

Environmental Policy Statement

Melcourt aims to work for a more sustainable future. We believe it is our responsibility to promote a sustainable environment and have established an environmental policy based on this.

Resource Use

For more than three decades Melcourt has led the way in the development of new markets for forest residues that were previously extremely difficult to market or were dumped. Minimal water is used in the production of Melcourt products and where used this is sourced from an on-site borehole. None of Melcourt's raw materials or products are treated with pesticides. All of Melcourt's products can easily be recycled after use. Almost no waste is generated in the manufacture of Melcourt products

No peat is used in any Melcourt products. Melcourt's ongoing research and development programme is constantly looking for new, sustainable raw materials. Those which show potential will be developed into low environmental impact, cost-effective products for the future.

Finished Products

All Melcourt products are formulated from natural organic materials derived from agricultural, forestry, wood processing and amenity industries.

All of Melcourt's eligible products hold Forest Stewardship Council® certification. The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)® is an international network that promotes the responsible management of the world's forests. Melcourt's FSC certified products are from FSC MIX Sources at a minimum of 70%.

It is company policy to avoid trading and sourcing bark and wood from the following categories:

- a) illegally harvested wood
- b) wood harvested in violation of traditional and civil rights
- c) wood harvested in forests where high conservation values are threatened by management activities
- d) wood harvested in forests being converted to plantations or non-forest use
- e) wood from forests in which genetically modified trees are planted

Many Melcourt products are approved for use in organic systems by the Soil Association, the UK's leading organic food and farming charity and certification body.

Manufacturing

At each of Melcourt's strategically located processing facilities, state-of-the-art-equipment is used effectively and efficiently to convert raw materials into marketable products. We assess the environmental impact of all our processes have invested heavily in new cleaner and safer technologies to improve production efficiency and reduce energy consumption.

Great care and attention is given when siting our facilities to reduce the visual and audible impact on the landscape and neighbours.

Plastics and pallets

Most of the products sold by Melcourt are damp and heavy, and typically stored outdoors. This requires the packaging material to be strong and weather resistant. Research is ongoing but at present, plastic offers the best solution to efficiently pack, transport, store and provide adequate shelf life for the products. However, Melcourt is working closely with its packaging suppliers in order to minimize the impact of the plastic it uses.

Virtually all of the polythene sacks supplied by Melcourt are made of 100% recyclable materials and incorporate 30% post-consumer waste (PCW). With our packaging suppliers we are working towards a goal of reducing our use of virgin plastic to at least 50% by 2025. In 2020 Melcourt introduced its Bag for Life, a scheme whereby garden centre customers can re-use their compost bag, the garden centre purchasing compost in large bales which use five times less plastic than the equivalent quantity in ordinary packs.

Wherever possible, recycled pallets are used.



Distribution

The nature of our products, together with customer requirements, necessitate deliveries using road transport. All vehicles used by Melcourt operate within legal requirements in respect of weight, speed and driver hours. The company favours hauliers who use modern, fuel efficient vehicles. Deliveries are organised efficiently to minimise mileages and lorries running empty.

Administration

To reduce car use, we operate from regional offices and communicate using the best available information technology. Where cars are needed these will gradually be replaced with hybrid, dual fuel or electric vehicles. Wherever possible, paper use is minimized and where used, is made from recycled fibres.

Responsible Sourcing of Growing Media Scheme

Melcourt has been an active member of the UK government Defra Task Force on peat reduction out of which the Responsible Sourcing of Growing Media Scheme was created. The Scheme seeks to measure the environmental and social impacts of materials used in growing media. Introduced during 2020, Melcourt was one of the first companies to be successfully audited.

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