

BRANCH '82

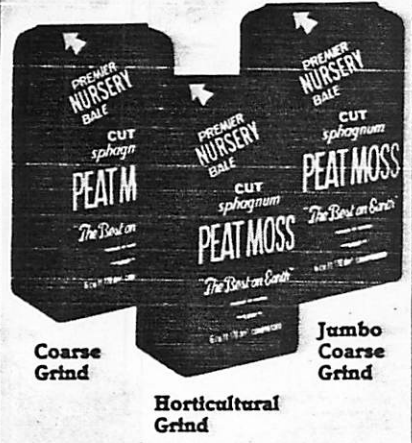
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GROWERS "CUT" SPHAGNUM PEAT MOSS

New! From PREMIER

Six cubic foot compressed bale yields a minimum of twelve cubic feet. Now available in 3 special fibrous grinds for the Nursery and Greenhouse trade: **Horticulture** grind for bedding plant and pot plant growers. **Coarse** grind for container growers and large greenhouse ornamentals. **Jumbo Coarse** for cut flowers and for growers who shred their own peat moss for special mixes.



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Between You & Me

STABY

Is there a future in irradiation preservation?

"Irradiated" foods may soon cause a ruckus.

The process uses ionizing radiation (also called ionizing energy), either from radionuclides such as cobalt or cesium, or from devices that produce beta rays or X-rays, to prolong the useful life of foods.

Scientists have studied it for nearly 30 years. Irradiation-sterilized foods have been used on many American space flights. But new interest developed in the late 1970s. The Food and Drug Administration is expected to issue a proposed regulation in early 1983, making commercial applications in the U.S. conceivable by late 1984 or 1985.

Would irradiation prevent flowers from spoiling so quickly?

I contacted an irradiation researcher, a food scientist who still keeps up with floriculture from his days as a horticulture professor.

Perhaps not, he said. Then again, perhaps.

On its face, the process seems inapplicable to the cut flower situation, where the breakdown is physiological. Irradiation delays spoilage by destroying microorganisms or insects.

On the other hand, low-dose irradiation can delay the ripening of some fruits, including bananas, mangoes, tomatoes, papayas, guavas, pears and avocados. Some of these fruits have insect contamination problems that can also be solved by irradiation. Lower doses can interfere with cell division, which is necessary for vegetable sprouting, and alter the biochemical reactions involved in fruit ripening.

An application for flowers?

There may be sound reasons why flower irradiation won't work. Or reasons why it *should* be tried, by one of our fine floriculture researchers.

The American Council on Science and Health has an easy-reading report on irradiated foods, that might serve as a point of departure. It's \$2 from the ACSH, 1995 Broadway, New York, 10023.

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