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26-212

ANNUAL

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SEP 21 1960



CANADA

THE PEAT INDUSTRY
1959



Published by Authority of
The Honourable Gordon Churchill, Minister of Trade and Commerce

DOMINION BUREAU OF STATISTICS
Industry and Merchandising Division

September, 1960
6514-521

Price 25 cents

PUBLICATIONS ON MINERAL STATISTICS

Dominion Bureau of Statistics
Ottawa, Canada

Catalogue number	Name of publication	Price
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26 - 209	B - The Gold Mining Industry75
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THE PEAT INDUSTRY

1959

During 1959 the Canadian producers of peat moss shipped 184,049 short tons valued at \$6,226,688. Comparable data for the preceding year was 149,401 tons valued at \$4,778,860. The valuations do not include the cost of containers. There were no shipments of peat fuel during recent years. Exports of peat moss, Irish moss, etc. during 1959 amounted to 161,236 tons valued at \$8,976,389. The bogs in British Columbia shipped 78,815 tons of peat moss and those in Quebec shipped 50,578. Peat moss was also harvested in Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

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 1959 was 1,333 to whom \$2,659,836 were distributed as salaries and wages. Fuel cost \$153,438 and 5,083,675 kwh. of purchased electricity cost \$85,440. Process supplies and containers cost \$1,731,682.

Peat moss, the dead fibrous moss produced from peat bogs, is valuable because of its high

absorbent capacity for liquids and gases, high resistance to decomposition, and low heat conductivity. Because of these properties it makes an excellent stable litter for horses and cattle, and it is especially valuable for poultry litter. Although not a fertilizer in itself, it is a good soil conditioner as it loosens up a clay soil, helps to maintain the moisture in a light sandy soil, and adds valuable organic matter to depleted soils. The main use of peat moss is horticultural, for better lawns, more luxuriant flowers, and stronger plants and shrubs are obtainable through its addition to the soil. It makes excellent packing material for the shipment of perishable fruits, vegetables and cut flowers. It is useful for making compost and as a diluent and carrier in the application of artificial fertilizers.

Technical information on peat moss appears in the Mines Branch Information Circular 1C 104 published by the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, Ottawa.

TABLE 1. Principal Statistics of the Peat Industry, Significant Years, 1921 - 59

Year	Estab- lish- ments	Em- ployees	Salaries and wages	Cost of fuel and electricity at works	Cost of process supplies and containers	Gross value of products shipped during year, including containers (f.o.b. works) ¹	Net value of production ²
	number				dollars		
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	2,163,376	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
1951	37	859	1,247,619	111,047	765,387	3,149,444	2,273,010
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
1955	39	1,180	2,109,166	165,496	1,184,589	4,651,411	3,301,326
1956	38	1,274	2,538,885	175,351	1,251,702	5,451,305	4,024,252
1957	35	1,168	2,542,210	182,987	1,283,093	5,898,696	4,432,616
1958	38	1,447	2,484,732	180,976	1,406,515	6,185,375	4,559,203
1959	38	1,333	2,659,836	238,878	1,732,682	7,908,662	5,937,102

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, 1958 and 1959

Province	Plants	Em- ployees	Earnings	Cost of fuel, electricity, process supplies and containers	Production		Selling value f.o.b. works ¹	
					Peat sold or used by producers			
					As fuel	Moss		
		number	dollars			tons	\$	
1958								
Nova Scotia	}	5	220	395,364	281,705	—	23,434	990,680
New Brunswick		17	418	708,953	435,134	—	43,669	1,447,222
Quebec	}	2	109	268,661	196,436	—	14,470	734,400
Ontario		14	700	1,111,754	712,897	—	67,828	3,013,073
Manitoba		38	1,447	2,484,732	1,626,172	—	149,401	6,185,375
British Columbia								
Canada								
1959								
Nova Scotia	}	5	271	469,584	281,714	—	27,492	1,154,072
New Brunswick		19	426	763,026	524,068	—	50,578	1,760,157
Quebec	}	2	95	288,746	302,338	—	27,164	1,227,190
Ontario		12	541	1,138,480	862,440	—	78,815	3,767,243
Manitoba		38	1,333	2,659,836	1,970,560	—	184,049	7,908,662
British Columbia								
Canada								

¹ Includes value of containers.

