



JUNE 2017

ROOTED

The HydraFiber® Advantage: Grow great plants...without the media headaches.

Change is good!

Meet the substrate that's
disrupting growing
and the team behind it.

**WELCOME! OUR TEAM IS
THRILLED TO SHARE THE
FIRST ROOTED WITH YOU.**

Each issue takes the deep dive into what HydraFiber adds to your plants and to your processes. We'll include the latest crop culture from industry experts and show you how to effortlessly use your equipment to make your mix blends.

Why ROOTED? In the most literal sense, HydraFiber helps you put high-quality, consistent growing media into every pot and pack, every day, so that each plant you grow is healthy, strong and super sellable. But more importantly, the arrival of your first truckload of material is just the beginning – our team is committed to being at your side through every crop and helping you gain more control of your soil and media program.

Are you visiting Cultivate in July? Be sure to stop by AgriNomix Booth 2161 – we look forward to meeting you, digging into your media pain points and ultimately, becoming ROOTED in your business!



Jennifer B. Broersma-Neujahr
Business Manager - Horticulture

**BRENT TROOST, HEAD GROWER AT
COLORPOINT-ILLINOIS, EVALUATES
THEIR 2017 HYDRAFIBER PRODUCTION
WITH JENNIFER. REGULAR ONSITE
VISITS BY OUR TEAM HELP GROWERS
FEEL COMFORTABLE WORKING
WITH HYDRAFIBER.**



The Inside Scoop on HydraFiber



KEVIN SPITTLE, DIRECTOR OF R&D FOR PROFILE PRODUCTS (THE PARENT COMPANY OF HYDRAFIBER), FILLS YOU IN ON PROGRESS, PINE, PROCESS AND MORE.

1. HydraFiber is one of the newest innovations from Profile Products. What can you tell us about the company?

In a nutshell, Profile develops and manufactures soil amendments that make products grow, especially in soils that are not conducive to growing. Our core competency is wood fibers, and we have decades of experience in ceramics. Our products are used on sports fields and golf courses; in mining, soil and gas reclamation; for commercial and residential construction and high-way projects, to name just a few.

2. Why the move into horticulture...and why now?

The horticulture industry is huge and is one of the largest potential markets for Profile. We first developed, trialed and introduced HydraFiber to large soil blenders, but then recognized the exciting opportunities to work with growers who mix their own media. Profile created our Hort Division about five years ago, at just the time that peat was showing supply issues, coir costs were rising, weather was impacting the industry. Really, a perfect storm of events that led to one of the most innovative substrate technologies since the 1960s.

3. How did you zero in on the loblolly pine as the heart of HydraFiber?

A great deal of research at North Carolina State, Virginia Tech and other universities over the years has identified that this virgin southern yellow pine species is the safest material to combine and place into a substrate. The toxins in hardwoods and other species can affect plant establishment and growth. With our manufacturing plant located in Conover, NC, we're less than a half day drive from the primarily reforested loblolly plots – this regional supply keeps trucking to a minimum.

4. What makes your refining process different?

Our unique Thermally Refined® processing is done in a pressurized vessel – that's unique to Profile in the horticulture industry. What that does is create very long, thin fibers with an incredible amount of surface area, up to seven times greater than peat. Since root hairs absorb water off a substrate's surface, HydraFiber's tremendous surface area leads to better root establishment and faster rooting. Our refining process also produces very low bulk density and high porosity.

5. Without tipping your hand, what's up next for HydraFiber?

My team is exploring a lot of areas right now, both in the conventional arena and in less traditional ways of commercial growing, like hydroponics. There are exciting opportunities in propagation and liner production, and we are also looking at methods for all kinds of pot and tray sizes.

Fall Mums

OUR TEAM WORKS CLOSELY WITH GROWERS COAST TO COAST TO TRIAL, EVALUATE AND UNDERSTAND HOW HYDRAFIBER WORKS WITH THEIR MANY PROGRAMS. **CHAD CAGLE, HEAD GROWER AT COLORPOINT-KENTUCKY AND MARC VERDEL, HEAD GROWER MANAGER AT BATTLEFIELD FARMS** SHARE THEIR TAKE ON THE SIZABLE MUM TRIALS THEY RAN LAST FALL, USING HYDRAFIBER BLENDS WITH THEIR LINER AND DIRECT STICK PRODUCTION.

