

EPAGMA UPDATE

June 2005

EPAGMA celebrates its first anniversary

The European Peat and Growing Media Association, EPAGMA, has just celebrated its first anniversary. The Association was founded on 1 May 2004 – the historic date of the European Union's enlargement to ten new countries. When EPAGMA was founded a year ago it consisted of eleven peat and growing media companies from eight European countries, but it has now expanded to sixteen members from eleven EU countries, including both "old" and "new" EU member states. The Secretariat of the Association is established in Brussels.

Management of waste from extractive industries – derogation for peat

The European Commission has proposed a Directive on the management of waste from extractive industries. Thanks to EPAGMA lobbying, key members of the European Parliament (MEPs) support a derogation for peat along the lines of the agreement reached in April by Member State governments and supported by the Commission. The European Parliament's position in second reading is expected to be adopted in early September this year.

Peat and Horticulture in Europe: EPAGMA socio-economic study

In its contacts with key decision-makers and stakeholders at European level, EPAGMA is faced with questions regarding the size and importance of the peat and growing media sector in Europe. EPAGMA is therefore commissioning a socio-economic impact study from a leading research institute on the role of peat in the horticultural industry across the EU. This EPAGMA study will be of key importance in demonstrating the significance and specificity of the sector to EU decision-makers and other stakeholders.

Eco-label for soil improvers and growing media – peat to be included?

Peat products are excluded from the current EU eco-label criteria, which are valid until 2006. EPAGMA participates in a working group that is reviewing the criteria this year. The working group met for the first time in March and advised to consider restricted admission of peat in growing media, provided that sustainability and traceability is assured. EPAGMA continues to actively participate in the revision of the criteria and will be present at the next working group meeting on 20 June in Brussels.

EPAGMA brochure now available

The EPAGMA brochure has now been printed and is available to all stakeholders. Should you wish to receive one or several copies, please contact the EPAGMA Secretariat at info@epagma.org.

We also invite you to visit the EPAGMA website at www.epagma.org. The website includes key information on EPAGMA and its members, and will be updated with EPAGMA news on a regular basis.

EPAGMA meetings

- The EPAGMA Executive Board last met in Brussels on 31 May. The next Board meeting is scheduled for 15 September.
- The next meeting of all the EPAGMA members will take place on 21 September in Brussels.