



# RHS PEAT- FREE POLICY

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Shows Exhibitors and  
Suppliers



# WHAT IS THE RHS PEAT-FREE POLICY – AND WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- The RHS is aiming to be 100% peat-free in all operations by 31/12/2025
- We stopped selling retail peat-based composts in 2019/2020
- Our gardens are currently 98% peat-free
- Peat-free fellowship established in 2022 to undertake trials of peat-free growing media on commercial nurseries, in partnership with industry stakeholders
- Trials on ‘difficult’ plants such as carnivorous and ericaceous subjects

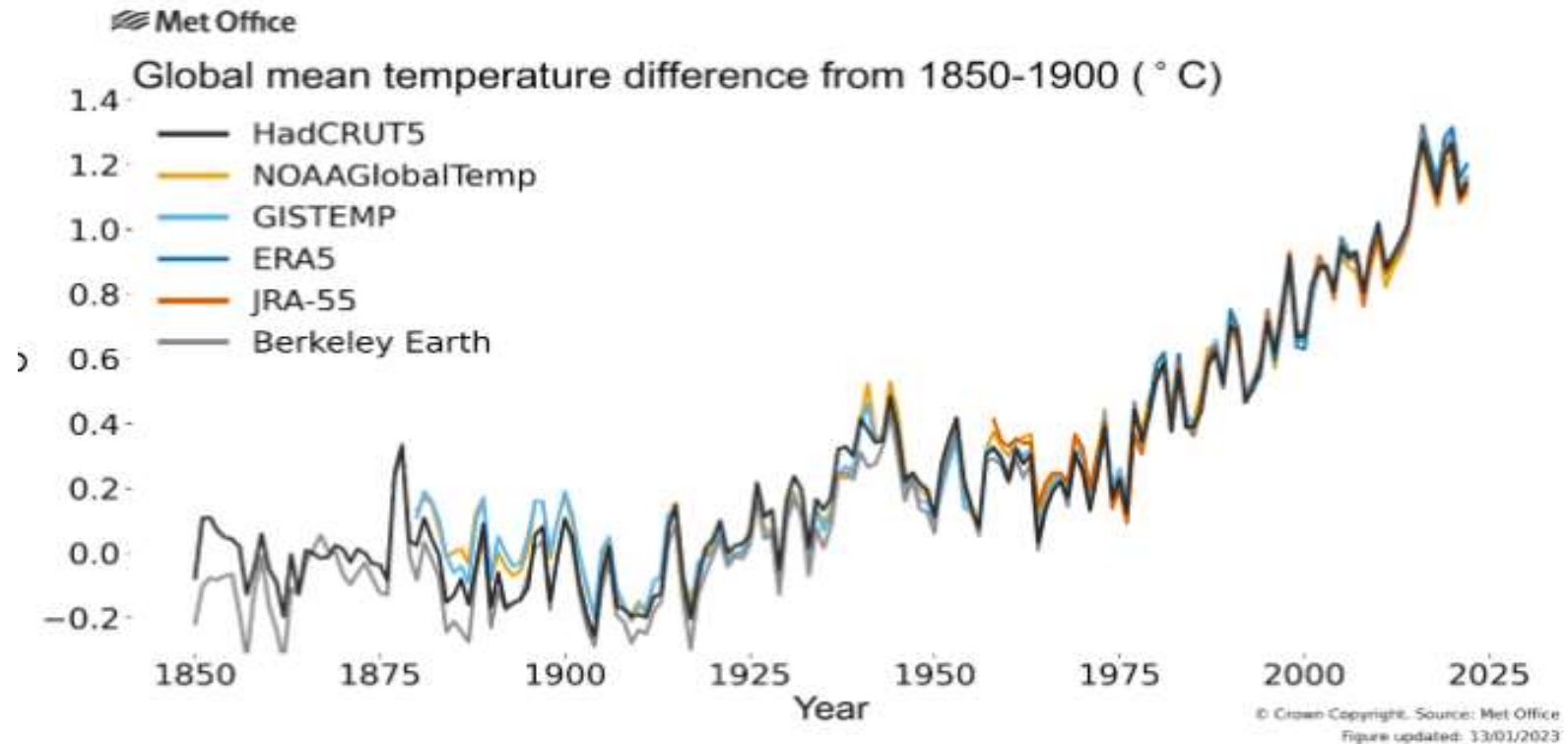
# WHY IS THE RHS DOING THIS?



- Climate Change causes extreme weather events
- Peat bogs cover approximately **3%** of the earth's landmass but they store **30%** of the carbon
- UK peatlands lock in an estimated **3.4 billion** tonnes of carbon
- Once peatland is degraded, e.g. through extraction, it becomes a source of carbon emissions

# WHY IS THE RHS DOING THIS?

- Once the carbon is released from peatlands – we can't recapture it
- The world's peat bogs store more carbon than all the world's forests
- Peatlands are crucial for water supply and flood mitigation and as a habitat for rare wildlife
- The UK has nearly 3 million hectares of peatland – 80% of which is damaged



*This plot shows the global temperature change from 1850 to 2022, compared to an estimated 1850-1900 baseline average temperature.*

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHOWS EXHIBITORS AND SUPPLIERS?

