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Recommendations for

Peat for horticultural and landscape use

ICS 65.080

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- Association for Consumer Research (ACRE)
- Association of County Councils
- Association of Playing Fields Officers and Landscape Managers
- British Society of Soil Science
- Department of the Environment
- Department of the Environment (Property Services Agency)
- Department of Transport
- Electricity Supply Industry in England and Wales
- Horticultural Trades Association
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- Institute of Terrestrial Ecology
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- Macauley Land Use Research Institute
- Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
- National Farmers' Union
- Peat Producers' Association
- Soil Survey and Land Research Centre
- Sports Turf Research Institute
- Thames Water
- University of Liverpool

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Foreword

This British Standard has been prepared under the direction of the Food and Agriculture Standards Policy Committee. It supersedes BS 4156:1967 which is withdrawn.

This revision takes account of recent developments, particularly regarding sampling, compacted bulk density, AFP air figure, the size of the market and the need for purchasers and users to be fully informed as to the nature of the peat.

Information about the uses of peat is given in Appendix A. Methods of test are given in Appendix B to Appendix G.

Amendment No. 1 changes lines 5 and 6 of A.1.

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Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 10, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

1 Scope

This British Standard gives recommendations for peat for horticultural and landscape use. It is not applicable to packages containing less than 2.5 L.

NOTE The titles of the publications referred to in this standard are listed on the inside back cover.

2 Definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard the following definitions apply.

2.1 peat

the partially decomposed plant material found in places such as bogs, mosslands, moors, marshes or fens where mineralization has been limited by climatic factors or oxygen deficiency and which has been partially dried and otherwise processed for horticultural and landscape purposes

NOTE 1 Peat-forming plants are sphagnum mosses, sedges, reeds and grasses, together with lesser amounts of heather and associated species, including other mosses. The type of peat is determined by the plants from which it is derived and the conditions under which it is formed. In their undisturbed state peat deposits contain about 85 % (*m/m*) to 95 % (*m/m*) of moisture, whereas partially dried and processed peat for general horticultural and landscape purposes has a lower moisture content, normally between 50 % (*m/m*) and 75 % (*m/m*). Undisturbed peat is relatively free from viable seeds and other plant material and from soil. Care should be taken to avoid contamination.

NOTE 2 Certain types and mixtures of peat are required for particular purposes. Information about the uses of peat is given in Appendix A.

2.2 lot

that amount of peat in a consignment or batch that can be assumed to be of uniform composition so that a representative sample may be obtained. A lot may be an amount of peat in bulk or a number of prepacked containers

2.3 increment

a quantity of sample taken at one time from one place in a lot

NOTE Increments may be mixed to provide a bulked sample or a laboratory sample.

2.4 AFP air figure

the volume of the pores containing air when the peat has been saturated with water and allowed to drain

NOTE A suitable method is described in Appendix G.

3 Sampling

3.1 Loose peat delivered in bulk

3.1.1 Time of sampling

Sampling should be carried out at the time of delivery. If this is not possible the peat should be kept in the condition in which it was delivered, and sampled as soon as possible.

NOTE Stored bulk peat may be sampled at any time except when taking samples for calculating the quantity delivered.

3.1.2 Size of sample

Seven samples, each of approximately 50 L, should be taken by scoop or shovel from equidistantly spaced areas around the pile of peat being sampled. Each 50 L sample should consist of at least 10 increments of approximately equal size taken 20 cm to 40 cm from the surface of the pile at about half the height of the pile above ground level and within 1 m of the point chosen for the 50 L sample. Each 50 L sample should be used separately to determine compacted bulk densities as described in Appendix F. After determination of compacted bulk density, the seven 50 L samples should be used to obtain a laboratory sample for the remaining tests.

3.1.3 Preparation of the laboratory sample

The laboratory sample should be approximately 8 L obtained by combining the seven 50 L samples, thoroughly but gently mixing them and coning and quartering the resulting bulked sample. Any lumps should be gently broken down by hand taking care to maintain the particle size.

NOTE The lumps to be broken are those formed after milling as far as can be ascertained.

3.2 Packaged peat

3.2.1 Number of packs

The number of packs to be sampled depends on the number of packs in a lot.

A lot should consist of not more than 10 000 packs. If the number of packs exceeds 10 000, lots of approximately equal size should be designated.

The number of packs from which increments are taken should be the square root (rounded up to a whole number if necessary) of the number in the lot, with a minimum of four packs. When there are only one to four packs, all should be sampled.