HydraFiber® EZ Blend

Ribbon Blending Guide for HydraFiber® EZ Blend

OPTIMIZING YIELD

The numbers noted in this scenario below are based on using a Ribbon Blender that holds 3 cubic yards to make a 60% peat: 40% HydraFiber EZ Blend mix. Your Profile Technical Account Manager can provide adjustments to fit your specific blending formulation and equipment size.

> Cut open three (3) EZ Blend bales and drop into the running blender.

> Cut open six (6) 3.8-cu. ft. peat bales and drop into the running blender.

> The total volume is approximately 30 cu. ft. of EZ Blend and 45.6 cu. ft. of peat for 75.6 cu. ft. or 2.8 cu. yds. of total mix.

> Add amendments to the blender and allow to mix for several minutes. At our Conover, NC plant, we do not run our ribbon blenders for more than 5 minutes of mix time.

> During the blending process, we recommend adding water after the amendments are blended to hydrate up to approximately 60% moisture. NOTE: Your Profile Technical Account Manager can provide a guide to moisture at blending.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Managing moisture at blending and during production is important to avoid re-wettability issues. We recommend that growers adopt a QC test to assess substrate wettability in mix production – ask your Profile Technical Account Manager for detailed information.

DON'T OVERWATER:

Because of its lighter color, the surface of HydraFiber mixes dries more quickly than darker-colored substrates. The media may still have sufficient moisture below the surface and care should be taken to not water based on surface drying alone.

DON'T WATER BASED ON TRADITIONAL POT WEIGHT:

Mixes with HydraFiber are lighter in weight than conventional mixes, so it is important to assess watering needs by other means than just weight. The best results come from both picking up the pots and visually checking the plants.

NOTE: For growers familiar with HydraFiber Ultra 065WB, EZ Blend is similar in physical properties so irrigation is comparable. EZ Blend is darker in color than Ultra, but it will still surface dry like Ultra does.

SURFACTANTS:

EZ Blend is made with a surfactant, but is only included for the EZ Blend itself, not the entire mix. We recommend adding a surfactant, but growers should reduce the addition relative to the amount of untreated raw materials.

LIME RATE ADJUSTMENTS

PEAT BLENDS

If you are using a peat-based media, the lime rate of the mix needs to be adjusted when changing your HydraFiber inclusion rate. Your Profile Technical Account Manager has

a lime rate calculator and can assist you in determining the correct rate for your situation.

For every 10% peat which is removed and replaced with HydraFiber, reduce lime by 10%. For example:

> When increasing HydraFiber inclusion rate from 30 to 40%, reduce lime rate by 10%.

> Then when increasing HydraFiber inclusion rate from 40 to 50%, reduce lime rate by an additional 10%.

For inclusion rate increases greater than 20%, contact your Profile Technical Account Manager for advice as lime rate adjustment percentages may vary.

COIR BLENDS

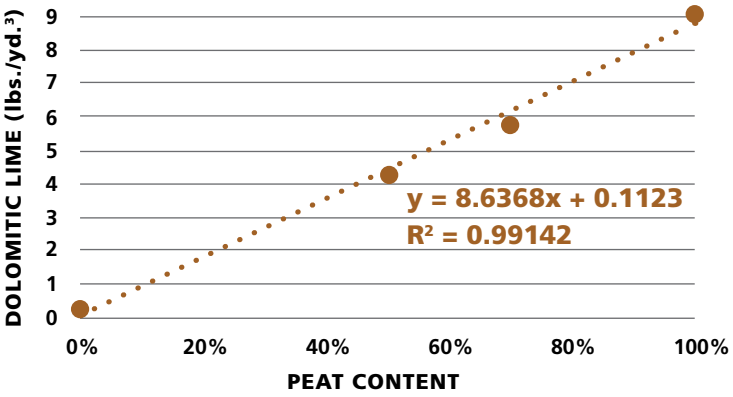
In coir blends, lime rates most likely do not need to be adjusted. However, if peat is being removed from the blend in a coir mix, talk to your Profile Technical Account Manager.

PERLITE REPLACEMENT

When substituting HydraFiber for perlite, no lime rate change is required.

NOTE: Run several batches of your HydraFiber blend and test initial pH. Retest after 24 hours, at 7 days and at 14 days. Adjust as needed. Your Profile Technical Account Manager can provide additional information.

FOR EVERY 10% PEAT REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH HYDRAFIBER, LIME SHOULD BE REDUCED APPROXIMATELY 10%.



GRAPH BASED ON RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY DR. RYAN DICKSON.

NITROGEN (N) INCLUSION

We recommend supplemental N be added to EZ Blend at all rates of inclusion, using Blue Chip (generic name; brand known as Nitroform 39-0-0). Blue Chip is a methylene urea-based N fertilizer which is commonly used in bark-based substrates to offset N immobilization.

Blue Chip is considered relatively safe and has a long history of being used in bark-based horticultural substrates. It is unlike polymer-coated controlled release fertilizers, as the release relies on microbial breakdown of the particle to release nitrogen. Polymer-coated controlled release fertilizers rely on a coating in which fissures develop in the coating due to change in moisture and temperature to release nutrients.

Our rate recommendation for Blue Chip is 2.5 lbs./yd. at 100% EZ Blend. For example, in a blend of 70% peat: 30% EZ Blend, we recommend adding 0.75 lb./yd. of Blue Chip to the final blend (or 0.29 lb. N per cu. yd.).

NOTE 1: Certain blends may require more or less N depending on other raw materials being added to the mix. We recommend growers consult with their Profile Technical Account Manager.

NOTE 2: Controlled-release fertilizer or other fertilizers can be used, but we recommend growers talk to their Profile Technical Account Manager for adjustment guidelines.

QUESTIONS?

Contact a HydraFiber expert at 800-508-8681 today.

FOR OTHER MIX TECHNIQUES (BALE BUSTER, PAD MIXING, ETC.), CONTACT YOUR PROFILE TECHNICAL ACCOUNT MANAGER FOR GUIDELINES.

Profile®
Solutions for your Environment™

HYDRAFIBER COMES FROM PROFILE PRODUCTS, PROUDLY OFFERING RESEARCHED AND PROVEN SOIL / MEDIA SOLUTIONS FOR OVER 50 YEARS.

PROFILE Products LLC
750 W. Lake Cook Rd., Suite 440
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
www.profileproducts.com

IECA Cornerstone Member

© 2019 PROFILE Products LLC, all rights reserved. | ® denotes a registered trademark and ™ denotes a trademark of PROFILE Products LLC. | 19051 01/20
*Profile Products is not liable for any potential damage resulting from cultural recommendations.