

PRESS RELEASE

THE FIRST HORTICERT-CERTIFICATION GOES TO THE GROWING MEDIA PRODUCTION SITE GEBRÜDER MAYER OF THE REWE GROUP

Cologne, September 2024

We are pleased to announce that Erdenwerk Gebrüder Mayer, the growing media producer of the German DIY store toom Baumarkt, is the first company in Germany to pass the HORTICERT audit successfully and thus receive official HORTICERT certification.

HORTICERT is an international certification system that verifies ecological, social and economic sustainability requirements for the production of peat substitutes, potting soils and growing media. The implementation of the new certification system started at the beginning of this year. Many of our pilot partners from last year have already started the certification process, and toom is setting an important milestone as a pioneer. Currently, certification of upstream suppliers of toom is ongoing. From 2025, HORTICERT-certified potting soils will therefore be available in many toom DIY stores and REWE stores. Consequently, HORTICERT-certified potting soils will be available in many toom and REWE stores from 2025. *„At toom, the topic of peat phase-out has been a key concern for us for many years. Already since 2016 we have been working on the consistent transition of all our potting soils to peat-free alternatives and by 2025 we will be completely peat-free in this segment, both for our own brands and private label,”* explains Dominique Rotondi, Managing Director Purchasing and Logistics at toom Baumarkt and Managing Director of Gebrüder Mayer. *„The development of a certification system for peat substitutes is a critical element in the promotion of more sustainable alternatives to peat. We are proud to be significantly involved in this process and to be the first company to receive certification through Gebrüder Mayer.”*

The ‘HORTICERT’ project was initiated as part of the Climate Protection Plan 2050 and the German government's peat reduction strategy. The strategy aims to end the use of peat in the horticultural hobby sector by 2026 and to reduce it as far as possible in professional horticulture by 2030. To facilitate this objective, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) has commissioned Meo Carbon Solutions GmbH to develop a corresponding certification system, which is being developed in a multi-stakeholder approach under the direction of the Agency for Renewable Resources (FNR).

By certifying peat substitutes, HORTICERT is playing a crucial role in advancing the goal of peat reduction and ensuring that sustainable, climate-friendly alternatives are adopted across the industry.

Please send a sample copy of any reprints to info@horticert.org. Many thanks.