

Why Hand Made is Better

I think it is safe to say that we have all heard the old saying “you get what you pay for”. There are many many things you will purchase that it really won't matter the quality...Will it make a big difference if I buy my kids street chalk from the dollar store versus Micheals? No... ultimately you will get the same results...and likely a bit of a mess! BUT....there are also many things that are certainly worth the extra dollars...bird feeders being one of them.

Firstly, we are all...or should be!...trying to reduce our plastic use. Bird Feeders that are made from plastic CAN NOT withstand harsh elements ...the sunlight exposure alone will dry it out making it brittle and opaque. This causes the plastic to crack and fall apart not to mention look bad. Plus there is always the cold, wind, rain, snow, humidity...all too destructive for full year outdoor exposure year after year.

Next would be the animals, they destroy plastic and they can easily chew through it...from mice to raccoons...childs play for these pesky yard animals that want that seed!

Beyond elements and animals we have the sanitary issue that most don't think of. Bird Feeders need to be cleaned a few times a year so the birds that we so lovingly feed stay healthy...we can make them sick by offering seed in feeders that have not been sanitized. Plastic feeders can never be properly washed. Why are more and more products made from plastic? Because it is cheap.

Anything that is mass produced will never have the craftsmanship (that by nature comes with integrity and pride) that small batch items have. It won't be made with the time to ensure that each and every step has been executed and completed to the highest of standards. Hand made means more than just supporting a local family..which you would totally be doing, it means your are investing in the item. When you purchase mass produced products, you will have to buy that same item repeatedly. Here is an example...you spend \$200 on a bbq....it's fine, it cooks, it works...for 2 years. You spend \$1000 on a bbq..its fine, it cooks, it works...for 10 years. Like most things, you get what you pay for.

So as far as bird feeders are concerned...break it down like this.

Plastic (or wood, metal, etc) **Mass Produced** Bird Feeder

- You pay \$30 at the box store like Walmart, Canadian Tire, Home Depot.
- You put it out in the spring and by fall it is rusted, brittle and a little shabby looking from a few months out in the yard
- You prepare for winter by haphazardly cleaning it as it difficult to clean and fill it up. By spring your feeder is rusted further, falling apart, chewed into and no longer functioning
- Back to the box store for another \$30 purchase.

Hand Crafted Bird Feeder

- You pay \$80 at a local art and craft show where you where able to talk to the maker about all the functions and care instruction for the Feeder
- You put it out in the spring and by fall it is crystal clear and beautiful and other than needing a wash, exactly as you purchased it 6 months ago.
- you prepare for winter by easily washing the feeder in hot soapy water and white vinegar to clean it and fill it up. By spring your feeder is exactly the same as year ago and functioning just as it should be.
- Back to the art and craft show to buy one for a friend or perhaps something new from another hand made crafter.

We of course are bias as we are hand makers..but we are also consumers. So we too can plainly see the value in picking and choosing when spending more makes sense. Hand made will always be a better purchase when you care about the function and beauty of an item. Keeping your business local is a meaningful and powerful thing that you are in control of. Make the right choice as often as you can.

