

Our METHOD -Why Fanntum Containers? by Dean Holmes, LA, MLA



The sheer number of nursery growing methods is mind boggling. We spent a great deal of time researching before deciding that a container nursery made a lot of sense. Containers are easy to move, no digging is necessary during the long wet season and, most importantly, our topsoil is not depleted with every harvest.



We were then faced with the problem of container type. There are an amazing number of containers. And there are problems with many containers such as circling and diving roots, compaction of substrate, heat build-up and cost. We contacted several experts in the field. Dr. Ted Bilderback from NC State suggested that we take a look at Fanntum Containers.

We immediately fell in love. Fanntum Containers, developed by Alan Fann of Fanntum Products, Inc., consist of a wire basket skeleton wrapped in a porous fabric that is stapled to the top rim. The pots are light, relatively inexpensive and sturdy. And, they just get better.

The porous fabric and mesh do a number of wonderful things. The container is simple to move and plant. At planting time you simply remove the fabric and use the wire skeleton to move, lift and lower the plant into the ground. The wire remains. It helps support the rootball and stabilize the tree after planting. The wire will biodegrade in 2 or 3 years and recent studies show no ill effects to the tree.

The porous fabric allows air and water penetration. The evaporative effect allows the roots to stay cooler in the hot summers of Guanacaste. Water that would normally drain out the bottom of a standard, plastic container transpires through the sides.

Most importantly, the fabric allows for air-root pruning that prevents circling and diving roots. In a smooth, plastic pot roots grow out, hit the side of the container and begin circling the root ball. When planted the roots continue the circling pattern and may eventually damage or strangle the tree. The result is an unhealthy or dead tree.

In contrast when roots grow to the side of the Fanntum containers they poke through the fiber. Air kills the end of the root and a small nub is formed. Small fibrous roots then grow laterally from the "air-pruned" root. These fibrous roots take in significant amounts of water and add structure to the root ball. Trees grow more robust, healthy and quickly. Root balls are bursting with fibrous roots ready to absorb water and nutrient when planted.

Fanntum Containers produce faster growth and superior fibrous root structure. The containers are simple to move, easy to plant and create trees prepared for a long, healthy life. What a great container!

Because of the above reasons and the positive environmental impact of these containers we have agreed to be the distributors for Fanntum Containers in Costa Rica. info@cocobolotreefarm.com (011) 506 2665 8470