TABLE 3. Production of Peat Fuel and Peat Moss, by Uses and by Provinces, 1958 and 1959

Province	Peat fuel		Peat moss								
			For horticulture		For poultry and stable litter		For other uses		Total moss shipments		
	Tons	Value	Tons	Value	Tons	Value	Tons	Value	Tons	Value ¹	
1958		\$		\$		\$		\$		\$	
Nova Scotia	}	—	—	22,045	698,385	1,389	28,827	—	—	23,434	727,212
New Brunswick		—	—	40,631	980,490	2,992	74,398	46	1,923	43,669	1,056,811
Quebec	}	—	—	11,612	419,134	2,858	141,017	—	—	14,470	560,151
Ontario		—	—	65,970	2,376,299	1,858	58,387	—	—	67,828	2,434,686
Manitoba		—	—	140,258	4,474,308	9,097	302,629	46	1,923	149,401	4,778,860
British Columbia											
Totals											
1959											
Nova Scotia	}	—	—	25,454	807,001	2,038	83,054	—	—	27,492	890,055
New Brunswick		—	—	47,348	1,196,212	3,164	81,029	66	4,840	50,578	1,282,081
Quebec	}	—	—	23,854	803,089	3,310	141,840	—	—	27,164	944,929
Ontario		—	—	77,168	3,057,726	1,647	51,897	—	—	78,815	3,109,623
Manitoba		—	—	173,824	5,864,028	10,159	357,820	66	4,840	184,049	6,226,688
British Columbia											
Totals											

¹ Does not include cost of containers which were valued at \$1,406,515 in 1958 and \$1,681,974 in 1959.

TABLE 4. Production of Peat Fuel, 1949-59

Year	Short tons	Value	Year	Short tons	Value
		\$			\$
1949	56	560	1955	—	—
1950	58	580	1956	—	—
1951	50	1,100	1957	—	—
1952	32	320	1958	—	—
1953	—	—	1959	—	—
1954	6	60			

TABLE 5. Production of Peat Moss, 1950 - 59

Year	Short tons	Value	Year	Short tons	Value
		\$			\$
1950	75,195	2,256,870	1955	117,579	3,485,287
1951	76,809	2,433,008	1956	128,054	4,240,714
1952	74,899	2,443,765	1957	137,747	4,734,504
1953	81,654	2,643,019	1958	149,401	4,778,860
1954	99,272	3,018,622	1959	184,049	6,226,688

TABLE 6. Exports of Peat Moss and Other Mosses, 1950 - 59

Year	Quantity	Value	Year	Quantity	Value
		\$			\$
1950	65,962	2,718,257	1955	102,997	5,388,362
1951	71,874	3,073,002	1956	113,346	6,068,845
1952	68,276	3,127,593	1957	117,877	6,668,723
1953	73,509	3,289,755	1958	129,138	7,507,463
1954	87,333	4,499,952	1959	161,236	8,976,389

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

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

Country	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
	thousand short tons				
Austria ²	45	45	45	45	40
Canada:					
Agricultural use ³	118	128	138	149	181
Denmark	785	778	809	424	463
Finland:					
Agricultural use	9 ²	19 ²	19 ²	8	6
Fuel	176	158	208	150	160
France:					
Agricultural use	33	45	45 ²	22 ²	28 ²
Fuel	2	6	6 ²	3 ²	3 ²
Germany:					
East ²	550	550	550	550	550
West:					
Agricultural use	492	659	780	819	880 ²
Fuel	1,153	1,005	808	649	772
Hungary ²	65	65	65	65	65
Ireland:					
Agricultural use	10	9	14	10	11 ²
Fuel	3,937	4,006	4,375	2,491	4,805
Israel, agricultural use	43	42	22	28 ²	44 ²
Japan ¹	75	75	80	80	80
Korea, Republic of	448	288	269	141	140 ²
Netherlands ²	500	500	500	500	500
Norway:					
Agricultural use	31	29	28	33 ²	33 ²
Fuel	263	263	260 ²	64	66
Poland	718	729	400	400 ²	400 ²
Sweden:					
Agricultural use	71	82	80	71	70 ²
Fuel	287	275	314	281	275 ²
U.S.S.R. ²	56,000	49,400	60,500	58,200	60,600 ²
United States, agricultural	274	292	316	328	419
World totals (estimate)⁴	66,090	59,450	70,630	65,510	70,600

¹ This table incorporates a number of revisions of data published previously.

² Estimate.

³ In addition, Canada produces a negligible amount of peat fuel.

⁴ Iceland, Italy and Spain produced a negligible amount of peat fuel.

TABLE 8. Employees and their Earnings in the Peat Industry, 1955-59

Year	Employees					Man-hours worked	Earnings		
	Administration		Workmen		Total employees		Administration	Workmen	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female					
	number					dollars			
1955	43	19	1,072	46	1,180	1,913,383	188,146	1,921,020	2,109,166
1956	40	17	1,167	50	1,274	2,223,615	215,724	2,323,161	2,538,885
1957	50	15	1,060	43	1,168	2,365,467	254,685	2,287,525	2,542,210
1958	47	22	1,301	77	1,447	2,298,171	214,159	2,270,573	2,484,732
1959	54	25	1,207	47	1,333	2,221,117	269,908	2,389,928	2,659,836

