PEAT

(Data in thousand metric tons unless otherwise noted)

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 $14 million in 2021. Peat was harvested and processed by 29 companies in 11 conterminous States. Florida, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, and Minnesota were the leading producing States and accounted for 98% of peat sold. Reed-sedge peat accounted for approximately 87% of the total volume produced, followed by sphagnum moss with 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.

Salient Statistics—United States:	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021[e]
Production	498	479	456	444	420
Sales by producers	515	545	556	524	540
Imports for consumption	1,150	1,200	1,160	1,390	1,700
Exports	30	37	46	46	38
Consumption, apparent[1]	1,520	1,670	1,480	1,780	2,000
Price, average value, f.o.b. mine, dollars per ton	27.55	25.88	24.59	24.74	25.00
Stocks, producer, yearend	222	196	280	288	290
Employment, mine and plant, number[e]	540	540	540	530	530
Net import reliance[2] as a percentage of apparent consumption	67	71	69	75	80

Recycling: None.

Import Sources (2017–20): Canada, 96%; and other, 4%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12–31–21
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. In the United States, the short-term outlook is for production to average about 420,000 tons per year and imported peat from Canada is expected to continue to account for more than 80% of domestic consumption. Imports for 2021 were estimated to have increased to 1.7 million tons from 1.4 million tons in 2020, and exports were estimated to have decreased to about 38,000 tons from 46,000 tons in 2020. In 2021, peat stocks were estimated to have remained about the same as those in the previous year. Based on estimated world production for 2021, the world's leading peat producers were, in descending order of production, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Latvia, Belarus, and Canada.

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PEAT

In many parts of the world, 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. Most of Ireland's peat production ended in 2021, as the country transitioned to alternative fuel sources. Ireland continued to produce peat briquettes but was expected to stop by 2024. The country's goal was to have at least 80% of its fossil-fuel sector employment transitioned to the renewable energy sector by 2025. In 2021, 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 2021, about 35% of Finland's energy consumption was supplied by peat and other fossil fuels. Several European countries, including Belarus, Ireland, and Sweden, were planning or implementing peatland restoration projects to help combat greenhouse-gas emissions and restore wildlife habitats. These initiatives were expected to decrease peat production across Europe in the future.

World Mine Production and Reserves: Reserves for countries that reported by volume only and had insufficient data for conversion to tons were combined and included with "Other countries." Reserves for Estonia and Latvia were revised based on information from company reports.

	Mine production		Reserves[3]
	2020	2021[e]	
United States	444	420	150,000
Belarus	2,590	1,900	2,600,000
Canada	1,400	1,300	720,000
Estonia	1,060	1,100	570,000
Finland	12,000	12,000	6,000,000
Germany	2,300	2,300	([4])
Ireland	1,300	—	([4])
Latvia	2,000	2,100	150,000
Lithuania	460	460	210,000
Poland	900	900	([4])
Russia	1,000	1,000	1,000,000
Sweden	2,400	2,400	([4])
Ukraine	680	330	([4])
Other countries[e]	350	350	1,400,000
World total (rounded)	28,900	27,000	13,000,000

World Resources:[3] 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 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.

[e]Estimated. — Zero.

[1]Defined as production + imports – exports + adjustments for industry stock changes.

[2]Defined as imports – exports + adjustments for industry stock changes.

[3]See Appendix C for resource and reserve definitions and information concerning data sources.

[4]Included with "Other countries."