Both Chad and Marc noted that few alterations were needed when they switched from conventional mixes to those blended with 30% and 40% HydraFiber. Chad was happy to report that “there really wasn’t a big difference in production methods with HydraFiber versus peat/perlite.” Fertilizer rates, chemical usage and other cultural practices all remained status quo, too.

Be in the Know About H2O

As with most crops, water management is critical for mums. With HydraFiber, most growers report that it behaves differently with water compared to conventional mixes.

- > HydraFiber mixes have lower bulk density – they get lighter faster than non-HydraFiber mixes.
- > HydraFiber mixes surface-dry faster than conventional mixes – while the surface appears dry, the mix is wetter below.



50 Coir: 50 Peat

- > HydraFiber mixes tend to have more available water than conventional mixes – this means more water is more easily extracted by the plant.

Knowing that most growers will tend to overwater when they start mums in HydraFiber, Marc advises to recognize visual differences... “popping roots out of pots to see what is going on beneath, feeling the mix and picking up the pots are all things growers should be doing to make sure they don’t overwater.”

Direct Stick Misting

Direct stick requires constant misting until plants root out, which can lead to algae and fungus gnats – this is true for all mixes, not just HydraFiber. Because of this, our team recommends that growers preventatively apply algacides (i.e., KleenGrow or ZeroTol) if they’re heavy-handed with misting. Chad seconds this plan, noting that these products work better as preventatives. Another tip from Chad:



65 Coir: 35 090WB

GROWERS CONSISTENTLY SEE EQUAL OR BETTER ROOT DEVELOPMENT WITH HYDRAFIBER COMPARED TO OTHER MIXES. HYDRAFIBER DELIVERS A HIGHER AIR SPACE THAN OTHER POPULAR SUBSTRATE INGREDIENTS, AND CREATES A SUPERIOR AIR-RICH ROOT ZONE ENVIRONMENT WHILE PROVIDING AVAILABLE WATER FOR PLANT UPTAKE. PHOTO FROM **COLOR SPOT NURSERIES** TROUP, TEXAS 2016 TRIALS.

try to cut down on wind as much as possible during rooting, as that causes the cutting to dry faster, with more misting needed.

Another approach might be reducing mist volume, but increasing the number of boom passes. Misting during propagation helps keep plants turgid since they have no roots – media doesn't need to be kept excessively wet, just keep the cuttings wet enough to remain turgid. Marc and his growers keep an eye on the foliage; if water is running off the leaves, it's likely too much mist is being applied.

WATERING TIPS FOR HYDRAFIBER BLENDS

Recognizing HydraFiber's differences is key to realizing the great benefits this advanced substrate technology provides, such as superior rooting performance. Use these quick guidelines not only for your mums, but for all HydraFiber-grown crops.

1

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. However, the good news is that the airspace HydraFiber adds to mixes makes them more forgiving should growers water plants too much.

2

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.

THANKS TO

CHAD (LEFT) AND MARC FOR SHARING THEIR HYDRAFIBER STORY.



HYDRAFIBER FAMILY

OUR TEAM

Our team brings a unique and strong set of talents to the table – each of us is committed to partnering with you to make your substrates work harder and find the right solutions for your media program. Read more about our team at www.hydrafiber.com.

WE SWITCHED TO HYDRAFIBER!

HydraFiber Advanced Substrate is already hard at work at several of North America's largest growers. They've reduced peat, perlite and other raw materials...all with minimal changes to their production practices. Meet just a few here and watch for more in our next issue.

BATTLEFIELD FARMS

CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN GROWERS

COLOR SPOT NURSERIES

COLORPOINT

DAN SCHANTZ FARM AND GREENHOUSES

SOUTH CENTRAL GROWERS



**JENNIFER NEUJAHR,
BUSINESS MANAGER –
HORTICULTURE**

JNeujahr@
profileproducts.com
630-386-5926



It's been very exciting to join the Profile Products family of soil amendment experts and wood fiber technologies to launch the HydraFiber brand and bring this groundbreaking innovation to the horticulture sector. I'm proud to be a catalyst for change in the soil and media industry."