TABLE 9. Workmen in the Peat Industry, by Months, 1958 and 1959

Month	1958					1959				
	At bogs		At dressing plants		Total	At bogs		At dressing plants		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female		Male	Female	Male	Female	
	number									
January	246	—	231	32	509	255	14	197	13	479
February	274	—	348	37	659	335	3	359	13	710
March	409	6	472	36	723	362	4	472	10	848
April	289	11	493	25	818	495	26	496	9	1,026
May	1,368	102	567	13	2,050	818	19	500	19	1,356
June	1,761	100	477	14	2,352	1,419	59	437	18	1,933
July	1,850	246	479	9	2,584	1,779	157	464	13	2,413
August	1,205	191	487	11	1,894	1,414	104	456	23	1,997
September	1,132	23	438	10	1,603	1,075	8	390	15	1,488
October	984	11	412	8	1,415	735	4	313	15	1,067
November	537	19	327	6	889	344	—	202	4	550
December	264	1	277	21	563	234	—	156	5	395
Average	886	59	415	18	1,378	846	34	361	13	1,254
<i>Man-hours worked</i>						2,175,372				
						2,083,511				

TABLE 10. Fuel and Electricity Used in the Peat Industry, 1959

Kind	Quantity	Cost at plant
		\$
Bituminous coal (a) From Canadian mines	short ton	5
(b) Imported	—	106
Sub-bituminous coal (from Alberta mines only)	short ton	4,608
Anthracite coal	—	45,624
Lignite coal	—	—
Coke (for fuel only)	—	—
Gasoline, (includes gasoline used in cars and trucks)	Imp. gal.	219,987
Kerosene or coal oil	"	807
Fuel oil	"	259,617
Wood (cords of 128 cubic feet of piled wood)	cord	7
Gas (a) Liquefied petroleum gases (propane, etc.)	—	—
(b) Other manufactured gas	—	—
(c) Natural gas	M cu. ft.	12,133
Other fuel	—	—
Electricity purchased for power and lighting	kwh.	5,083,675
Electricity purchased for other purposes	—	—
Totals (cost only)	238,878
Electricity generated (a) For own use	—	—
(b) For sale	—	—

... Figures not applicable.

Directory of Firms in the Peat Industry, 1959

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
Bog-Trotters Ltd. ¹	Grand Falls	Centreville
Faffard Peat Moss Co. ¹	Shippegan	Shippegan
Québec:		
Boulangier & Frères ¹	St-Fabien	Rimouski
Bourque & Fils Enreg. ¹	St-Marc-des-Carières	St-Alban
Cornier, Eloi	Bécancourt	Nicolet
Fortin, Jean J. Mme ¹	582, boul. Lamarche, Chicoutimi	La Baleine
Lerclerc Peat Moss	La Baleine	Charlevoix
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
R. & B. Moss & Peat Products ¹	Box 243, Waterville	Waterville
Roy, Benoit ¹	Rivière Blanche	Matanne Co.
Roy, Ernest ¹	St-Fabien	St-Fabien
Roy, Roméo ¹	St-Ulric	St-Ulric
Saguenay Peat Moss Co. Ltd. ²	582, boul. Lamarche, Chicoutimi	Bagot Twp.
Shawinigan Chemicals Ltd. ²	600 Dorchester St. W., Montreal	Lac à la Tortue
Tourbière de Pointe-au-Père ¹	Mont-Joli	Pointe-au-Père
Tourbières Rivière-Ouelle, Les ¹	Rivière-Ouelle	Rivière-Ouelle
Tourbière de St-Fabien ¹	St-Fabien	St-Fabien
Théberge, Henri ¹	St-Fabien	St-Fabien
Ontario:		
Atkins & Durbrow (Erie) Ltd. ¹	Box 55 Port Colborne	Wainfleet Twp.
Manitoba:		
Western Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	New Westminster, British Columbia	Moss Spur
British Columbia:		
Acme Peat Products Ltd. ¹	687 # 7 Road R.R. 2, Richmond	Lulu Island
Atkins & Durbrow Ltd. ¹	1158 Mellville St., Vancouver	Ladner
Blundell Peat Co. Ltd.	806 No. 6 Road, Vancouver	No. 6 Road
Byrneroad Peat Farm ¹	6350 McKay Ave., South Burnaby	Burnaby South
Coast Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	736 Granville St., Vancouver	Pitt Meadows
Industrial Peat Products Ltd. ¹	Box 238, New Westminster	Delta Municipality
Kootenay Peat Products Ltd. ²	2nd St., Cranbrook	Kootenay District
Lulu Island Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	261 No. 7 Road, R.R. 2, Vancouver	Lulu Island
Meadowland Farms Ltd. ¹	5025 Marine Drive, South Burnaby	South Burnaby
North American Peat Ltd. ¹	10th & Alma, Vancouver	Burnaby
Northern Industries Ltd. ¹	245 # 8 Road, Richmond	Richmond
Richmond Peat Products Ltd. ¹	245 No. 8 Road, Richmond	Lulu Island
Western Peat Co. Ltd. ¹	Box 88 New Westminster	Lulu Island

¹ Produces moss.² Active but no shipments made.³ Produces humus.

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