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THE PEAT INDUSTRY

1954



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NOTICE

The annual reports prepared by the Industry and Merchandising Division of the Bureau of Statistics are divided into 3 volumes, as follows: Volume I — The Primary Industries, including mining, forestry and fisheries; Volume II — Manufacturing; Volume III — Merchandising and Services. The volumes are made up of parts, and the parts in turn are subdivided according to the industries which they comprise.

Volume I consists of the following parts:

- Part I — Mineral Statistics
- Part II — Forestry Statistics — Operations in the Woods
- Part III — Fisheries Statistics

Part I includes the following reports which constitute the complete series on Mineral Statistics of Canada. Individual reports are issued as the information becomes available; they are arranged in a form suitable for binding.

- A — General Review of the Mining Industry, 50¢
- B — The Gold Mining Industry, 50¢
- C — The Silver-Lead-Zinc Mining Industry, 25¢
- D — The Nickel-Copper Mining, Smelting and Refining Industry, 25¢
- E — The Miscellaneous Metal Mining Industry, 25¢
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- S — The Sand and Gravel Industry, 25¢
- T — The Stone Industry, 25¢
- U — Contract Drilling in the Mining Industry, 25¢

THE PEAT INDUSTRY

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During 1954 the producers of peat moss in Canada shipped 99,272 tons valued at \$3,018,622 (excluding the value of containers). The comparative figures for the preceding year were 81,654 tons valued at \$2,643,019. Shipments of peat fuel amounted to 6 tons valued at \$60, in 1954. Exports of peat moss, Irish moss, etc., amounted to 87,333 tons valued at \$4,499,952. There were 40 bogs or plants operated by 36 firms.

The harvesting of peat moss is a seasonal occupation, thus, the number of persons employed varies widely from month to month. The average number of employees during 1954 was 880 to whom \$1,736,002 were distributed as salaries and wages. Fuel cost \$87,842 and 2,247,598 k.w.h. of purchased electricity cost \$53,162. Process supplies and containers cost \$999,791.

Peat occurs in nature in two distinct forms, unhumified and humified, which differ markedly in

physical properties and in chemical composition. Unhumified peat is the dead moss of the sphagnum plant, only slightly humified. It is fibrous, elastic, of light greyish green or yellowish to light brown colour, becoming somewhat darker on drying. It has an absorptive value of up to twenty-five times its own weight. It is used as a bedding litter for animals, for horticultural purposes, and as a filler for fertilizers. Because of its elasticity and low heat conductivity, it is used for insulating and sound-proofing and as a packing material.

Humified or fuel peat in its natural state is dark brown to black, colloidal, plastic, homogeneous and somewhat elastic. It dries into a hard solid mass of a specific gravity higher than water. It has almost no absorptive value. Peat moss left in its natural state will humify in course of time and all fibrous matter eventually disappear.

TABLE 1. Principal Statistics of the Peat Industry, Significant Years, 1921-1954

Year	Establishments	Employees	Earnings	Cost of fuel and electricity at works	Cost of process supplies and containers	Gross value of products shipped ¹ during year, including containers (f.o.b. works)	Net ² value of production
						No.	
1921							
1929							
1931							
1933							
1937							
1939							
1941	22	667	486,116	17,327	145	646,408	628,936
1944	39	1,183	1,154,009	48,423	334,953	1,163,376	1,780,000
1946	41	1,391	1,562,689	102,004	569,157	2,920,812	2,249,651
1949	43	1,129	1,510,105	51,804	648,456	2,987,332	2,287,072
1950	39	1,118	1,530,866	113,558	653,552	2,868,202	2,101,092
1951	37	859	1,247,619	111,047	765,387	3,149,444	2,273,010
1952	36	1,042	1,601,825	97,671	835,269	3,257,057	2,324,117
1953	36	955	1,579,715	118,127	866,870	3,432,093	2,447,096
1954	40	880	1,736,002	141,004	999,791	3,965,572	2,824,777

