

HTA Grower Technical Workshop Programme for 2024

Tips for establishment of crops in peat-free growing media

Methwold Village Hall, St George's Hall Complex, High Street, Thetford IP26 4NT (a.m.)

Darby Nursery Stock, Old Feltwell Road, Methwold, Thetford IP26 4PW (p.m.)

Tuesday 21st May 2024

Peat-free growing media requires greater levels of attention to detail relative to peat-based potting mixes. Crop losses and crop uniformity issues in the first couple of weeks post-potting can be significant due to the various factors which influence plant establishment, especially with plug plants from small cell sizes.

This workshop covers the key factors and their impact on crop establishment, important peat-free growing media characteristics, handling of young plant material, potting depths and impact of mulches, rooting stimulants, as well as irrigation and nutrient management in the early crop establishment stage.



Workshop agenda

Time	Content	Speaker
Methwold Village Hall, St George's Hall Complex		
09:00 – 09:30	<i>Coffee, tea, and refreshments</i>	
Presentations		
09:30 – 10:10	Building momentum towards peat-free production	Wayne Brough, HTA
10:10 – 10:50	Establishment of crops in peat-free growing media – grower and scientific viewpoints	Alastair Hazell, Darby Nursery Stock Ltd , Raghavendra Prasad, RHS
10:50 – 11:00	<i>Coffee, tea, and refreshments</i>	
11:00 – 11:40	Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria (PGPR) - benefits of incorporation into peat-free growing media	Robert Patten, Plantworks Ltd
11:40 – 12:20	Coir as main constituent of peat-free growing media – physical and chemical properties of different coir fractions and challenges around supply	Tom de Vesci and Raul Cabrera, Horticultural Coir Ltd
12:20 – 13:00	Practical advice and tips for improving crop establishment in peat-free growing media. Experiences from different crop sectors	Selchuk Kurtev, Zest Sustainable ICM
13:00 – 13:45	<i>Lunch buffet</i>	

Nursery tour (Darby Nursery Stock) and discussion		
14:00 – 14:15	Introduction to Darby Nursery Stock	Alastair Hazell, Darby Nursery Stock Ltd
14:15 – 15:30	Nursery tour of Darby Nursery Stock. Split into two groups	Alastair Hazell / Selchuk Kurtev
15:30	<i>Wrap up and depart</i>	

The number of attendees per business will be limited to two.

BASIS and NROSO continual professional development points will be available on the day of the workshop.

Addresses and directions:

<p>St George’s Hall Complex, 16 High Street, Methwold, Thetford, Norfolk IP26 4NT (a.m.) (highlighted in yellow on the map) <i>What3words: ///chosen.happy.seabirds</i></p>	<p>Darby Nursery Stock, Old Feltwell Road, Methwold, Thetford IP26 4PW (p.m.) (highlighted in yellow on the map) <i>What3words: ///pitch.staring.narrating</i></p>
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