- This **only** applies to plants you are selling at RHS events or outlets
- **All** potting operations in your nursery for those plants must be peat-free after 01/01/26
- Any plug plants or propagation material purchased in 2026 must be peat-free for plants to be sold at RHS events or outlets – **100% peat free**
- If you are producing for other outlets or shows that are not 100% peat-free – that is fine as long as they don't come to ours!

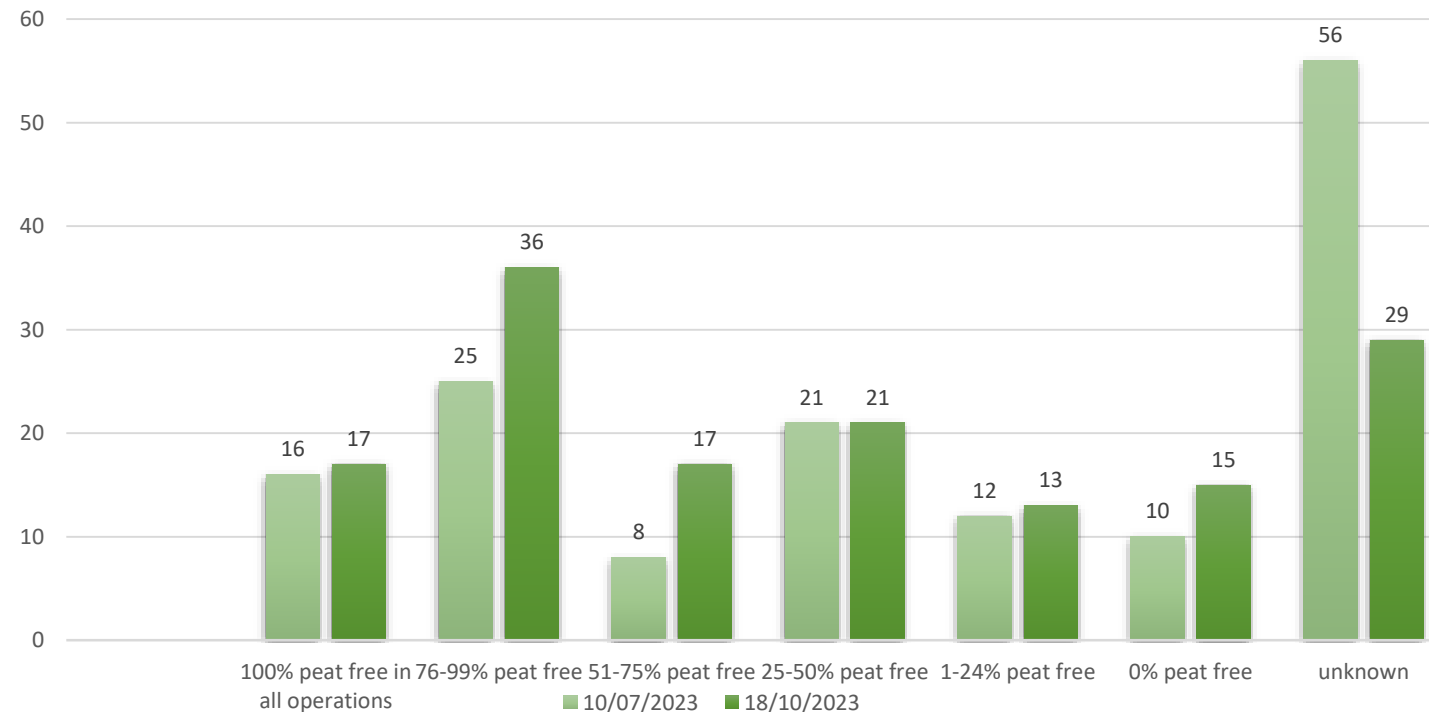
# LEGACY PEAT - DEFINITION

- Any peat that is **already in your production system** up to 31/12/25
- Age or size of the plant doesn't matter, as long as any potting action after 31/12/25 uses peat-free growing media
- Container-grown specimens will continue to have residual peat for many years – until they are planted in the ground!
- If you bought in plug plants in 2025 that contain peat, and pot them into peat-free in 2026, that is considered legacy peat and plants can be sold or exhibited through the RHS
- You will be asked to **declare** that the plants you are selling at RHS shows or outlets comply with our policy

# Here is the good news!

- 17 exhibitors are already 100% peat-free in all operations
- 35% of exhibitors are already compliant with our policy
- 25% more anticipate being compliant by 2026
- 21% are working towards this but need help! That is what we are here for 😊
- Nurseries on our 100% peat-free list are applying to be show exhibitors

Shows Exhibitors Peat Free Status Progress - 148 in Total



# What is the RHS doing to help?

- This event!
- RHS Peat-Free Fellowship – commercial trials with industry partners
- Workshops for growers planned around the country – RHS Bridgewater in February 2024
- Peat-free hub on website – knowledge sharing for growers
- Helping our suppliers and exhibitors to set up their own trials
- Sharing information as it becomes available
- Working with growers and industry on 'problem areas'