



Growing Media Europe

*Delivering on the
European Green Deal and
defining our future vision*

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Baltic Peat Producers Forum

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Growing Media Europe - European association for producers of growing media and soil improver



- ✓ Focus on end product
- ✓ Representing ALL raw materials
- ✓ Science-based
- ✓ Secretariat: 2 employees



- NGOs
- Related industry sectors
- Media
- Science



The GME Board Members



Thanja van Dongen,
Zelta Zeme



Moritz Böcking,
Klasmann-Deilmann



Rafael Bolinches,
Projar



Thorleif Hals,
Jiffy



Vesa Tempakka,
Kekkilä-BVB



When a picture says it all...

The European Green Deal - Umbrella for several (countless...?) legislative and non-legislative) initiatives on EU - level



Big goals and numerous links to our sector

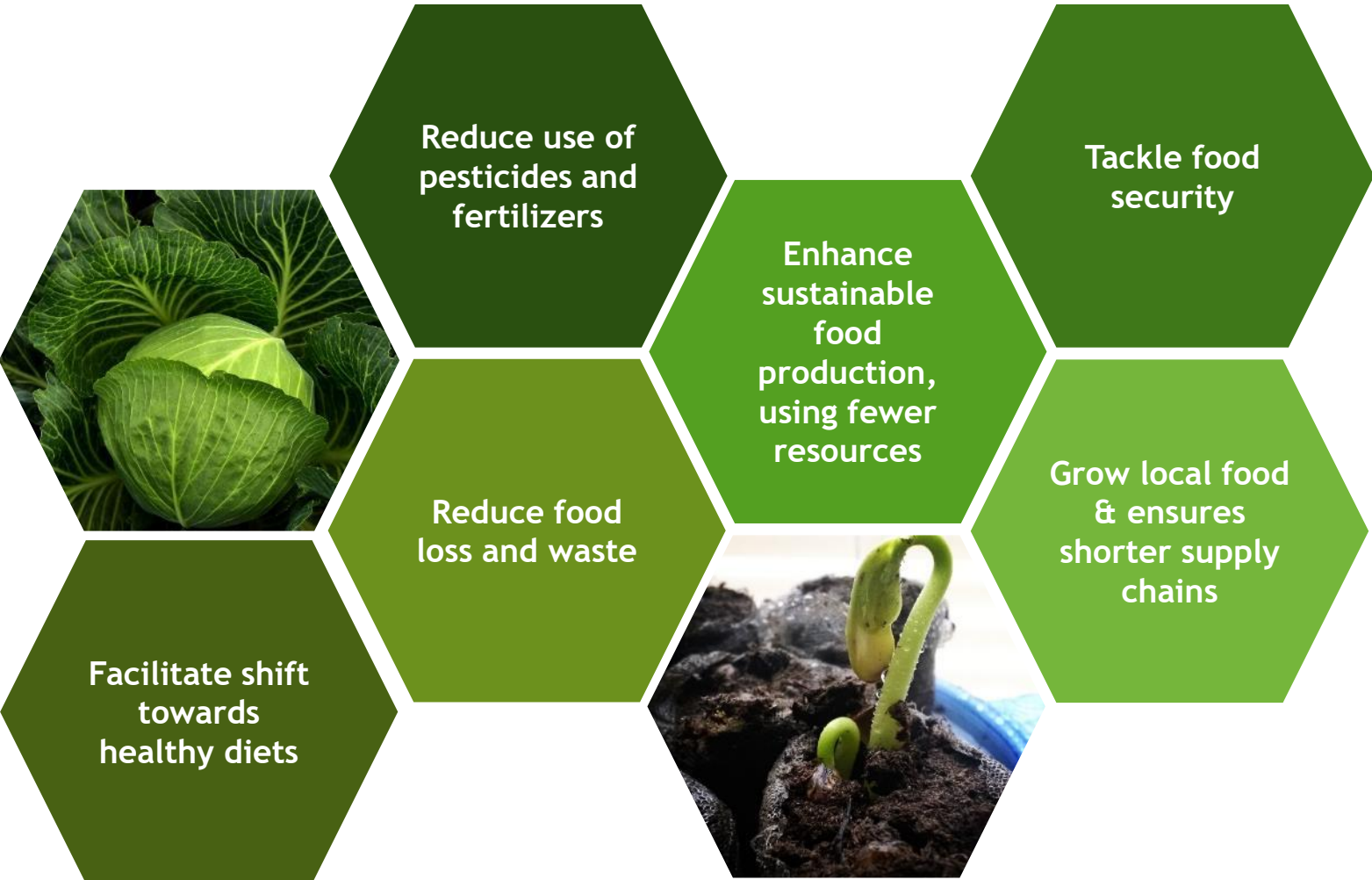


Enthusiasm at first, BUT:

No recognition of our sector, several hurdles



Growing media contribute to several objectives of the Farm-to-Fork strategy



Growing media contribute to several objectives of the Biodiversity strategy



BUT: Unawareness and misinformation on the role of peat for those Green Deal goals → political pressure

- Low awareness of role in horticulture
- Small sector → Low hanging fruit
- Fake news keep spreading
- Peat extraction is confused with mire destruction
- Discussion focusses solely on carbon emissions
- Low awareness of restoration and “Responsibly Produced Peat”
- National level: Several MS are discussing a phasing out of peat
- EU level: several policy files with potentially important impact



SO, CAN WE ACTUALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Lobbying does pay off!

- **Peat debate on highest political level:** EU Commissioner for Agriculture Janusz Wojciechowski during meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries council:



"...peat continues to be a crucial means of production of many horticultural activities, for which today no valid alternatives at similar scale yet exist."

- Direct reaction to outreach of GME and partners
- Chance to have a Commission study on the sector, resulting in actual data on peat and other raw materials

SO, CAN WE ACTUALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Lobbying does pay off!

➤ LULUCF Regulation:

Outreach to several Members of the EU Parliament prevented introduction of specific sub-targets for wetlands used for peat extraction

➤ Taxonomy Regulation:

Risk of criteria defining “sustainable investments” excluding any economic activity related to peat

→ Joint letter with several other industry associations increased awareness of importance of peat and secured high-level meeting with the Commission

→ Much better outlook for upcoming negotiations



HOW CAN WE GET EVEN BETTER?

1) Own your truth - Fight the lack of scientific data

- Exact and up to date numbers on
 - Production volumes, raw materials
 - Amounts import and export
 - Applications
 - EU wide CO2 emissions linked to peat (and other materials)
- Data proof that protected cropping uses less resources
- Research comparing restoration techniques
(with and without previous harvest of peat)
- In July, GME members agreed to raise the “Science Budget”
- Hiring process for a Science Coordinator has started

HOW CAN WE GET EVEN BETTER?

2) Develop a long-term vision that gives answers to pressing questions

- How will our sector position itself in face of the climate crisis?
- How will our sector respond to the goals for biodiversity and nature restoration?
- GME Members will hold a Strategy Workshop on 9 November to kick-off the process of defining long-term objectives

3) Keep allies close and intensify cooperation

- Strengthening ties with related organisations has catalysed the our advocacy power
- GME established a new level of joint forces with European farmers and growers
- GME has joined the “Peat Alliance”
- GME and RPP have adopted a joint position paper on peat!



IN SUMMARY:

Modern horticulture and (peat-based) growing media need to be recognised at political and legislative level as enabler of several political and societal goals!

If sustainable plant production is the common objective, then policies need to secure continued access to responsibly sourced growing media constituents



THANK YOU!

Any questions....?

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