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## Plant care and phytosanitary products

Plant care and plant protection in natural gardens is based on preventive cultural measures and the creation of optimum living conditions. If diseases or pests appear despite preventive measures, environmentally friendly plant care and phytosanitary products should be preferred.

Just in private gardens large quantities of chemical phytosanitary products are used all too frequently instead of alternative products such as beneficial organisms or physical phytosanitary.

Labeling environmentally friendly gardening products with the ecolabel would encourage gardeners in their product choice and reduce thereby the use of chemicals on their green. Through appropriate application possible side effects could also be avoided.

The plant care and phytosanitary products directive is widely diversified, comprising the following product groups

- Biological phytosanitary products (micro-organisms, other beneficial organisms, viruses)

- Chemical plant care, plant aid and phytosanitary products

- Physical phytosanitary products

Plant care and phytosanitary products which carry the ecolabel may not contain any ecological and toxicologically ambiguous additives and active agents. In addition, they may not trigger any significantly negative repercussions for the animal world, particularly on so-called "beneficial organisms". Genetically modified organisms or substances are excluded, as their systemic effects have not yet been sufficiently explored.

The products must be available in package sizes suitable for the occasional gardener and contain detailed instructions regarding their safe use, storage and relevant precautions.

The observance of legal regulations is a further prerequisite which must be fulfilled in order to be issued the ecolabel ("legal compliance"). The manufacturers must also prove that they operate using a waste management according to AWG (Waste Management Act) or environmental management system (EMAS or ISO 14001). This ensures that possible ecological weak spots in production are discovered and corrected.

An essential element of the directive is the guarantee of the products' efficacy. Chemical and biological Products which are not approved under the Phytosanitary Care Act must submit two expertises from independent experts. In the case of physical phytosanitary products their efficacy is documented through existing studies or tests.

Thus the ecolabel is a decision support for consumers wishing to decrease the use of chemicals in their gardens and pursue alternative methods in the field of garden care.

Find our ecolabel products at

[www.umweltzeichen.at](http://www.umweltzeichen.at)

For further information please contact one of the eco-label organisations

Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism,  
Department V/7  
Josef Raneburger  
Stubenring 1, A-1010 Vienna  
Tel: +43 (0)1 71100 61-1250; Fax: ext. 7649  
e-mail: [josef.raneburger@bmnt.gv.at](mailto:josef.raneburger@bmnt.gv.at)  
[www.umweltzeichen.at](http://www.umweltzeichen.at)

VKI Association for Consumer Information,  
Eco-label team  
DI Oswald Streif  
Linke Wienzeile 18, A-1060 Vienna  
Tel: +43 (0)1 588 77-272; Fax: ext. 99 272  
e-mail: [ostreif@vki.or.at](mailto:ostreif@vki.or.at)  
[www.konsument.at/umweltzeichen](http://www.konsument.at/umweltzeichen)