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## **Growing media in Germany – an industry fit for the future?**

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### **Abstract**

Germany is the largest producer of growing media and potting soils in Europe. Every year, 8 to 9 million cubic metres of growing media are produced for domestic needs and for the worldwide export. Since the development of the 'Einheitserde' in the 60ies of the last century, the growing media industry continuously developed. But also, in future the sector is facing new developments. These include social megatrends, like neo-ecology and urbanization. Also, the politically endorsed withdrawal from peat extraction in Germany and the reduction of peat use in growing media and potting soils, due to climate change considerations will enormously challenge the sector. However, these changes do not only affect the German growing media industry, but also the horticultural sector. To support both economic sectors the Lower Saxonian Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection established the forum for 'Sustainable Replacement of Peat from Renewable Raw Materials for Horticultural Production'. This forum assembles the main stakeholders of politics, nature conservation, consulting, professional horticulture and growing media industry to discuss and develop possible solutions to face the future.