EU harmonization of marketing regulations for growing media

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Paris International Seminar, 9 September 2009
• Who is EPAGMA?
• EU Growing Media Market
• EU Growing Media Trade
• Barriers to Growing Media Trade
• Harmonization of Growing Media Legislation
• EN Standards for Growing Media
• Conclusions
Who is EPAGMA?

- EPAGMA is the European Peat and Growing Media Association, representing the interests of peat and growing media producers at European level.

- EPAGMA has 17 member companies with peat and growing media operations across the EU.
• GM are used to provide an optimum rooting environment

• The GM industry has a turnover of 1.3 billion € accounting for 11,000 jobs across the EU member states. Main markets are D, I, NL, F, E and UK. GM are used throughout the EU and worldwide.
GM are an integral and crucial part of horticulture which counts:

- Over 173,000 full time jobs in ornamental horticulture
- Over 600,000 full time jobs in vegetable growing
Peat versus non-peat constituents for the production of professional GM (Total >22 million m³)

- Peat: 86%
- Non-peat: 14%
Amounts of constituents used in major producer countries for the production of GM for professional and hobby markets

- Peat
- Other organics
- Composted materials
- Mineral materials
Sizes of GM companies in the EU

- Large companies: 151
- Medium companies: 32
- Small companies: 337
- Micro companies: 14
Nordic Region exports: Denmark, Finland, Sweden
Germany exports
Benelux exports
Conclusion: Growing media trade is very intensive in the EU
• National legislation and labelling requirements are the biggest trade barriers for EU producers.

• The current situation is incoherent and leaves industry with no level playing field:
This means:

- non-transparency of products
- elaborate regulations in some countries
- high bureaucratic hurdles (e.g. registration process in I and PL)
- little or even no regulations in other countries
- different parameters to be labelled
- use of different analytical methods
- increase of analytical costs; increase in staff; disposal of packaging material
The growing media industry is committed to:

- working on the removal of existent trade barriers
- solutions to the increasing diversity of regulations in EU member states
- striving for a common legislation framework for GM across the EU
Supportive parties:

- all members of EPAGMA
- European Farmers-European Agri Cooperatives (COPA-COGECA)
- French Ass. for Soil Improvers and Growing Media (CAS)
- French Union of Enterprises for the Protection of Gardens and Amenities (UPJ)
- Italian Growing Media Association (AIPSA)
- Swedish Peat Producers Association
- Lithuanian Peat Producers Association
Continued...

- German Growing Media Association (GGS)
- Association of Finnish Peat Industries (AFPI)
- Belgian Potting Soil Federation (BPF)
- Dutch Association of Growing Media Producers (VPN)
- German Association of Garden Industries Dept. Substrates, Potting Soils/Constituents (IVG/SEA)
- Dutch Foundation RHP
- Others
CEN TC 223 Soil Improvers and Growing Media is in favour of EU harmonisation:

Resolution 144/2006 taken by CEN/TC 223 on 2006-06-01/02:

„Subject: CEN/TC 223......would support the development of a European Directive on growing media, based on the Standards of CEN/TC 223 in order to facilitate the trade in these products. The decision was taken by simple majority with 6 votes in favour, 1 against and 0 abstentions“
# Available EN standards and CEN Reports for Soil Improvers and Growing Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampling</th>
<th>Extraction of...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample preparation</td>
<td>...calcium chloride/DTPA (CAT soluble nutrients)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Determination of...</strong></td>
<td>...water soluble nutrients</td>
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<tr>
<td>...quantity</td>
<td>...aqua regia soluble nutrients</td>
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<tr>
<td>...pH</td>
<td>CR 13455: Guidelines for the safety of users, the environment and plants</td>
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<td>...EC</td>
<td>CR 13456: Labelling, specifications and product schedules</td>
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<tr>
<td>...ash/organic matter</td>
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<td>...physical properties</td>
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<td>...particle size distribution</td>
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<td>...moisture content</td>
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<td>...laboratory bulk density</td>
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### EPAGMA voluntary labelling scheme for growing media based on EN methods

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Major constituents:</strong> e.g. raised bog peat (H4-H5) and GWC</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Electrical conductivity:</strong> e.g. 50 mS/m (± 25 %)</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td><strong>pH (H₂O):</strong> e.g. 5.5-6.5</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Quantity by volume (atof):</strong> e.g. 70 litres</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Recommended use:</strong> e.g. for pot plants</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Amount of fertilizer added:</strong> e.g. 1.2 kg/m³ NPK-fertiliser</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td><strong>Producer:</strong> e.g. Growing Media Ltd.</td>
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</table>
Conclusions

- Major European standards for the sector have been introduced

- Industry sees EU-harmonization of growing media as an essential step towards a more transparent, consumer and producer friendly market

- Harmonizing the rules is an early opportunity for the new European Commission and the new European Parliament to reduce business costs and administrative burdens
Thank you for your attention!