

F.Y.I October 2025

Plastic ignored breaks down polluting the environment.

The problem

Plastic nanoparticles are a widespread environmental contaminant, and in the UK, they reach soils through agricultural sources like plastic mulch and sewage sludge, as well as atmospheric deposition and contaminated water. These particles persist indefinitely, fragmenting from larger plastics, and can leach harmful plasticizers and other chemicals into the soil. Their presence impacts soil structure, microbial communities, and plant growth, with potential for uptake into plants and leaching into groundwater.

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A list of solutions to consider

To avoid plastic in the garden, opt for plastic-free plant pots (terracotta, coir, wood), use natural plant labels (bamboo, wood), tie plants with jute or hemp twine, and create compost and soil mixes from home instead of buying in plastic bags. You can also grow your own plants from cuttings or seeds, use cardboard or newspaper for mulching, and repurpose items like old yogurt pots for seedlings.