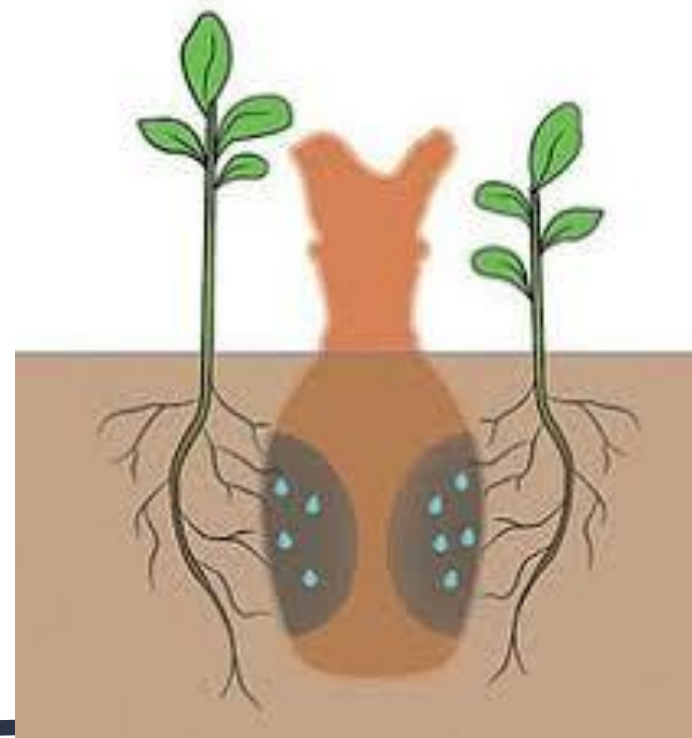




OLLAS

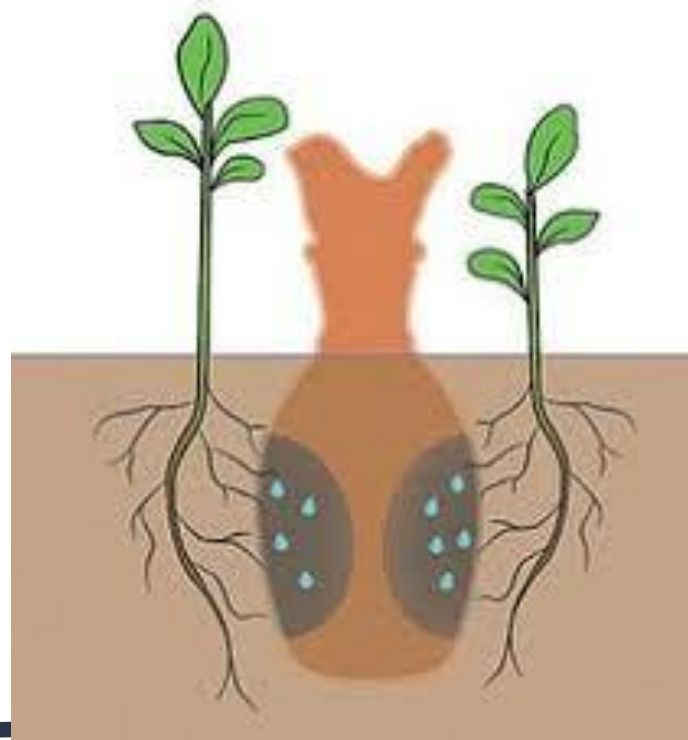
ANCIENT WISDOM FOR MODERN WATER CONSERVATION





OLLAS

OLLA (PRONOUNCED OH-YA)



WHAT IS AN OLLA?

- IS AN ANCIENT TECHNIQUE PRACTICED IN VARIOUS DRY AND ARID PARTS OF THE WORLD
- ESPECIALLY IN AFRICA, PAKISTAN, INDIA, IRAN, PARTS OF MEXICO, AND MORE
- IT HAS BEEN MENTIONED IN ONE OF THE FIRST CHINESE AGRICULTURAL TEXTS AS OLD AS 2000 YEARS



WHAT IS AN OLLA?

