
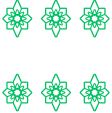
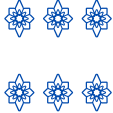
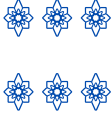
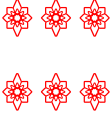



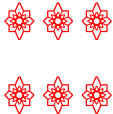

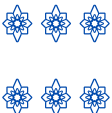
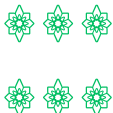


Nursery trials guide

1. Speak to different growing media suppliers to find the most suitable mixes for your crop and environment
2. We recommend a minimum of 6 pots per block
3. The control mix should be your normal growing media, and at least two different peat-free mixes should be trialed

Layout of trial:

Replicate 1	Replicate 2	Replicate 3
<p>Control</p> 	<p>Peat-free 2</p> 	<p>Peat-free 1</p> 
<p>Peat-free 1</p> 	<p>Control</p> 	<p>Peat-free 3</p> 
<p>Peat-free 2</p> 	<p>Peat-free 3</p> 	<p>Control</p> 
<p>Peat-free 3</p> 	<p>Peat-free 1</p> 	<p>Peat-free 2</p> 

Top tips

Pre-potting:

- Use growing media as soon as possible and store excess in a cool, dry place.
- Ensure all pots are clearly labelled with their growing media and date of potting.
- All plants should be potted at the same time, have the same irrigation method and be in the same environment for rainfall, humidity, temperature.
- Don't treat your peat-free mixes differently to your control.
- Use stock plants at the edges of your trial plot to avoid edge effects.

During the growing period:

- Analyse growing media with an Electrical Conductivity meter at the start, end and at intervals throughout the trial.
- Take measurements of all plants on the same day and time where possible, and at regular intervals throughout the growing cycle.
- Water according to plant requirements and to meet best practice. Wetting agents can be very useful with peat-free media, but make sure to also use on your control. They come as granules or liquid so can be added before or after potting.
- Lift pots to see water levels at the base of the compost. Peat-free mixes may look dry on top but can be moist lower down.
- Use additional fertiliser as required for all plants on a block, just as you would with your normal mix. If plants are outside, rain and temperature may affect leaching and controlled release fertiliser. Keep records of what was added and when.
- Be aware plants may root later in peat-free media.

Record card

Potting date

	Example	Control	Peat-free 1	Peat-free 2	Peat-free 3
Crop					
Irrigation	E.g. Wetting agent added as a liquid at Xml/litre				
Temp					
Feeding	E.g. Extra CRF added as top dressing at Xg/litre				
Chemical or biological control	E.g. Added Encarsia spp for whitefly - date				

Score card

Date

	Example	Control	Peat-free 1	Peat-free 2	Peat-free 3
Root growth	E.g. Good rooting at base				
Top growth	E.g. Average of 6 leaves per plant				
Flowers					
Saleable 1-5*					
Notes					

*Scoring categories

1 - waste

2 - poor quality unsaleable

3 - saleable but below normal standard

4 - saleable typical standard

5 - very high standard