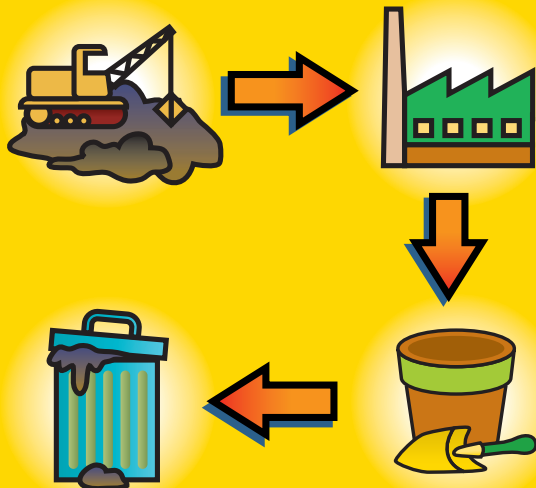


Dirt that comes clean For many city and suburban residents, the garden is their primary contact with the natural world. Managed correctly, a garden can be a source of food, flowers, and solitude. Plants provide fresh air and filter harmful elements. Careless garden management, however, fouls our water and soils our soil.

The European Eco-label will help your garden to bloom in harmony with nature. The Flower is your sign that a gardening product:

- does the job well;
- doesn't harm the environment, particularly water systems; and
- provides clear instructions on how to use the product safely and effectively.

Soil improvers and potting compost affect the environment when their chemical contents filter into aquatic systems. Eco-labelled products reduce these risks and help renew the **life cycle** (see diagram) of organic materials, making these products better by nature.



The European Eco-label

distinguishes products that meet high standards of both performance and environmental quality. Every product awarded the European Eco-label must pass rigorous environmental fitness trials, with results verified by an independent body.

Other environmental labels cover specific environmental concerns such as recyclability or energy efficiency, but the Flower of the European Eco-label stands for low environmental impacts throughout a product's life cycle — from manufacturing to disposal. Consumers can find it across the European Union, Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland.

Criteria exist for more than 23 types of products and services, with new categories continuously being adopted. The Flower adorns, among other items, environmentally friendly appliances, clothing, gardening products and tourist accommodations.

Look for the Flower!



CONTACT INFORMATION

The European Commission: ecolabel@ec.europa.eu
 Your national Competent Body: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/ecolabel/tools/competentbodies_en.htm
 General information on the Flower: <http://ec.europa.eu/ecolabel>
 The Green Store: www.eco-label.com
 The European Eco-label on tourism services: <http://www.eco-label-tourism.com>



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The choice for **health** and **value**



Eco-labelled products help your garden without harming other plants.

Soil improvers

Environmental advantages

- Eco-labelled soil improvers are pure, containing less than 0.5% glass, metal and plastic.
- Eco-labelled soil improvers use renewable materials or organic matter derived from waste material.
- Soil improvers contain at least 20% organic matter.
- Products do not contain sewage sludge, while non-sewage sludge content is strictly controlled.
- Minerals extracted for use in soil improvers are not taken from protected areas.
- There are strict limits on the amount of heavy metals and pesticide residues, which threaten aquatic systems.
- Nitrogen content is regulated to halt environmental harm such as eutrophication in water bodies.
- Clear instructions on storage and use of the product prevent waste and overuse.

Potting compost

Environmental advantages

- Potting compost, also known as growing media, makes use of organic waste from a compost producer, keeping biological refuse out of our landfills.
- Eco-labelled growing media use renewable materials or organic matter derived from natural waste material.
- Products do not contain sewage sludge, while non-sewage sludge content is strictly controlled.
- Minerals are not extracted from protected areas for use in potting compost.
- Eco-labelled products do not adversely affect plant emergence or subsequent growth.
- Eco-labelled growing media products provide information to consumers about correct use and safe handling.
- Pathogens such as salmonella are strictly limited.

Less nitrogen in soil improvers means cleaner lakes.



BETTER FOR YOUR HEALTH

- The bacterial content of soil improvers is strictly controlled for dangerous pathogens such as salmonella and helminth ova.
- Clear guidelines are provided for proper storage, handling and use of Eco-labelled soil improvers and potting compost.
- Products with the European Eco-label contain limited amounts of heavy metals, such as lead, which are hazardous to human health.



BETTER FOR YOUR WALLET

- Eco-labelled products contain less of what you don't need, such as weed seeds and other nuisances.
- The performance of the products is assured through various tests by independent bodies.
- User instructions help you get the most out of the product through proper storage and recommendations for proper use.
- Clear labelling helps the home gardener pick the right soil improvers and potting compost for the types of plants grown.

Eco-labelled products contain organic matter for a healthier garden.