Jennifer leads the global team that is revolutionizing the commercial hort industry by supply it with game-changing HydraFiber raw materials for growing plants. She is focused on putting new products, processes and technologies into place for growers and pre-mix blenders in both North American and international markets.



**KRISTAN MCGUIGAN,
PRODUCT
REPRESENTATIVE –
HORTICULTURE**

KMcGuigan@
profileproducts.com
630-418-3890



I work directly with our grower customers and engage in proactive discussions to make sure that they feel comfortable, successful and profitable growing with HydraFiber."

Kristan knows growing from start to finish – she has spent 20 years in the Ornamental Horticulture industry, nine of those as a grower herself. Today, she develops best practice manuals for our HydraFiber growers, troubleshoots any production issues, and compiles trial data/photos to capture their HydraFiber story.



**DANIEL NORDEN,
R&D AND TECHNICAL
SERVICES MANAGER –
HORTICULTURE**

DNorden@
profileproducts.com
224-343-8198



My team is the “middle man” between growers and our R&D team. I partner with current and potential customers to recommend the best formulas, offer product advice and promote best cultural practices. On the flip side, we take what we learn in the greenhouse and work with R&D to solve any pain points our growers have.”

Daniel is equally passionate about plants and about helping customers succeed, whether it's through new and novel products, ensuring high quality standards, or offering objective and timely tech support. His expertise in substrates makes him the “go-to” guy for setting up and evaluating HydraFiber trials.



**NATHAN CARNEY,
TECHNICAL
SPECIALIST –
HORTICULTURE**

NCarney@
profileproducts.com
229-392-8807



My top priority is making sure that growers are successful with both their equipment and their crop culture.”

Nate makes regular site visits to support growers and ensure they're seeing maximum results from their HydraFiber Processing Unit: highest yields from every bale, correct blends, and successful pot and container filling. In addition, he sets up trials, reviews production and provides best-results growing advice. Nate also assists with our key blending partners and international accounts.

**ANOTHER KEY PLAYER
ON OUR TEAM IS
KEVIN SPITTLE –
HE SHARES THE
“INSIDE SCOOP”
ON PAGE 3.**

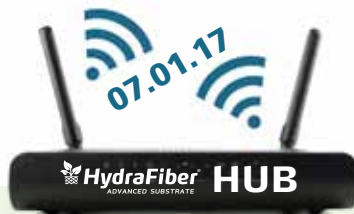
READY TO JOIN OUR FAMILY?

**CALL 800-508-8681 TODAY TO
START YOUR FREE HYDRAFIBER TRIAL.**

See proven results for yourself and jumpstart your next growing season.

NOT BLENDING YOUR OWN SOILS?

Let us connect you with one of our HydraFiber pre-mix partners, or visit their booths at Cultivate: **BERGER** (Booth 2357), **GRO-BARK** (Booth 3258) or **OLDCASTLE** (Booth 0448).



July 1: HydraFiber HUB Goes Live!

The HUB is your toolbox of everything HydraFiber. Log in 24/7 to this personalized, timely and pertinent online info source... designed with you in mind.

Access HydraFiber trial and analysis data unique to you, plus up-to-date production tips, latest results from independent research labs, “How To” video library and much more.

Be ready...simply submit your current email address today to HUB@profileproducts.com for your password and log-in tips.



750 Lake Cook Rd., Suite 440
Buffalo Grove, IL 60089

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WWW.HYDRAFIBER.COM

The Buzz is Building!

HydraFiber is turning growing upside down – it's the **ONLY** consistent and managed growing mix component that's **domestic, reliable and readily available.**

- > 10 to 35% more available water to every plant due to the higher surface area of our fibers
- > Better air space and improved root zone development from the 98% porous material
- > Expedited shipping available for all standard HydraFiber formulations
- > Locked-in contract pricing available
- > Arrives unfrozen and ready to use

PROFILE PRODUCTS' JENNIFER NEUJAHN REVIEWS GROWER TRIALS WITH **RON VAN DER HENGST OF SOUTH CENTRAL GROWERS.**