- A POROUS, UNGLAZED CLAY POT BURIED IN SOIL
- FILLED WITH WATER AND COVERED AT THE TOP
- WATER SLOWLY SEEPS THROUGH THE WALLS OF THE POT
- ANCIENT IRRIGATION METHOD USED IN CHINA, AFRICA, AND THE AMERICAS



ANCIENT TECHNOLOGY, MODERN SUSTAINIBIBILITY

- ▶ Ollas rely on natural forces, making them simple and effective.
- ▶ This ancient technique conserves water and supports plant health.
- ▶ Preserving this tradition ensures sustainable water use.

WATER MOVEMENT THROUGH THE SOIL



Nature strives to be in equilibrium, meaning everything is balanced.



The soil outside the olla draws water through its porous wall into the surrounding soil.



Ollas work under natural atmospheric pressure.

The olla releases water until the soil reaches field capacity.

This prevents overwatering (saturation) and underwatering (wilting point).

This delicate system requires no man-made energy.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The soil around the olla draws water through the pot's walls via soil moisture tension
- Water is only released when the surrounding soil is dry
- No water waste from evaporation or runoff



Capillary Action in Soil

- ▶ Water from the olla spreads several inches due to capillary action.
- ▶ Water molecules adhere to soil particles and spread outward
- ▶ Plant roots detect and grow toward moisture.





