

## Green Lake Nursery Dallas, Texas Case Study



### HYDRAFIBER®

In just two years, Kyle Carboni has moved every crop Green Lake Nursery produces over to HydraFiber® blends...and that's saying a lot as Green Lake grows pretty much everything under the sun, from 4-inch annual and perennial bedding plants, up to 7-gallon agaves to a broad range of flowering shrubs.

Kyle kindly shared a few minutes on a very busy spring afternoon to talk about Green Lake's experiences moving from purchased premix blends to mixing HydraFiber blends in-house. "When we initially looked at HydraFiber, we were looking at it to help us reduce our Canadian peat and perlite use. Both of those items have longer lead times and require a lot of storage, not to mention the cost," explained Kyle. "We wanted to use a more sustainable product so we trialed HydraFiber for several reasons: the 13:1 expansion ratio, because it allowed air space in the soil, and for its moisture retention. We liked what we saw and made the switch to HydraFiber Ultra 160WB."

*"HydraFiber® has made this crazy season better!"*

With shortages of peat, bark and perlite really crunching availability this year, Kyle has added another key benefit to his list. "We are not experiencing any HydraFiber shortages. In fact, HydraFiber has been consistently available to us this entire season when other raw materials have run out. We have changed our mix formulations to include more HydraFiber because it's the one material that we can continue to count on being available to us."

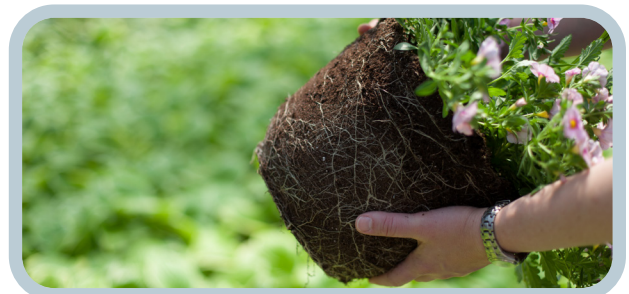
Being a highly compressed engineered-fiber material, HydraFiber's smaller storage footprint is a big 'plus' to Kyle from a management and supply line perspective.

"In terms of ordering, I bring in one HydraFiber truckload and it lasts the whole season. I'm not having to set up several truckloads like I do with peat, bark and other materials. HydraFiber takes up a lot less production yard space, which is important because our business is growing so rapidly. And since they make HydraFiber in their factory every day, my order lead times are much shorter."

*"We haven't found a crop yet that doesn't like HydraFiber."*  
- Kyle Carboni, Production Manager

Why the switch away from buying premix to mixing their own blends? "We needed more flexibility than we could get with the premix offerings. We did have to create a whole new production process, but we really like how adding HydraFiber to make our own blends has played out in tandem with adding the AgriNomix processing equipment to mix our own media. Soil costs have gone down and the results have been great in terms of how our plants have finished.

"Of course working with premix might look 'easier' than mixing your own soils because you just order and it shows up. Mixing our own soil, we had to learn how to get the same high-quality plants. I did a lot of work at the start and asked a lot of questions. The HydraFiber and AgriNomix teams were excellent to work with as we made the transition. We worked with them to get both our soil blends and the mixing equipment just right."



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"Now that we've settled in, the process is easy. We now have an initial setting when we are doing smaller pots and flats, and as the season progresses and we switch to larger pots, we've been raising our inclusion, especially in light of not having enough of our other raw materials. I have an Excel file that calculates for me so I know exactly what to order of every material based on the plants we will grow.



"HydraFiber has a lot of other positive features," says Kyle. "I think it's far more sustainable than perlite mixes. You end up not having to water as much because of the moisture retention. Of course, you want to make sure that the medium is properly hydrated before it goes through your flat filler, or whatever you're using to fill your pots. Otherwise it won't expand out to the level that you need it. We learned how to use the "Squeeze Method" to make sure our blends are at correct moisture consistency to not only ensure optimal fill but also have fewer wettability issues in production."

"Beyond that, we found that even though we could get it to the point where it was properly hydrated, where you would ball it in your hand and water droplets wouldn't come out but it would keep its form, we saw a little bit of settling below the lip of the pot." Kyle said, "The Profile Products team was very helpful with recommendations to tweak our equipment."



Kyle passes this along to every grower who has not trialed HydraFiber yet, "Try it! You could potentially save a lot of money. It will cut down on the amount of raw materials you need to stockpile on your production yard. And probably one of the most important aspects is the flexibility HydraFiber delivers. It has been consistently available this season when other raw materials have run out. After trialing HydraFiber, we knew we liked the product for a lot of different reasons. Our grower tested it out in the field and said he was happy with it. And from there, we're like, okay, we've done our homework. We can move forward with this."

## TIMELY TIPS FOR HYDRAFIBER SUCCESS

**Tweak fill as you change pot sizes.** Maximize the results you see from your filling equipment with simple adjustments to get the right compaction and eliminate void in your media in any size container.

Details at [hydrfiber.com/resources/how-fill-hydrfiber-blends](https://hydrfiber.com/resources/how-fill-hydrfiber-blends)

**Make sure your moisture is right.** Easily determine if your mix is properly hydrated using several different wettability tests including the squeeze method we recommended to Kyle Carboni, a float test and a moisture scale. Watch the video [here](http://bit.ly/3XE0w9E) at <http://bit.ly/3XE0w9E>.

**Up your inclusion rates, grow without interruption and increase your profits.** To offset other raw material shortages, many growers are successfully taking their HydraFiber rates to 50% for finishing their crop. Along with consistent availability, they're seeing better air space and water-holding capacity, reduced labor and water costs, and overall production savings. Our [Inclusion Rate Manual](#) tells you more.

**Visit the HydraFiber Resource Library for more tips.**

Our valuable toolbox at [hydrfiber.com](https://hydrfiber.com) lets you get online, get what you need and get growing! You and your team can access info on product selection, blending and filling practices, use of equipment and more. Be sure to check the site regularly as we continue to add content often. Let us know what else will make it easier for you grow and sell...and we'll find a solution!

Our thanks to Kyle for taking time to share Green Lake's experiences with HydraFiber. If you're a grower or blender interested in learning more and starting your HydraFiber trials, visit [hydrfiber.com](https://hydrfiber.com) for more information, or reach out to us at [hydrfiber@profileproducts.com](mailto:hydrfiber@profileproducts.com) or 800-496-0955.

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