# Gardening Experts Share Key Tips for Hydrating Plants During Heatwaves



Geoff Stonebanks, a 71-year-old gardening expert, has provided key tips for keeping plants hydrated during a heatwave without increasing the frequency of watering. Stonebanks, who maintains an award-winning garden in Seaford, East Sussex, advises using a reservoir method to retain moisture. This can be achieved by lining the bottom of plant pots with tin foil and watering less frequently but for longer periods.

Stonebanks emphasizes that heavy watering helps plant roots remain moist longer and encourages roots to grow deeper and wider, making them more resilient to sunlight. He also recommends placing plants in shade to reduce the drying rate and using an inner reservoir system within containers to hold moisture.

Double potting is another method suggested by Stonebanks, where a smaller pot with a plant is placed inside a larger pot filled with soil, moss, or stones. Covering exposed soil with shingle or gravel can prevent moisture loss and protect plants from pests. Using larger containers helps retain moisture more effectively due to the increased soil volume.

For those unable to water regularly, Stonebanks recommends automatic self-watering systems. He also stresses the importance of watering slowly to allow moisture to permeate the soil properly.

Jack Stooks, a senior gardener for King Charles, also shares gardening advice. Stooks, with over 20 years of experience in the royal gardens at Highgrove, advises deadheading flowers, mulching beds, staking tall plants, and adjusting lawn mowing height during summer. He also provides guidance on picking fruits and vegetables and maintaining house plants during hot weather.