BENEFITS OF USING OLLAS

- EFFICIENT WATER USAGE
- PROMOTES DEEP ROOT GROWTH
- REDUCES WEED GROWTH
- LOW MAINTENANCE



OLLAS WORK BEST
FOR PLANTS THAT
HAVE FIBROUS (OR
ADVENTITIOUS)
ROOTS AND A
CANOPY OF
LEAVES OVERHEAD

Root

Fibrous roots

Tap roots



TOMATOES



HERBS



SALAD GREENS



KALES



CHILI PEPPERS



GOURDS



BELL PEPPERS



SQUASH



BEANS



PEAS



FLOWERS




POTATOES




MELONS

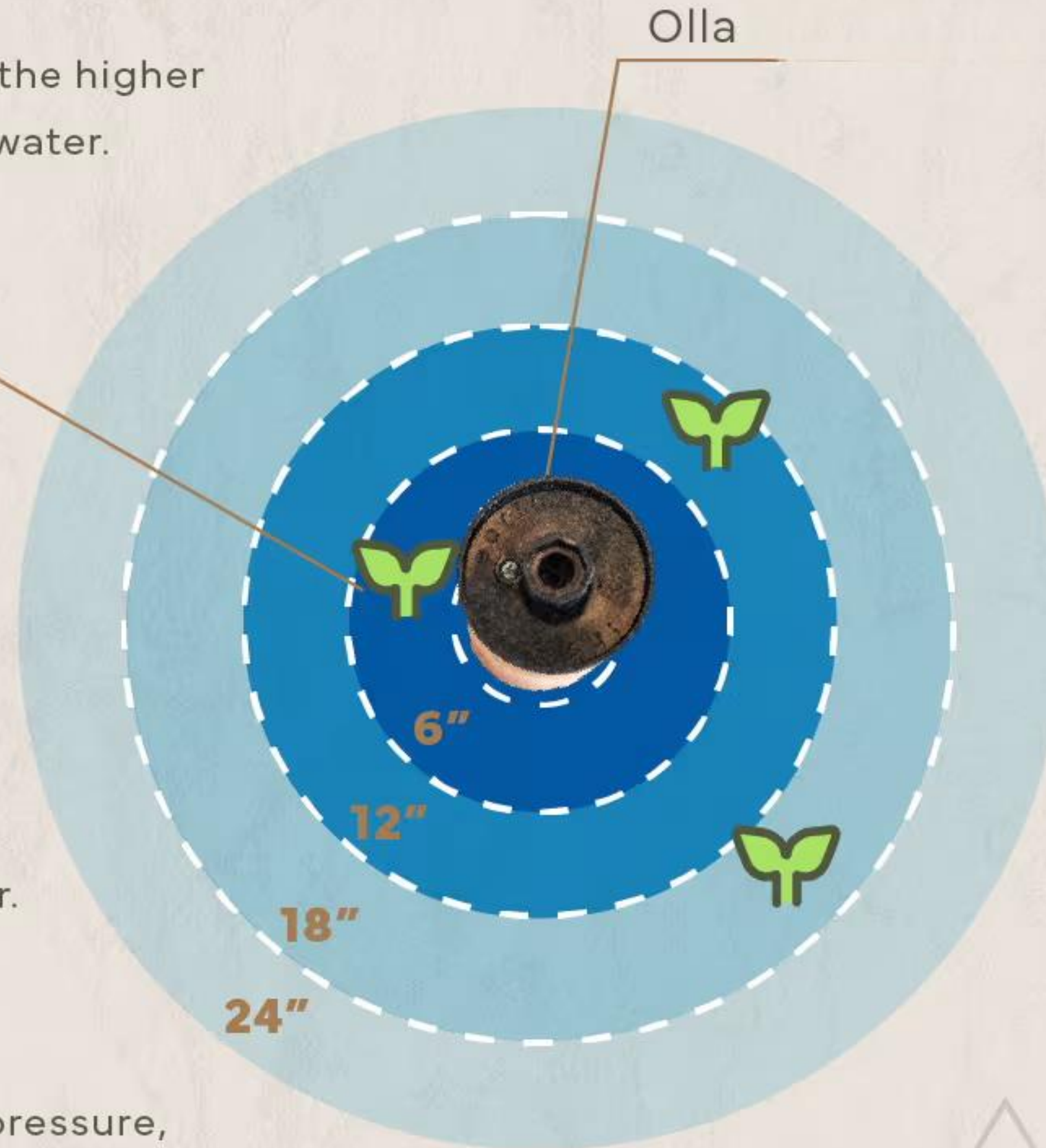


CORN

 The closer to the olla the higher the concentration of water.

 Plant your thirsty plants like:
squash
zucchini
melons,
and tomatoes
close to your olla
cotta cup (the
darkest blue circle)
so it gets lots of water.

 Plume size varies depending on water pressure, soil type and temperature. An 18" plume is the most common.



HOW TO DO IT

STEP-BY-STEP OLLA IRRIGATION

1. BURY THE OLLA IN YOUR GARDEN BED
2. FILL IT WITH WATER
3. COVER THE OPENING TO PREVENT DEBRIS AND MOSQUITOES
4. REFILL EVERY FEW DAYS, DEPENDING ON CLIMATE & PLANT NEEDS

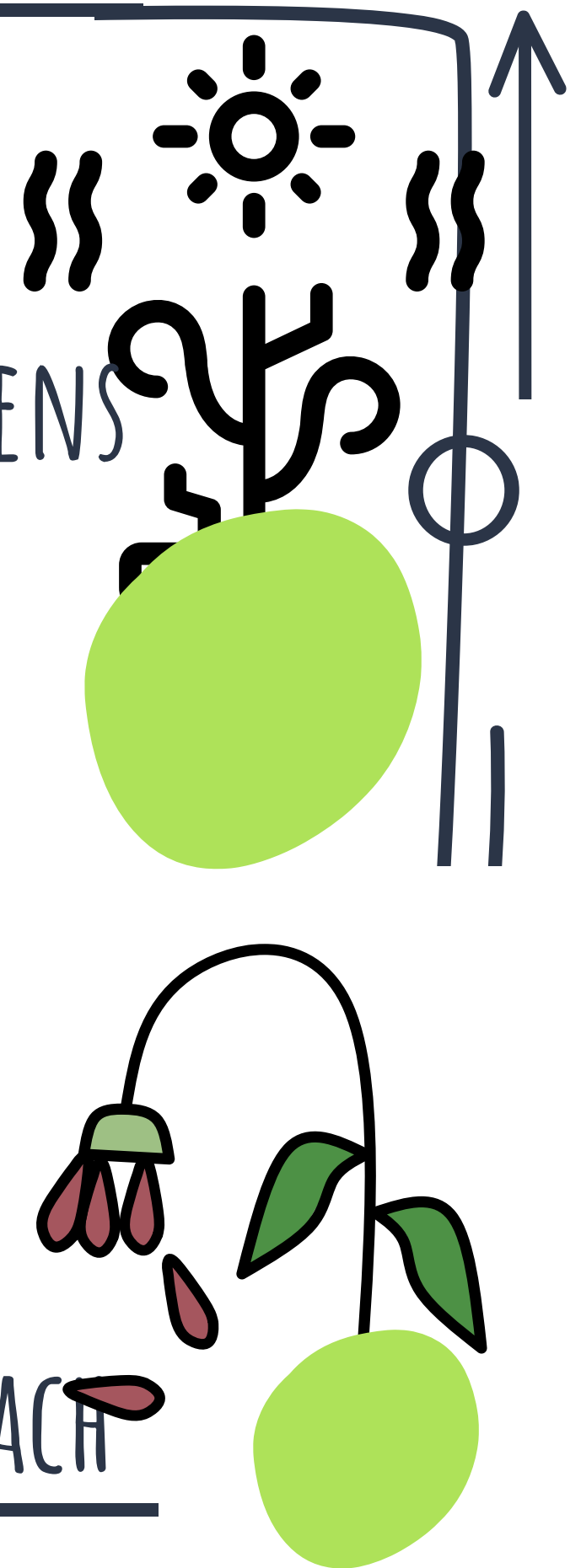
KEY POINTS ON OLLA EFFICIENCY:

