

Pots, Potting, Depotting and Repotting

Pots are containers in which seeds are sown, seedlings are raised or plants are maintained. Pot culture is the growing of plants in pots.

Purpose - Potting is one of the important horticultural operations for raising of seed propagated plants eg. Papaya, Acid lime etc. in polythene bag for direct sale and raising of seedling for rootstock purpose. One can also enhance the beauty of interiors by artistic arrangement of potted plants, especially the blooming seasonal, perennials and decorative foliage plants. A terrace or roof garden can be developed by growing fruit trees, shrubs, creepers, cacti, succulents and even vegetables in pots as well as large size tubs. The major limitation is that the space and the quantity of soil are limited in pots; as such growth of plants is restricted.

Types of Pot-Pots may be classified into following groups -

- 1- **On the basis of material used-** Earthen (clay) pots, Metallic pots, Plastic pots, Cemented Pots, Fibre pots, Ceramic Pots, Glass pots and Polythene bag, Portrays etc. Among them polythene bag and earthen pots are more common. Flower pot is the relative term used for all the containers.
- 2- **On the basis of Shape-** Conical, Square, Rectangular, Circular, Cylindrical, Bowl shape etc.
- 3- **On the basis of size-** Large, medium large, medium, medium small and small size.
- 4- **On the basis of Colour-** Green, Yellow, White, Red and multiple colour with different design.

Qualities of an ideal pot: It must have sufficient space along with holes for drainage and fulfill the purpose with desired shape and colour. Potted plants can be easily handled and shifted conveniently to any place for decoration purposes and as per requirements.

Potting mixture – Soil : Sand : FYM/ Vermicompost (1:1:1) enriched with or without Bio fertilizer and plant growth promoting substances

Potting: Generally, potting refers to first planting of seedling or a cutting in a container. It is a process of planting a new plant in pot with a suitable pot mixture for establishment. Although it is a simple operation, it requires certain degree of skill and practice.

Procedure for potting of earthen pot-

1. Select a good quality earthen pot and immerse in water for about one hour. If old pots are used, thorough cleaning is necessary.

2. Place a good crock on the drainage hole with its concave side facing the hole. Over this a large number of pot pieces are put (4-5 cm thick). On these crocks a layer of coarse sand or gravel or coconut fibre or sphagnum moss is spread to ensure adequate drainage and prevent clogging of drainage hole.
3. Remaining space in the pot is filled with suitable pot mixture leaving a head space of 2.5-5.0 cm.
4. The pot mixture should be sufficiently moist at the time of planting.
5. The plant is placed at the centre by scooping out the required amount of pot mixture, so that it accommodate the root system and held in position by packing the soil mixture with hand gently.
6. Water the pots immediately after planting.

Depotting:

It is a simple technique of taking the established plant out of the original container. A systematic approach is necessary for removing the plant intact from the pot. The pot is lifted by one hand, the palm spread over the top of the soil holding the stem between the fingers (Fore finger and middle finger) and then the pot is inverted. A gentle tapping of the rim portion of the inverted pot is inverted pot against a hard surface or edge of the bund is necessary so that the entire ball of earth with its entwining roots will slip out as one piece. If soil is too dry water the pots 1-2 hr before depotting.

Repotting:

It is generally referred to the transfer of a plant from one pot to another and replacing the soil mixture with the fresh one. The first step in repotting is the depotting. After depotting the plant with compact roots, with mother soil removed from it is placed in the centre of the new pot and then the sides are packed with the new garden mixture.

Repotting is necessary when, nutrients are exhausted, pots are broken due to wind or mechanical damage, the soil turns sourest due to continuous watering, under pot bound conditions, insect and disease infestation and for exhibition purpose.