PEAT

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)¹

Domestic Production and Use: The estimated f.o.b. plant value of marketable peat production in the conterminous United States was \$15.0 million in 2011. Peat was harvested and processed by about 38 companies in 12 of the conterminous States. The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, which conducted its own canvass of producers, reported 59,800 cubic meters of peat was produced in 2010; output was reported only by volume. A production estimate was unavailable for Alaska for 2011. Florida, Minnesota, and Illinois were the leading producing States, in order of quantity harvested. Reed-sedge peat accounted for approximately 86% of the total volume produced, followed by sphagnum moss, 8%, hypnum moss, 4%, and humus, 2%. About 97% of domestic peat was sold for horticultural use, including general soil improvement, golf course construction, nurseries, and potting soils. Other applications included earthworm culture medium, mixed fertilizers, mushroom culture, 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.

Salient Statistics—United States:	<u>2007</u>	2008	2009	2010	<u>2011^e</u>
Production	635	615	609	628	605
Commercial sales	694	648	644	605	525
Imports for consumption	977	936	906	947	1,060
Exports	56	^e 57	77	69	39
Consumption, apparent ³	1,590	1,440	1,440	1,560	1,640
Price, average value, f.o.b. mine, dollars per ton	25.59	26.42	23.24	24.80	24.40
Stocks, producer, yearend	98	152	149	100	90
Employment, mine and plant, number ^e	625	620	610	610	610
Net import reliance⁴ as a percentage of					
apparent consumption	60	57	58	60	63

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2007–10): Canada, 97%; and other, 3%.

Tariff: Item Number Normal Trade Relations
Peat 2703.00.0000 Free.

Depletion Allowance: 5% (Domestic).

Government Stockpile: None.

PEAT

<u>Events, Trends, and Issues</u>: Peat is an important component of growing media, and the demand for peat generally follows that of horticultural applications. In the United States, the short-term outlook is for production to average about 600,000 tons per year and imported peat from Canada to account for more than 60% of domestic consumption.

Owing to poor weather conditions, the Canadian peat harvest was expected to fall well short of the 2011 season targets. Eastern Canada, where 60% to 70% of the peat is harvested in New Brunswick and Quebec, was the most affected.

World Mine Production and Reserves: Countries that reported by volume only and had insufficient data for conversion to tons were combined and included with "Other countries."

	Mine 2010	production 2011 ^e	Reserves ⁵
United States	628	605	150,000
Belarus	2,593	3,200	400,000
Canada	1,262	950	720,000
Estonia	965	970	60,000
Finland	6,460	4,800	6,000,000
Ireland	3,300	3,300	(⁶)
Latvia	1,119	1,000	76,000
Lithuania	327	330	190,000
Moldova	475	475	(⁶)
Norway	440	300	(6)
Poland	672	650	(⁶)
Russia	1,300	1,650	1,000,000
Sweden	2,550	2,500	(⁶)
Ukraine	597	450	(⁶)
Other countries	<u>670</u>	670	_1,400,000
World total (rounded)	23,400	22,000	10,000,000

World Resources: 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% annually 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 that country. Reserve data were estimated based on data from International Peat Society publications and the percentage of peat resources available for peat extraction. More than 50% of the U.S. peatlands are located in undisturbed areas of Alaska. Total world resources of peat were estimated to be between 5 trillion and 6 trillion tons, covering about 400 million hectares.⁷

<u>Substitutes</u>: 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.

eEstimated.

¹See Appendix A for conversion to short tons.

²Szumigala, D.J., Harbo, L.A., and Aldeman, J.N., 2011, Alaska's mineral industry 2010: Alaska Division of Geological & Geophysical Surveys Special Report 65, 83 p.

³Defined as production + imports – exports + adjustments for industry stock changes.

⁴Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes.

⁵See Appendix C for resource/reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.

⁶Included with "Other countries."

⁷Lappalainen, Eino, 1996, Global peat resources: Jyvaskyla, Finland, International Peat Society, p. 55.