

MAKING BIODEGRADABLE RECYCLED SEEDLING POTS!

Paper is highly recyclable because it is made of cellulose, which comes from plants and, in this experiment, we can get a first hand look at the process!

Using a really simple process, we can break down and recycle our own paper and form it into seedling pots we can plant right into the soil of our garden.



MATERIALS

- 2 LETTER SIZED PIECES OF PAPER, CARD STOCK, OR CONTRUCTION PAPER - RECYCLED IS BEST!
- BOWL
- PLASTIC PLANT POT
- PLATE
- 1/2 CUP FLOUR
- WATER
- POTTING SOIL AND SEEDS FOR PLANTING

PROCEDURE

1. TEAR YOUR PAPER INTO STRIPS ABOUT ½ INCH WIDE AND TEAR THOSE STRIPS INTO LITTLE SQUARES. PUT THE PAPER SQUARES INTO YOUR BOWL AND ADD JUST ENOUGH WATER TO WET THE PAPER.
2. GRAB A HANDFUL OF THE PAPER AND SQUEEZE IT IN YOUR HANDS, THIS WILL START TO TURN THE PAPER INTO A SOGGY PULP WHEN YOU DO IT FOR A FEW MINUTES.
3. MIX IN THE ½ CUP FLOUR. STIR AND BLEND UNTIL THE FLOUR AND PAPER ARE FULLY MIXED.
4. GRAB YOUR PLANT POT AND, OVER THE PLATE, GRAB A CLUMP OF THE PULP TO MOLD ONTO THE POT. PRESS IT ONTO THE BOTTOM AND SIDES, TRYING TO GET A NICE LAYER WITH NO GAPS OR HOLES.
5. PLACE THE POT SOMEWHERE WARM FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS TO DRY AND SET.
6. AFTER IT'S DRIED, CAREFULLY CLEAR PULP FROM THE TOP AND GENTLY SQUEEZE THE PLASTIC POT, LOOSENING IT FROM THE PULP. YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO CAREFULLY WIGGLE AND REMOVE IT.
7. PUT YOUR PULP POT ON A PLATE, FILL IT WITH SOIL, PLANT A SEED, AND TEND TO IT TO HELP IT GROW.
8. WHEN THE PLANT HAS GROWN A FEW INCHES TALL AND IS READY TO BE PLANTED OUTSIDE, YOU CAN DIG A HOLE AND PLACE YOUR ENTIRE POT INSIDE!
BECAUSE IT'S MADE OF CELLULOSE AND FLOUR (BOTH FROM PLANTS), IT WILL BREAK DOWN OVER TIME AND BECOME PART OF THE SOIL!

THIS EXPERIMENT IS GREAT FOR BEGINNER EXPLORERS, USES HOUSEHOLD ITEMS, AND CAN BE MESSY. THIS EXPERIMENT WILL REQUIRE DAYS BEFORE FINALLY PLANTING IT IN YOUR GARDEN.