- Water savings: Up to 50–70% less water than surface irrigation (like sprinklers or drip lines).
- Low evaporation: Since the water is released underground, surface evaporation is minimal.
- Precise moisture delivery: Plants take only the water they need via capillary action, reducing overwatering.
- Low maintenance: Once buried and filled, ollas need refilling only every few days (sometimes a week), depending on weather and soil.



OLLAS COME WITH DISADVANTAGES

- THEY NEED TO BE BURIED - TAKE UP SPACE, IN SMALL GARDENS
- FILLING THEM BY HAND - TIME-CONSUMING
- IF YOU FORGET TO CHECK THEM (OR GO ON VACATION)
IT CAN LEAD TO ISSUES - LIKE NO WATER!
- SALTS MAY BUILD UP IN THE OLLA AND CLOG IT
- SEEDLINGS WILL NEED EXTRA WATER UNTIL THEIR ROOTS REACH





Thirsty Earth: Automatic Olla Watering System For Your Garden

Buy at Epic Gardening Shop

If you want to store or on-line purchase there are plenty of options!

Popular products :



Also nearby

Back to the Roots Self-Watering Terracotta Olla Pot

\$9.97

Amazon.c... & more
4.8 ★★★★★ (88)



The Olla Company Olla Classic Small Watering Pot with...

\$44.99

The Olla ... & more
Free delivery



Back to The Roots Self-Watering Terracotta Olla Pot

\$29.99

Amazon.c... & more



Terrain Terracotta Watering Ollas Set of 3

\$48.00

Anthropologie



GARDENBRO 4



Olla Watering Pot



The Olla Company



Self-Watering

MAKE IT YOURSELF

Materials: unglazed clay pots (2) with saucer or lid, Waterproof caulk or silicone sealant