1. Includes packing materials and containers.

2. Gross selling value less cost of process supplies, containers, fuel and electricity.

TABLE 2. Principal Statistics, by Provinces, 1953 and 1954

Province	Number of plants	Number of employees	Earnings	Cost of fuel, electricity, process supplies and containers	Production		
					Peat sold or used by producers		Selling value f.o.b. works ¹
					As fuel	Moss	
1953			\$	\$	tons	tons	\$
New Brunswick	2	139	144,020	125,664	—	8,323	316,572
Quebec	17	214	285,673	276,918	—	22,021	842,267
Ontario	2	12	36,296	16,901	—	1,319	65,734
Manitoba and Nova Scotia	2	31	85,628	26,038	—	2,235	120,409
British Columbia	13	559	1,028,098	539,476	—	47,756	2,087,111
Canada	36	955	1,579,715	984,997	—	81,654	3,432,093
1954							
New Brunswick	3	134	160,644	160,899	—	9,888	328,705
Quebec	19	252	326,807	325,636	—	27,784	1,032,481
Ontario	3	16	44,909	11,302	6	640	26,589
Manitoba and Nova Scotia	2	39	124,459	43,647	—	3,612	185,639
British Columbia	13	439	1,079,183	599,311	—	57,348	2,392,158
Canada	40	880	1,736,002	1,140,795	6	99,272	3,965,572

1. Includes value of containers.

TABLE 3. Production of Peat Fuel and Peat Moss, by Uses and by Provinces, 1953 and 1954

Province	Peat fuel		Peat moss							
			For horticulture		For poultry and stable litter		For other uses		Total moss shipments	
	Tons	\$	Tons	\$	Tons	\$	Tons	\$	Tons	\$
1953										
New Brunswick	—	—	7,438	211,687	885	35,259	—	—	8,323	246,946
Quebec	—	—	20,286	539,220	1,656	44,299	79	4,152	22,021	587,671
Ontario	—	—	1,319	52,535	—	—	—	—	1,319	52,535
Manitoba and Nova Scotia	—	—	920	35,136	1,315	63,003	—	—	2,235	98,139
British Columbia	—	—	41,266	1,402,262	6,490	255,466	—	—	47,756	1,657,728
Total	—	—	71,229	2,240,840	10,346	398,027	79	4,152	81,654	2,643,019
1954										
New Brunswick	—	—	8,648	185,419	1,240	32,002	—	—	9,888	217,421
Quebec	—	—	24,442	640,934	3,254	84,311	88	5,005	27,784	730,250
Ontario	6	60	640	19,809	—	—	—	—	640	19,809
Manitoba and Nova Scotia	—	—	616	28,981	2,996	119,171	—	—	3,612	148,152
British Columbia	—	—	48,479	1,642,472	8,869	260,518	—	—	57,348	1,902,990
Total	6	60	82,825	2,517,615	16,359	496,002	88	5,005	99,272	3,018,622

1. Does not include cost of containers which were valued at \$789,074 in 1953 and \$946,890 in 1954.

TABLE 4. Production of Peat Fuel, 1945 - 1954

Year	Short tons	\$	Year	Short tons	\$
1945	118	1,062	1950	58	580
1946	145	1,305	1951	50	1,100
1947	95	950	1952	32	320
1948	85	850	1953	—	—
1949	56	560	1954	6	60

TABLE 3. Production of Peat Moss, 1945 - 1954

Year	Short tons	\$	Year	Short tons	\$
1945	83,963	2,011,139	1950	75,195	2,256,870
1946	96,839	2,395,649	1951	76,809	2,433,008
1947	80,019	2,279,821	1952	74,899	2,443,765
1948	89,800	2,767,878	1953	81,654	2,643,019
1949	80,249	2,376,849	1954	99,272	3,018,622

