

Impress Your Customers: HydraFiber® Improves Retail Shelf Life

LUCAS GREENHOUSES
Monroeville, New Jersey



Lucas Greenhouses first opened their doors in 1979 and have been growing ever since. With a focus on excellence, Lucas Greenhouses stays on top of the latest trends, technology, methods and efficiencies to ensure they provide the very best plants and service.

As peat moss shortages became more common, the Lucas Greenhouses team was looking for ways to reduce reliance on peat moss and perlite, while creating a growing media mix that was cost-effective, yet reliably available and consistent in performance. Lucas Greenhouses partnered with their long-time substrate supplier to dial in a mix using a finished blend of HydraFiber® and peat that allowed the Lucas team to continue producing premier plants. The result: plants that Lucas customers said were better prepared for the retail shelf.

HYDRAFIBER AT LUCAS GREENHOUSES

HydraFiber is a premier growing media that brings stability to media cost and reliable availability, all while delivering agronomic advantages. For growers wanting to do blending themselves, there are tower and bale options available with pure HydraFiber or blends of peat and HydraFiber. With their mixing line, the Lucas team uses this finished-form input

and other raw materials to create their mix. They started with a 20% inclusion rate, and gradually increased to 30%, creating a mix with optimum water-holding capabilities, superior drainage once saturated and faster rooting.

"We grew all of our mum crop in the peat/HydraFiber product from our supplier," head of operations at Lucas Greenhouses Joe Moore said. "I am very happy with the quality, and I am completely sold on HydraFiber."

The uniquely engineered fiber substrate comes highly compressed with a low bulk density designed to maximize shipping efficiency and storage. The unique fibers also significantly improve air porosity and water availability for plants.



"I AM VERY HAPPY WITH THE QUALITY AND I AM COMPLETELY SOLD ON HYDRAFIBER."

JOE MOORE, HEAD OF OPERATIONS,
LUCAS GREENHOUSES



BASIL IN LUCAS GREENHOUSES' CUSTOM HYDRAFIBER BLEND.

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HYDRAFIBER MEDIA MIX ENSURES STRONG, HEALTHY ROOT SYSTEMS.



HYDRAFIBER HELPS RETAIN MOISTURE AND PREVENT CHANNELING.



FINISHED GROWING MANAGER AT LUCAS GREENHOUSES JASON SZYMANSKI (LEFT) AND TWO SECTION GROWERS.

A REWARDING MEDIA MIX

With a few adjustments to the production process, the transition to a HydraFiber media mix was seamless. The Lucas team not only saw improvements in plant quality and rooting, but in water retention and drainage.

“When we made the transition, we had to tweak the filling slightly,” Moore said. “The HydraFiber team has a lot of resources that have helped with that. We learned that we have to have a bit more soil on the top of the pot than we were used to in order to accommodate the sponginess of the soil. Working to get it right is so rewarding when we see the nice root mass that our plants develop. HydraFiber delivers the soil airspace plants need to thrive.”

Due to HydraFiber’s superior water-holding capabilities, the team and customers modified their watering schedules.

“The top layer will dry out first,” Moore said. “However, if you can learn to keep the top layer dry, it helps to prevent shore flies that tend to like to live in plants that stay too wet.”

Lucas Greenhouses employees aren’t the only people to notice a significant improvement in soil quality and plant life.

Moore remarked, “One of my customers called and said, ‘I’m not sure what you did to the soil but it has been performing better for me. I notice that I water less for retail and that the plants hold up nicely on the shelf.’ Dry down seems to be less on the mums at retail. Due to the HydraFiber in the soil, somehow it makes more water available to the plant.”

Our thanks to Joe for talking with us about Lucas Greenhouses. If you’re a grower interested in learning more about HydraFiber trials, visit HydraFiber.com or reach out to us at hydrafiber@profileproducts.com or 800-496-0955.

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