

Vermiculite

Buy only U.S. produced vermiculite, not the imported. Recently a grower called us concerning African vermiculite and we want to share our reason with you.

Most of the vermiculite ore comes from mines in Montana and South Carolina. The pH of the domestic ores ranges from 6.5 to 7.2.

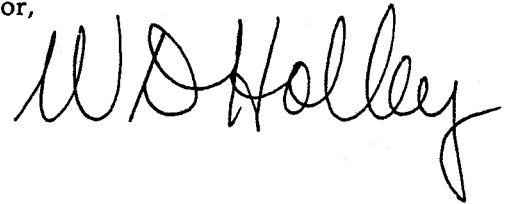
Some vermiculite ore is imported from Africa. It is much lighter in color and has a pH of 9.6 or higher. African vermiculite is softer than the domestic ore.


Incidentally, vermiculite ore is heated to approximately 800° and is sterile. Vermiculite is a mica-

type material that has a cellular structure and expands when heated. The thin leaf structure of expanded vermiculite enables it to hold and release large quantities of water and minerals for plant growth.

Vermiculite has a relatively high action-exchange capacity and is a good buffer. It also resists rapid changes in pH. Vermiculite contains adequate magnesium and potassium for the growth of most crops. One last reminder — use only the horticultural grade for plant growing. from *Greenhouse Notes*. Edited by James K. Rathmell, Jr. Coop. Ext. Service, Penn. State Univ.

Your editor,



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