AgroCoir® success in BEDDING PLANTS

AgroCoir is one of the best possible components for growing plants in flats and packs. It is all natural organic matter derived from the husks of Mexican coconuts which are low in sodium and very rich in potassium. This sustainable fibrous product is milled and screened for each horticultural application. It is free of sticks and wood and flows readily in mechanical systems. AgroCoir is resistant to excess compaction and decay making it an excellent component when air porosity is important. The ability to release tightly held water provides less production loss due to drying and longer shelf life. Incorporation of 30% or more in a blend gives great water management properties to the substrate and helps in bedding plant production, performance and sales.

BEDDING PLANT BLENDS

AgroCoir is used in three basic ways by bedding plant growers:

1. ADDING TO PREPARED BLENDS

Simply add 1 part AgroCoir medium grade to 2 parts of your favorite prepared blend and mix thoroughly before filling your containers. Adding some additional water (1 to 2 quarts per cubic foot) before mixing helps improve blend texture and maintain air porosity.

2. BLENDING WITH PEAT

A suggested peat and coir blend for bedding plants

35% AgroCoir medium grade
50% sphagnum
15% perlite
4 to5 lbs./Cu.Yd. Dolomitic lime
1 to 2 lbs. / Cu.Yd. complete starter fertilizer
4 to 8 oz../Cu.Yd. Surfactant
10 to 15 gallons water

Apply water unto perlite to reduce dust. Combine components and mix thoroughly until uniformly blended. Do not over mix.

3. USING 100% COIR

1 cubic yard of loose AgroCoir medium grade
2 to 4 lbs. of calcium nitrate
1 to 2 lbs. of super phosphate
½ to 1 lb. of Epsom salts
3 to -5 lbs. gypsum
4 to 8 oz. of trace element mix
10 to 15 gallons of water

Combine components and add water and mix thoroughly until uniformly blended. Do not over mix.

Note: These formulations are intended only as a starting point. For the greatest success in your operation adjustments should be made to the blends.

STORAGE AND HANDLING

Your AgroCoir blends are best used when freshly mixed. However, prepared mixes and pre-filled containers should be stored like other blends and should remain usable for many years when properly stored. The following suggestions will help maximize performance of your AgroCoir blends.

- Store in a clean dry area
- Do not over wet (saturate) the mix before storage
- Do not over compact moist blends
- Cover to avoid contamination
- Avoid contact by rodents and pests

WATER MANAGEMENT

AgroCoir blends have higher available water than sphagnum peat blends when saturated but they also have greater air porosity and increased drainage thus avoiding water logging and the diseases associated with wet substrates. When sufficient quantities of AgroCoir are incorporated excess watering is not a problem and over saturation from mechanical and manual watering systems is greatly reduced. Sub-irrigation works very well with AgroCoir blends. Use of a surfactant (wetting agent) is always recommended but often not necessary due to the hydrophilic nature of AgroCoir in greenhouse systems. Growers who prefer to dry down the crops between watering find the coir blends often take longer to reach wilt point but absorb and evenly distribute small quantities of water within the substrate.

FERTILIZER & pH MANAGEMENT

The high potassium levels provided in AgroCoir make nutrient management easy. For bedding plants use of 20-10-20 at a rate of 75 to 150 ppm N in rotation with calcium nitrate and an occasional application of Epsom salts will maximize performance. It is suggested that a 100 to 200 ppm N solution of calcium nitrate be used for watering in the crop at planting to encourage strong root growth. Repeated use of the calcium nitrate about once every two to three weeks is advised. Additional benefits are often observed from applications of Epsom salts applied at a rate of 1 to 2 Lbs. per 100 gallons every 2 to 4 weeks. Leaching the crop is seldom necessary but may be helpful on salt sensitive crops due to the high levels of potassium naturally in the AgroCoir. Slow release fertilizers can be incorporated at a little lower rate in AgroCoir blends due to the higher nutrient holding ability. Management of substrate pH is less critical in blends containing AgroCoir due to the higher C.E.C. buffer. However, it is still advised to use the normal routine of adjusting water alkalinity and selecting fertilizers to help maintain the desired media pH.

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