TABLE 6. Exports of Peat Moss and Other Mosses, 1945 - 1954

Year	Quantity	Value	Year	Quantity	Value
	tons	\$		tons	\$
1945	76,409	2,625,514	1950	65,962	2,718,257
1946	81,940	2,892,563	1951	71,874	3,073,002
1947	72,918	2,634,003	1952	68,276	3,127,593
1948	77,924	2,946,923	1953	73,509	3,289,755
1949	68,390	2,554,388	1954	87,333	4,499,952

Note. The weight of peat moss shipped varies greatly depending on the moisture content. Weight is used as a unit of measure of production (shipments) owing to the fact that Canadian moss is shipped in various forms, including bales, bags, pads, etc., and at present there is no general standardization in Canada as to the size of these units.

TABLE 7. World Production of Peat, by Countries¹, 1949 - 1953

(Taken from the "Minerals Yearbook" of the United States Bureau of Mines)

Country	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Thousands of metric tons					
Austria ²	50	50	50	50	50
Canada:					
Agricultural use ³	73	68	70	68	77
Denmark	1,416	902	2,014	1,620	574
Finland:					
Agricultural use	19	7	7	250 ²	250 ²
Fuel	179	197	200	200 ²	250 ²
France	45	10	20 ²	15 ²	15 ²
Germany:					
East Germany ²	500	500	500	500	500
West Germany	1,203	1,200 ²	423 ⁴	1,151 ⁴	1,340 ⁴
Hungary ²	8	8	8	50	50
Iceland ²	3	3	2	3	2
Ireland	4,079 ²	3,114	3,992 ⁵	3,864 ⁵	3,850 ²
Italy	4	4	5	5 ²	5 ²
Japan	6	6	6	30	50 ²
Korea, Republic of	250 ²	200 ²	319	81	75
Netherlands	779	528	642	695	700 ²
Norway ⁴ :					
Agricultural use	20 ²	25	25	26	25
Fuel	382	361	328	332	335
Portugal	6	6	—	6	6
Spain	1	5	4	2	2 ²
Sweden:					
Agricultural use	106	99	103	120 ²	120 ²
Fuel	94	75	116	91	90 ²
U.S.S.R. ²	36,000	44,000	44,000	45,000	45,000
United States	118	119	176	191	185
Total (estimate)	45,000	51,000	53,000	54,000	53,000

1. This table incorporates a number of revisions of data published in previous chapters.

2. Estimate.

3. In addition, Canada produces less than 100 tons of peat for fuel, per year.

4. Including 280,959 tons for agricultural use in 1951, 337,497 tons in 1952 and 439,639 tons in 1953.

5. Includes 3,419 tons for agricultural use in 1951 and 4,471 tons in 1952.

6. Less than 500 tons.

TABLE 8. Employees and Their Earnings in the Peat Industry, 1950-1954

Year	Number of employees					Man-hours worked	Earnings			
	Administration		Workmen		Total employees		Administration	Workmen	Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female						
1950	44	12	971	91	1,118	...	154,335	1,376,531	1,530,866	
1951	42	15	750	52	859	1,295,177	131,410	1,116,209	1,247,619	
1952	38	13	919	72	1,042	1,550,590	165,704	1,436,121	1,601,825	
1953	33	13	867	42	955	1,600,087	170,184	1,409,531	1,579,715	
1954	36	17	802	25	880	1,432,578	177,767	1,558,235	1,736,002	

TABLE 9. Workmen in the Peat Industry, by Months, 1953 and 1954

Month	1953					1954					Total	
	At bogs		At dressing plants		Total	At bogs		At dressing plants				
	Male	Female	Male	Female		Male	Female	Male	Female			
January.....	212	4	195	3	414	166	6	186	—	358		
February.....	265	6	262	7	540	207	5	259	14	485		
March.....	262	4	293	10	569	331	10	306	12	659		
April.....	277	4	307	7	595	411	11	310	5	737		
May.....	460	20	236	6	722	386	19	304	2	711		
June.....	938	49	307	6	1,300	984	28	285	2	1,299		
July.....	1,582	126	447	29	2,157	1,135	61	381	16	1,593		
August.....	1,112	129	333	9	1,583	837	25	282	1	837		
September.....	961	24	288	5	1,278	736	24	254	1	736		
October.....	460	5	229	6	700	621	6	196	1	621		
November.....	239	3	203	8	453	392	5	182	1	580		
December.....	176	1	241	18	436	291	5	154	1	451		
Average	585	20	282	12	900	542	19	260	6	827		