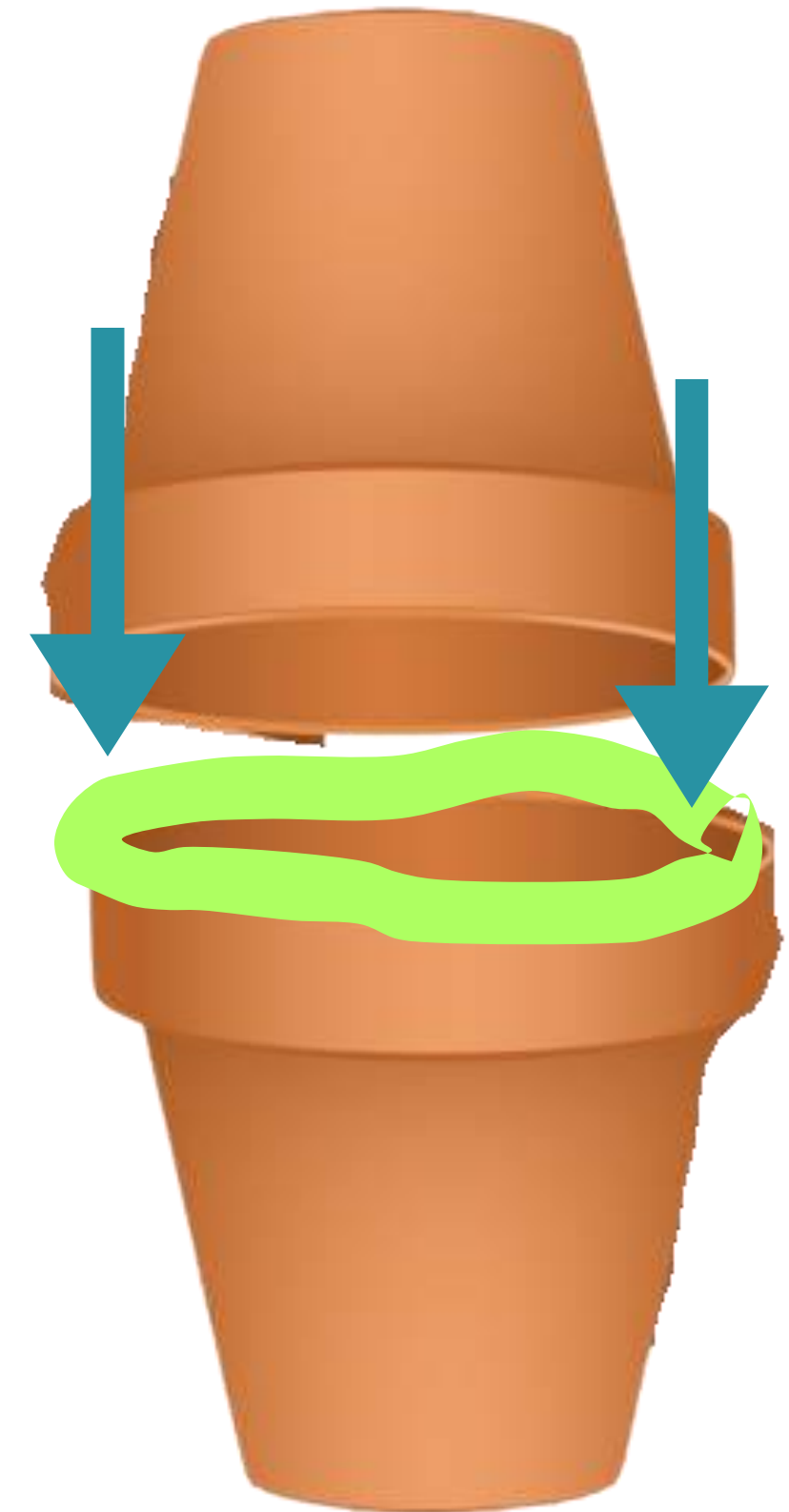
- USING WATERPROOF SEALANT PLUG THE DRAIN HOLE OF ONE POTS
- ENSURE THE SEAL IS TIGHT TO PREVENT LEAKS
- ALLOW IT TO "CURE" OR DRY ACCORDING TO SEALANT LABEL DIRECTIONS



MAKE IT

Using the pot with the sealed drainage hole and the other clay pot
YOURSELF

- CONNECT THE POTS: APPLY THE SEALANT AROUND THE TOP EDGE OF THE SEALED POT
- ATTACH THE OTHER POT, UPSIDE DOWN,
- CREATES A WATERTIGHT CONTAINER
- ALLOW TO DRY WELL



MAKE IT

YOURSELF

- ADD A LID, SAUCER OR EVEN A LARGE PEBBLE TO THE TOP TO HELP PREVENTS EVAPORATION
- PREVENTS MOSQUITOES, INSECTS OR DEBRIS





**Great for
container-
grown plants**
STILL WATERS WHEN AWAY

MINT

AND OTHER WATER
LOVING PLANTS

- Can spread quickly in a garden if conditions are right
 - Loves evenly moist soil
- POT CONTAINS THE ROOTS / PLANT
 - NO SPREADING
 - OLLA HELPS TO KEEP THAT EVENLY MOIST SOIL



THANK YOU!

ANY QUESTIONS?

SHARON P. FLYNT,
AGENT FOR HORTICULTURE
SCOTT COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION



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Lexington, KY 40506



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accommodated
with prior notification.

RESOURCES.



AND MORE . . .