A close up of text on a white background

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**Thinking Outside the Pot**

**What have we been doing?**

We have always tried to be sustainably minded as a company and our impact on the environment has always been high on the agenda. As part of our journey we have embarked upon the following initiatives…

* We installed an internal policy to review our use of electronic communication and data storage over printing, reducing paper usage and minimising ink cartridge use
* We installed solar panels onto our office roof
* We have installed low energy lighting into all our new or redeveloped areas of the nursery
* We have consciously signed up to the mantra ‘every little helps’ (other supermarket slogans are available) by looking at even the smallest aspects of our business from an environmental standpoint. One such example is we have stopped buying one-use disposable cups for internal use and operate a policy of using reusable cups
* We operate our delivery service with our carbon footprint at the top of the list
* We operate an emission compliant delivery service and always review each vehicle when they reach the end of their commercial lives to make sure the replacements we choose are in-line with our environmental policies.
* We have worked on peat reduction in our production and use peat free forms of propagation media. We encourage the reduction of traditional plastic use by installing alternatives such as CoCo wrapping and reusable, recyclable air pots
* We try to use re-usable packaging wherever possible, promoting the use of Danish trollies, returnable pallets and crates and other forms of packaging
* We recycle our waste wherever possible
* For just over 30 years we have recycled all our water, including rain run off and have two fully functioning reservoirs
* We are in the process of building a third reservoir and have built a third lagoon in preparation
* We use efficient forms of irrigation and continually develop our site to maximise our ability to recycle water. We retrospectively fit new irrigation as well as factoring it into new areas of construction.
* We engineer our beds to maximise water harvesting
* In July 2020 we are moving over to a 100% renewable energy company

**Where are we now?**

It Is important to know where we are starting from, to understand what we are trying to achieve and to set targets which can be measured and reported on.

We acknowledge that we have done a lot, but we can do so much more. Our journey may take many years, but through managing. measuring, monitoring and reporting we will be able to get to where we want to be…

So…What’s next?

**Where do we want to be in the future?**

We have initially identified 4 main areas of our business which we wish to address

**Delivery and Transportation**

* We will be introducing a ‘Green Delivery’ grouping delivery areas to reduce on mileage between drops.
* We will be working with alternative transport partners to minimise unproductive mileage and congestion on the roads, without compromising our service
* As a rural business, where transport links can be challenging, we wish to encourage more environmental forms of travel and more renewable fuel options for staff and visitors. As such we are looking at installing a charging station(s) for electric vehicles,
* installing more cycle racks onsite, offering a transfer service from Wye station (our closest station) for visitors and similar initiatives offering staff the chance to leave their vehicles at home.

**Plastics and Packaging Waste**

* We will be looking to work with clients and the recycling industry on initiatives to recover and recycle pots
* We began production of a range of plants in recyclable taupe pots – 3 litre, 7.5 litre and 15 litre’s in selected ranges (you may have seen them at our stand)
* We will look to increase the number of deliveries that use recoverable and recyclable forms of packaging.

**Peat Reduction**

* We will continue to look at reducing our peat consumption and are targeting a further 5 % reduction in 2020 – Our current annual peat consumption is 1646 cubic metres and our current wood fibre consumption is 602 cubic metres. We also use bark topping on our containers which totals 474 cubic metres.
* We use peat free material in our propagation.
* We will look to promote traditional planting seasons for bare root, rootballed, corms/tubers etc and, where possible, will offer options such as coir wrapped trees instead of containerised for out of season purchases. We will also explore other alternative forms of packaging and delivery, such as ‘pot-less’ deliveries, endeavouring to ‘Think Outside of the Pot’!
* We will look to host and promote discussions with like minded clients for a container grown, peat free range, running trials to determine consistent standards and quality.

**Integrated Pest Management**

* We are shortly introducing a specific IPM Policy and have already introduced and published our Biosecurity policy
* We will evaluate alternative controls where effective, and environmentally and financially sustainable…
* We will employ husbandry, biological and mechanical controls wherever practicable to reduce chemical usage
* We will promote resistant varieties and our own brand, Palmstead Proven Performers, which represents a selection of plants we have chosen, that we grow and offer robust results

In summary…

Our core values put environment and our community at the heart of what we do, and we understand the responsibilities we have as a business. We are committed to the principles of ‘Calculate, Reduce and Offset and ‘Recover, Reuse and Recycle’.

With effective, considered action we can reduce emissions, reduce our footprint on the environment and save money. As a company, we will continually…

* Challenge what we do and why we do it…
* Actively engage with our partners and like-minded businesses to continue to develop the principles and practices outlined in this presentation.
* Review and communicate how we operate as a business

Together we must be responsible for our actions, we must foster relationships that encourage dialogue and cooperation, we must support each other to achieve common goals and most importantly, we must communicate transparently and effectively.

To innovate, achieve and deliver these goals requires commitment and a receptive audience (hopefully all of you in attendance today) who will guide the commercial decisions shaping our future…

The company has chosen to elect an environmental champion who will make sure we reach our targets. Kate Ruston, an owner and director at Palmstead will fulfil this extremely important role for us moving forward.

We hope you will all join us on our journey!