

# e-learning to support shoppers with their plant purchases

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[hta.org.uk/plant-retail-success](http://hta.org.uk/plant-retail-success)



## Elearning to support customer success with their plant purchases



The HTA and GCA are working together to make elearning available for staff in garden retailers to support plant retail success. The courses help equip staff in the plant area to provide advice and information to shoppers that help them succeed and get the best from their plant purchases. The courses also help them to answer any questions on some hot topics around sustainability in gardening, such as peat and the safe and responsible use of plant protection products. As a HTA or GCA member, your staff can enrol on the following elearning courses.

- Supporting customers with peat-free growing media
- Using Garden Plant Protection Products Safely



### Supporting gardeners with peat-free

The first course on growing media consists of five short modules, and equips staff to answer customers' queries about peat-free growing media. It will give your staff confidence and understanding of topics such as the materials being used to replace peat, and how gardeners can work with them to ensure success. It will also help your staff answer questions which shoppers may have on the sustainability of growing media, for instance giving information on the Responsible Sourcing Scheme for Growing Media and how this works to show the different environmental footprints of growing media products. The elearning is also supplemented by videos produced by the GCA and RHS that can provide further support for retailers on helping their customers succeed with peat free growing media.



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### Supporting gardeners to use plant protection products safely

The second course is available via a HTA elearning subscription, and has been developed by the HTA with CropLife UK to meet the requirement on businesses which sell pesticides for non-professional use to 'employ certificated staff to be available to provide information to customers on request, at the point of sale<sup>1</sup>. This requirement applies to businesses except micro-distributors, which is defined as businesses which have: a turnover of less than £1 million, and that have less than ten employees, and only offer for sale non-professional products that are not formulations classified as toxic, very toxic, carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic for reproduction according to the Classification, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulations. Your supplier of plant protection products should be able to tell you how a product is classified under these regulations.

Irrespective of any regulatory requirements, the course gives a great grounding in some of the questions customers may have about using plant protection products, and can help equip staff to help customers use plant protection products appropriately, effectively, and responsibly.



### Accessing the courses

You can access the courses either through the HTA or GCA's online hubs.

HTA members can access both elearning courses on the HTA's web site:

**[hta.org.uk/elearning](https://hta.org.uk/elearning)**

GCA members can access the growing media elearning via their GROW login:

**[grow.gca.org.uk/login/](https://grow.gca.org.uk/login/)**

To find out more about how to set up a subscription to the HTA e-learning Hub' visit

**[hta.org.uk/elearning](https://hta.org.uk/elearning)**



<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pesticides/using-pesticides/codes-of-practice/guidance-sustainable-use-ppp-regs-2012.htm> for further information and a list of accredited courses.

## Further support for Plant Retail Success

This is one of a series of guides and information available from the HTA and the Garden Centre Association (GCA) to help plant retailers get the most out of plant retailing; other resources available in the series are available online at [hta.org.uk/plant-retail-success](https://hta.org.uk/plant-retail-success) and are set out below:

RESOURCE	SUMMARY
Retailing peat-free growing media elearning	Five elearning courses have been produced with the GCA covering: what Peatlands are and why they're important; The Responsible Sourcing Scheme for growing media; helping shoppers choose the right growing media for the right purpose; reassuring peat users about peat-reduced and peat free alternatives; understanding main ingredients used as peat alternatives. The courses are designed for retail staff who work with shoppers in the plant area.
Information videos on caring for plants grown in peat-free	Videos produced by the GCA and RHS to help either retail staff or the general public succeed with plants grown in peat-free growing media
Guide for retailers: ranging quality growing media	A short written guide for retail buyers on how to work with manufacturers when ranging growing media products
Using Garden Plant Protection Products Safely elearning	A course jointly produced by the HTA and CropLife to provide retail staff with the knowledge needed to provide information to consumers, as is required by the Sustainable Use Directive.
Caring for plants grown in peat-free and peat-reduced mixes	This guide for staff in retail plant areas has been prepared with commercial growers, and shares tips and advice on ensuring plants grown in peat-free or peat-reduced mixes thrive and stay healthy and saleable.
Guide to maximising link sales from plants	This guide is based on real-life merchandising examples and statistical analysis of over 7 million garden centre transactions. It provides common-sense insights into ways of maximising profit and customer success from each transaction.
Shopper eye-tracking research	This research uses eye-tracking technology to see the plant area as the shopper sees it. It contains ten key insights, illustrated with video footage, which help improve merchandising effectiveness in the plant area, as other zones in the garden centre.