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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORLD'S UGLIEST PLANT TO UNGRACE AMERICAN HOMES

Think of house plants, and you conjure up visions of sensuous philodendrons, graceful coleus and delicate African violets. But, if certain strange people have their way, all that many change.

They're the execs at Mental Manufacturing, Inc., and they're justly proud – and totally ashamed – of their company's latest product, which is reaching stores around the country now. It's called, simply, "The World's Ugliest Plant."

It's a genuine house plant, and you grow it yourself as part of a complete kit including ugly seeds, ugly food, starter pot, and full instructions. And, yes, according to Karen Boss of Mental Manufacturing, "It's one of nature's saddest mistakes. The kind of thing you want to turn away from."

Why would people grow an avowedly hideous house plant? "Well," says Boss, "I think everyone comes to something like this for different reasons. There's that imp of the perverse Edgar Allen Poe spoke of. Or maybe it's because all of those beautiful house plants we try to grow so often turn out to be ugly anyway, and this is just a way of saying, 'OK, let's roll with it, and finally do it on purpose.' For once, when it comes out ugly we can chalk it up as a success because we wanted it that way! Or maybe, facing the ugly side of nature makes us more capable of facing it in ourselves."

Or there may be deeper reasons yet, adds Bob Neuman of Mental Manufacturing, with tongue not completely in cheek, "Maybe this ugly plant may even be able to help us to love each other a little more. Our society hypes beauty so much – and everywhere you look, it's Brat Pitt and Jessica Simpson. But the world isn't all beauty, and if the World's Ugliest Plant teaches us that, and lets us accept our imperfections, even learn to love them, then it's well worth growing."

Finally, the big question: What does the plant look like? “Well,” says Boss, “you certainly wouldn’t want your son or daughter to marry it.” Outside of that, no one’s telling. Adds Neuman, “When passing by in the room, it’s definitely better if you can remember to look the other way.”

For those who find they can’t take it anymore, the kit comes with a bag to place over the poor plant’s head, and full euthanasia instructions. “We certainly don’t recommend killing any living thing, however atrocious,” says Boss. “But we feel that’s a choice people have the right to make for themselves.”

The plant is available at novelty shops, gift shops, department stores as well as other kinds of brave businesses around the country. The suggested retail price is \$5.00. For more information, write Mental Manufacturing, Inc., Rockefeller Center Station, Box 00, New York, NY. 10185

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PEOPLE AGHAST! WORLD'S UGLIEST PLANT UNVEILED.

Everyone talks about love, but now there's a new product that puts the ability to love to the test. It is "The World's Ugliest Plant." If you can love this hideous freak of nature you can love anything. It comes with everything necessary to grow it – ugly seeds, ugly food, ugly starter pot, full ugly instructions, an ugly bag to hide all the ugliness, and should desperation set in, euthanasia directions have been thoughtfully included.

Of what use is it? According to its creators, Mental Manufacturing, Inc., it is ugly enough to scare off burglars. Make a wife/husband/lover look better by comparison. Or simply measure your compassion for other living things.

It makes the ideal gift for anyone with a slightly weird sense of humor or just to remind a beautiful friend how lucky they are.

As a gag gift, it will have its recipient in stitches just reading the instructions. And that's even before the ugly seeds have been allowed to germinate. Once they do and when the plant reaches maturity, they will have to laugh just to keep themselves from crying.

The suggested retail price of "The World's Ugliest Plant" is five dollars. In fact, the price is the only non-ugly thing about it. To find out what stores carry it, write Mental Manufacturing, Inc., Rockefeller Center Station, Box 00, New York, NY 10185.