



The biodegradable mask is made from layers of rice paper and contains a Dutch meadow seed mix | Photo source [RuudMorijn/iStock](#), Marie Bee Bloom

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BIODEGRADABLE MASK GROWS INTO FLOWERS

 HEALTH & WELLBEING

Designer Marianne de Groot has created a biodegradable face mask that users can bury once they've worn it, before watching it sprout into flowers

Spotted: Disposable face masks have become a daily necessity since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. One of the negative results of this is the way that they're being disposed of: made of plastic fibres, they are even more prone to breaking down into microplastics than plastic bags or water bottles. In an effort to curb this problem, Dutch designer Marianne de Groot has created a biodegradable mask made from layers of rice paper and containing a Dutch meadow seed mix. The "Marie Bee Bloom" masks can then be buried once used, and if the conditions permit, flowers will start to sprout.

The rest of the Marie Bee Bloom mask is environmentally friendly too. Pure sheep's wool replaces the rubber bands for the ear loops, and a cord fastener made of egg cartons has been punched into the shape of tiny flowers, allowing the wearer to adjust the loops to fit. The loops also run through a small tube built into each side of the mask, glued on with potato starch and water.

The Marie Bee Bloom masks are available to order online, and come in packs of five, ten and fifteen, starting at a price of €15.

Many innovations to reduce the waste produced from disposable face masks have been in the works over the past year. Some recently spotted innovations include these masks made from seaweed and [plastic stools](#) made from discarded masks.

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Takeaway:

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was already a huge effort to reduce the effects of single-use plastics. However, now that face masks are a part of daily life across the world, **an estimated 129 billion facemasks** are being sent to landfill each month. The Marie Bee Bloom face masks demonstrate a more sustainable approach to personal protective equipment, providing the wearer with both protection and an environmental incentive -- even if the user decides not to bury their mask after use, it will still decompose in the landfill.