

## PEAT

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise specified)

**Domestic Production and Use:** The estimated free on board (f.o.b.) mine value of marketable peat sold by producers in the conterminous United States was \$16 million in 2023. Peat was harvested and processed by 26 companies in 10 of the conterminous United States. Two companies were idle in 2023. The top five producing States were Florida, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, and Minnesota, which accounted for 98% of the peat sold. Reed-sedge peat accounted for approximately 87% of the total volume produced, followed by sphagnum moss with an estimated 10%. Domestic peat applications included earthworm culture medium, golf course construction, mixed fertilizers, mushroom culture, nurseries, packing for flowers and plants, seed inoculants, and vegetable cultivation. In the industrial sector, peat was used as an oil absorbent and as an efficient filtration medium for the removal of waterborne contaminants in mine waste streams, municipal storm drainage, and septic systems.

<b><u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u></b>	<b><u>2019</u></b>	<b><u>2020</u></b>	<b><u>2021</u></b>	<b><u>2022</u></b>	<b><u>2023<sup>e</sup></u></b>
Production	366	354	324	<sup>e</sup> 350	360
Sales by producers	420	388	386	<sup>e</sup> 510	510
Imports for consumption	1,160	1,390	1,630	1,440	1,100
Exports	46	46	37	43	46
Consumption, apparent <sup>1</sup>	1,400	1,690	1,970	1,750	1,400
Price, average unit value, f.o.b. mine, dollars per metric ton	25.77	26.07	38.52	27.49	31.70
Stocks, producer, yearend	280	288	235	235	240
Employment, mine and plant, number <sup>e</sup>	520	510	510	510	500
Net import reliance <sup>2</sup> as a percentage of apparent consumption	74	79	84	80	74

**Recycling:** None.

**Import Sources (2019–22):** Canada, 96%; and other, 4%.

<b><u>Tariff:</u></b>	<b><u>Item</u></b>	<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Normal Trade Relations</u></b> <b><u>12–31–23</u></b>
	Peat	2703.00.0000	Free.

**Depletion Allowance:** 5% (domestic and foreign).

**Government Stockpile:** None.

**Events, Trends, and Issues:** Peat is an important component of plant-growing media, and the demand for peat generally follows that of horticultural applications. Imports in 2023 were estimated to have decreased to 1.1 million tons from 1.4 million tons in 2022, and exports were estimated to have increased by 7% to an estimated 46,000 tons from 43,000 tons in 2022. In 2023, peat stocks were estimated to have increased to 240,000 tons from 235,000 tons in 2022. The world's leading peat producers in 2023 were estimated to be, in descending order of production, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Canada, Latvia, and Belarus.

Concerns about climate change prompted several countries to plan to decrease or eliminate the use of peat, owing to peatland's ability to act as a carbon sink. In 2023, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) distributed \$35 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act to fund conservation and restoration projects. NOAA announced the awarded projects in April, one of which was a peatland conservation project in Alaska that planned to purchase 55 acres of peatland and recharge its water levels. Doing so was expected to also alleviate coastal erosion and safeguard the water quality of the area.

Other projects in the United States were done in partnership among conservation institutions and local and Federal governments to restore peatlands in Minnesota and North Carolina. In Minnesota, research on how to restore peatlands was done in partnership with a conservation institute, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, two local universities, and a local nonprofit organization. In North Carolina, work was done with various Federal and State agencies and institutions to install water management infrastructure, including water control structures, to restore degraded peatlands.

Finland continued to work toward its goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2035. To achieve this, peat production was to be phased out in favor of other forms of noncarbon energy. In the first half of 2023, only about 2% of Finland's energy consumption was supplied by peat. Approximately 42% of Finland's energy supply was generated using renewable energy sources, whereas 26% was produced by nuclear energy.

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Ireland announced the end of its peat harvesting in 2021, as the country transitioned to alternative fuel sources, but peat briquet production was expected to continue until 2024. In 2023, the country released a 30-year climate plan that aims to phase out coal and peat-fired electricity generation. Instead, renewable energy sources were expected to generate approximately 80% of its electricity needs by 2030.

In March 2023, the United Kingdom announced a delay on the ban of peat-based growing media sales to amateur gardeners that had been expected to start by 2024. Owing to concerns from the peat sector, the ban will be delayed until 2026, with some exemptions delayed until 2030 to prepare for the phaseout.

**World Mine Production and Reserves:** Reserves for countries that reported by volume only and had insufficient data for conversion to tonnage were combined and included with “Other countries.”

	Mine production		Reserves <sup>3</sup>
	2022	2023 <sup>e</sup>	
United States	<sup>e</sup> 350	360	150,000
Belarus	<sup>e</sup> 2,300	2,300	2,600,000
Canada	2,390	2,400	720,000
Estonia	1,130	1,100	570,000
Finland	5,870	5,800	6,000,000
Germany	<sup>e</sup> 2,600	2,600	( <sup>4</sup> )
Latvia	2,440	2,400	150,000
Lithuania	473	470	210,000
Poland	<sup>e</sup> 1,100	1,100	( <sup>4</sup> )
Russia	<sup>e</sup> 1,400	1,400	1,000,000
Sweden	2,560	2,500	( <sup>4</sup> )
Ukraine	440	440	( <sup>4</sup> )
Other countries <sup>e</sup>	580	600	1,400,000
World total (rounded)	23,600	23,000	13,000,000

**World Resources:**<sup>3</sup> Peat is a renewable resource, continuing to accumulate on 60% of global peatlands. However, the volume of global peatlands has been decreasing at a rate of 0.05% per year owing to harvesting and land development. Many countries evaluate peat resources based on volume or area because the variations in densities and thickness of peat deposits make it difficult to estimate tonnage. Volume data have been converted using the average bulk density of peat produced in each of those countries. More than 50% of the U.S. peat resources are located in undisturbed areas of Alaska.

**Substitutes:** Natural organic materials, such as composted yard waste and coir (coconut fiber), compete with peat in horticultural applications. Shredded paper and straw are used to hold moisture for some grass-seeding applications. The superior water-holding capacity and physiochemical properties of peat limit substitution alternatives in most applications.

<sup>e</sup>Estimated.

<sup>1</sup>Defined as production + imports – exports ± adjustments for industry stock changes.

<sup>2</sup>Defined as imports – exports ± adjustments for industry stock changes.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix C for resource and reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.

<sup>4</sup>Included with “Other countries.”