

BRITISH FLORIST ASSOCIATION  
Harmful Plants and flowers code of practice for all Florists



The British Florist Association together with the Institute of Professional Florists has produced a list of flowers and plants which are potentially harmful to staff and customers. A special thank you should be made to Rosemary Hughes for her contribution and hard work.

The vast majority of plants and flowers sold by a florists are entirely harmless, however some may have sap, pollen or seeds which are potentially harmful. Some are toxic if digested and others can cause some skin irritations. It is always advisable to keep flowers and plants out of the reach of pets and small children. Hands should always be washed thoroughly after handling regardless of if you are a florist, consumer or enthusiast.

| Name of flower/foilage/berry           | Common Name                | Harmful because                                   |
|--|----------------------------|---|
| <b>Category A: Poisonous or Toxic</b>  |                            |   |
| Aconitum napellus                      | Monkshood                  | Toxic if eaten: Harmful via skin                  |
| Aucuba japonica                        | Spotted/Japanese Laurel    | Toxic if eaten                                    |
| Convallaria majalis                    | Lily of the Valley         | Toxic if eaten                                    |
| Digitalis purpurea                     | Foxglove                   | Toxic if eaten                                    |
| Euphorbia sp (Excluding pulcherrima)   | Spurge                     | Toxic if eaten: Skin & eye irritant               |
| Gloriosa rothschildiana                | Flame Lily                 | Toxic if eaten                                    |
| Helleborus orientalis                  | Christmas Rose             | Toxic if eaten                                    |
| Taxus baccata                          | Yew                        | Toxic if eaten                                    |
| Veratrum nigrum                        | Black false Hellebore      | Toxic if eaten                                    |
| Zantedeschia sp                        | Arum/Calla Lily            | Toxic if eaten: Skin & eye irritant               |
| <b>Category B: Irritant Properties</b> |                            |   |
| Alstroemeria sp                        | Alstroemeria               | May cause skin irritation                         |
| Anthurium andraeanum                   | Anthurium/painters paletts | Harmful if eaten                                  |
| Arachnoides adiantiformis              | Leatherleaf                | Spores may cause skin irritation                  |
| Asparagus sp                           | Asparagus fern             | May cause skin irritation/fruits harmful if eaten |
| Buxus                                  | Box                        | Harmful if eaten                                  |

| <b>Name of flower/foilage/berry</b> | <b>Common Name</b> | <b>Harmful because</b>                     |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Capsicum annum                      | Chilli Pepper      | Eye irritant/May cause skin irritation     |
| Chrysanthemum sp                    | AYR/Chrysanth      | May cause skin irritation                  |
| Clematis sp                         | Clemetis           | Harmful if eaten                           |
| Cupressocyparis leylandii           | Cupressus          | May cause skin irritation                  |
| Delphinium elatum                   | Delph              | Leaves and seeds harmful if eaten          |
| Diplocyclos palmatus                | Striped Cucumber   | Harmful if eaten                           |
| Hedera sp                           | Ivy                | Harmful if eaten/May cause skin irritation |
| Hippeastrum sp                      | Amaryllis          | Harmful if eaten, the bulb is toxic        |
| Hyacinthus orientalis               | Hyacinth           | Harmful if eaten/May cause skin irritation |
| Hydrangea sp                        | Hydrangea          | Harmful if eaten/May cause skin irritation |
| Hypericum perforatum                | St Johns Wort      | Harmful if eaten                           |
| Ilex sp                             | Holly              | Berries and foliage harmful if eaten       |
| Iris sp                             | Iris               | Harmful if eaten                           |
| Monstera deliciosa                  | Swiss Cheese Plant | May cause skin/eye irritation              |
| Narcissus sp                        | Daffodil           | Harmful if eaten/May cause skin irritation |
| Ornithogalum sp                     | Star of Bethlehem  | Harmful if eaten                           |
| Philodendron sp                     | Philodendron       | Harmful if eaten                           |
| Polygonatum x hybridum              | Solomons seal      | May cause skin allergy                     |
| Tulipa sp                           | Tulip              | Harmful if eaten/mmay cause skin allergy   |
| Viscum album                        | Mistletoe          | All parts are poisonous                    |

# ESSENTIAL GUIDELINES

- No plants or flowers sold by a florist should be done so for human or animal consumption.
- All plants listed are safe to purchase and sell as long as precautions are taken. If you are particularly sensitive you may wish to wear gloves when handling materials.
- Information on these products should be relayed to all staff members and be accessible for them to refer to easily.
- Any customers buying these products should be advised accordingly by staff members.
- Within the home, retail or event situation, No harmful plants or flowers should be placed where pets or children are likely to brush against them or ingest them.
- All staff and customers should wash hands thoroughly after handling plant and flowers

Suggested ways to advise customers and staff safely.

## **The Potentially Harmful plants and flowers leaflet**

The above information can be purchased from the British Florist association in a counter top leaflet form. This can be given to customers who are interested or are purchasing an identified item. Staff can also use the leaflet as a reference sheet.

## **Care cards**

Having specific printed care cards accompanying potentially harmful flowers and plants is a good way to make sure information is available to customers and/or recipients.

## **Verbally**

A simply conversation with a customer can be sufficient to relay the information needed.

| <b>If irritation occurs through.....</b> | <b>Recommended Advice</b>   |
|--|---|
| <b>Digestion</b>                         | Drink plenty of water and seek medical advice immediately should you feel unwell.                       |
| <b>Skin contact</b>                      | Wash area immediately with soap and warm water. If irritation persists seek medical advice immediately. |
| <b>Contact with eyes</b>                 | Rinse thoroughly with cold clean water. If irritation persists seek medical advice immediately.         |