

# Weather affects plant sales while non-traditional categories soar

Posted by [GardenCentreRetail](#) on Sunday, April 19, 2015 · [Leave a Comment](#)



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The Garden Centre Association's Barometer of Trade results have revealed garden centres saw clothing and catering sales soar in March, while plant sales fell.

Houseplants were up 5.50% while sales of outdoor plants fell -13.76%. Clothing sales were up 9.16% compared with the same month in 2014 and catering was up 5.87%.

Iain Wylie, GCA chief executive, explained: "This time last year we experienced some fantastic weather, which led to some impressive sales figures at the garden centres.

"It was always going to be tough to beat this year as the great British weather is so unpredictable so we have seen sales of plants rise and fall throughout the month.

"When our traditional categories are being affected like this it's great to see sales of our non-traditional categories pick up the pace.

"Despite the rain it looks like garden centre customers made sure they were kitted out in the latest gear and stopped off at cafés and restaurants during their visits for a spot of lunch, dinner or a cuppa and cake."

During the month food hall and farm shop sales reached 2.88% up.