Directory of Firms in the Peat Industry, 1954

Name of firm	Head office address	Location of bog or plant
Nova Scotia:		
Annapolis Valley Peat Moss Co. Ltd. ¹	Berwick	Berwick
New Brunswick:		
Atlantic Peat Moss Co. Ltd. ¹	4460, boul. Pie IX, Montréal, Québec	Shippegan, Lameque
Fafard Peat Moss Co. ¹	Shippegan	Shippegan
Québec:		
Beausejour Peat Moss ¹	St-Romuald	St-Lambert
Boulanger & Frères ¹	St-Fabien	Rimouski
Bourque & Fils ¹	St-Marc des Carrières	St-Alban
R. & B. Moss & Peat Products ¹	Box 243, Waterville	Waterville
Michaud, J.F.A. ¹	Isle Verte	Isle Verte
Premier Peat Moss Producers Ltd. ¹	Rivière-du-Loup	Cacouna, Isle Verte, Rivière-du-Loup
Quebec Peat Moss Co. ¹	St. Guillaume d'Upton	St. Bonaventure
Roy, Ernest ¹	St-Fabien	St-Fabien
Roy, Romeo ¹	St-Ulric	St-Ulric
Saguenay Peat Moss Co. Ltd. ¹	582, boul. Lamarche, Chicoutimi	Bagot Twp.
Shawinigan Chemicals Ltd. ⁴	600 Dorchester St. W., Montreal	Lac A la Tortue
Tourbières Rivière-Ouelle, Les ¹	Ste-Anne de la Pocatière	Rivière-Ouelle
Tourbière de Pointe-au-Père ¹	Mont Joli	Pointe-auPère
Tourbière de St-Fabien ¹	St-Fabien	St-Fabien
Tourbière de Rivière Blanche ²	Rivière Blanche	Matane Co.
Ontario:		
Atkins & Durbrow (Erie) Ltd. ¹	24 Dorothy St., Welland	Wainfleet Twp.
Humar Corporation, Ltd. ³	Suite 1010-100 Adelaide St. W., Toronto	Beverley Twp.
Leasa Peat Works ^{2,4}	12 Rankin St., Stratford	Ellice Twp.
Manitoba:		
Western Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	New Westminster, British Columbia	Moss Spur
British Columbia:		
Acme Peat Products Ltd. ¹	789 W.Pender St., Vancouver	Lulu Island
Atkins & Durbrow Ltd. ¹	532 Burrard St., Vancouver	Ladner
Byrneroad Peat Farm ¹	2707 McKay Ave., South Burnaby	Burnaby South
Blundell Peat Co. Ltd.	806 No. 6 Road, Vancouver	No. 6 Road
Coast Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	736 Granville St., Vancouver	Pitt Meadows
Columbia Products Ltd. ¹	Box 699, New Westminster	Lulu Island
Industrial Peat Co. ¹	Box 329, New Westminster	Delta Municipality
Lulu Island Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	R. R. 2, Vancouver	Lulu Island
Meadowland Farms Ltd. ¹	3495 Marine Drive, South Burnaby	South Burnaby
Northern Peat Moss Co. Ltd. ¹	532 Burrard St., Vancouver	Lulu Island
North American Peat ¹	10th & Alma, Vancouver	Burnaby
Richmond Peat Products Limited ¹	532 Burrard St., Vancouver	Lulu Island
Western Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	Box 699, New Westminster	Lulu Island

1. Produces moss.

2. Active but no shipments made.

3. Produces humus.

4. Produces peat fuel.

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