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Which importance for peat in professional and amateur growing media markets?

Growing media market is divided in 2 distinct markets: one dedicated to professionals, and the other to the general public, the last one meaning more important sales volumes.

Peat is an essential raw material for growing media manufacturers, especially in France. However, the French market is based on a relatively varied range of raw materials.

Due to these 2 major facts, which are structuring the French market of growing media, it seems interesting to analyze its long-term evolution.

Professional market

It is mainly based on products for market gardeners, horticulturists, nurserymen, local governments and landscape architects.

These actors show different expectations about growing media, related to life cycles of crops. For example, these cycles are long for nurserymen whereas they are short for horticulturists and market gardeners. That's why any growth retardation of plants means major economic impacts for these professionals. Peat then becomes very important for this users' category.

In 2006, peat meant 2/3 of the total volume of raw materials used in growing media, nearly all of it being imported. But peat contribution decreased by about 6% between 2003 and 2006.

Amateur market

It doesn't show the same technical issues. Growing media manufacturers then get a wider choice of raw materials.

The analysis of the volumes of raw materials used in general public growing media shows that peat only meant in 2006 1/3 of the total, 80% of it being imported. The volume of peat used decreased by nearly 20% between 2003 and 2006.

Conclusions

Peat is still essential for growing media, especially those for horticulturists and market gardeners. However, manufacturers have proved their innovation ability as peat share has decreased in volume for both amateur and professional markets.