

# Solutions

## Taking a lead: Melcourt are founder members of the Growing Media Initiative

Melcourt are amongst the first organisations to join the Growing Media Initiative (GMI), the UK gardening industry scheme working towards reducing the use of peat in the domestic horticulture market. Others in the process of joining are B&Q, Dobbies, Focus, Homebase, Royal Horticultural Society, Scotts, Vital Earth and Westland.

The scheme developed by the HTA in conjunction with the Growing Media Association, DIY, supermarkets and garden centre retailers, DEFRA, the RSPB and the Royal Horticultural Society seeks to help the UK horticultural industry reduce peat usage.



Tim Briercliffe, Director of Business Development at the HTA and GMI Scheme Manager said, "It is extremely encouraging to see manufacturers and retailers sign up to this initiative illustrating their commitment to reducing peat use. We encourage others to do the same so that as an industry we can have real impact."

Melcourt's Catherine Dawson, who is also the current Growing Media Association chair, explains why it is important for Melcourt to be scheme members. "We believe that the scheme will rapidly gain industry-wide recognition as a worthwhile aid to managing gradual peat reduction, and being externally audited it will be independent of any particular interest groups. We also believe that as an industry, growing media manufacturers need to be seen to be taking positive steps towards greater use of alternatives."

She continues, "This industry-led scheme demonstrates clearly to government that manufacturers are responding to environmental changes and although Melcourt is already peat free, we feel that it is far better that the manufacturers we supply manage the changes themselves rather than have changes imposed from government."

For further information about joining the scheme and the different levels of membership see [www.growingmediainitiative.org.uk](http://www.growingmediainitiative.org.uk)

## Spotlight on Melcourt Pot Mulches

Previous editions of **Melcourt Solutions for Growers** have highlighted the benefits of pot mulching as a management technique for nursery stock. We make no apology for revisiting this topic as the interest in it just grows and grows. Our website gives full details of methods and benefits or phone us for advice. The most popular products are **Melcourt Potting Bark** and **Melcourt Propagating Bark**, which both provide the necessary freely draining, chippy and attractive surface. Easy to apply by hand or machine and extremely effective in use, a 2cm layer of either of these products will discourage moss and liverwort growth, weaken weeds and enhance crop growth.



As well as providing a hostile surface for moss and liverwort, the mulch has been shown to enhance growth by preventing evaporation from the pot surface and reducing competition, as shown here with these *Choisya ternata* 'Aztec Pearl', no mulch on the left, a 2cm layer of Melcourt Potting Bark on the right.

# Melcourt growers range product summary

At Melcourt we are proud of the level of customer support we offer. In-depth technical advice on any of our products is only a quick phone call away and our extensive website [www.melcourt.co.uk](http://www.melcourt.co.uk) can

answer many questions. If a quick check of particle size and main applications is all that is required, you may find the summary below useful.

Product	Particle size (mm)	Bark type	Principal uses	Approval
Potting Bark™	3 – 15	Pine chip	Use at 20 – 30% with peat to aid long term porosity Pot mulching 9cm and upwards	SA
Propagating Bark™	2 – 7	Pine chip	Use 50/50 with peat or coir for vegetative propagation Pot mulching smaller pots	SA
Growbark® Pine	0 – 5	Pine fines	Use at up to 80% for peat replacement or as an ingredient in peat free media	SA
Growbark® Mixed Conifer	0 – 6	Mixed conifer fines	Use at up to 80% for peat replacement or as an ingredient in peat-free media – a darker, softer, more composted product than Growbark Pine, and which holds slightly more moisture	SA FSC
Sylvafibre®	0 – 5	Pine wood fibre	Use at up to 60% for peat replacement or as an ingredient in peat free media	SA
Hortibark Pine®	0 – 15	Pine	Use at up to 60% for peat replacement and to impart excellent structure to medium. Will provide longer term porosity than Hortibark® Mixed Conifer	SA
Hortibark® Mixed Conifer	0 – 12	Mixed-conifer bark	Use at up to 60% for peat replacement. Gives more porosity than Growbark as is coarser. Has been lightly screened so although it contains fines there are far fewer than in Growbark. Is very dark and composted	SA FSC
Salad-Bag™	0 – 5	Pine fines substrate	Mineral wool replacement in tomato and other salads production	
Orchid Bark™	5 – 20	Pine chip	A chunky fine-free pine chip for use in orchid composts	SA

SA – These products are approved by the Soil Association for restricted use in organic systems.

FSC – These products are Forest Stewardship Certified. In brief they are made from sustainable sources and are part of a traceable chain of sustainable stewardship.

Remember, in addition to supplying top quality products we can also offer nursery visits and help with setting up trials.

## Come and see us at the shows

Our Growers Range will be on show and sales and technical advisors will be on hand, so come and say hello...

### Four Oaks

2 and 3 September 2008  
nr Holmes Chapel, Cheshire

### Eastgro

11 September 2008  
Tamar Nurseries, Wisbech, Cambs

### South West Regional Growers Show

1 October 2008  
Exeter, Devon

### IPPS Conference

7 – 10 October 2008  
Falmouth

### Clydeside Trading Society

Open Day  
8 October 2008  
Kirkmuirhill, Lanarkshire, Scotland

### Southern Growers Exhibition

12 November 2008  
Sandown Racecourse, Surrey

### GAN Trade Show

11 February 2009  
Bournemouth

## Where to buy the Melcourt Growers Range

**Scotland**  
Clydeside Trading Society  
tel: 01555 894151  
[www.clydesidetradingsociety.co.uk](http://www.clydesidetradingsociety.co.uk)

**North of England**  
Green-Tech Ltd  
tel: 01423 332100  
[www.green-tech.co.uk](http://www.green-tech.co.uk)

**Northern Ireland**  
Green-Tech Ltd  
tel: 02897 533122  
(0044 from S.Ireland)

**Ireland**  
Avoncrop

**England & Wales**  
Avoncrop Ltd  
tel: 01934 820363 Bristol office  
01344 426300 Brocknell Office  
01205 460160 Boston Office  
[www.avoncrop.co.uk](http://www.avoncrop.co.uk)

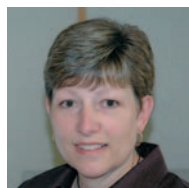
## Melcourt People



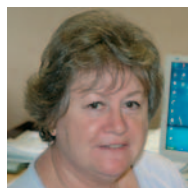
**Andy Chalmers**  
Sales & Marketing  
Director



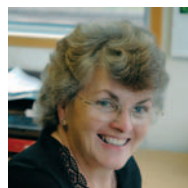
**Catherine Dawson**  
Research &  
Development  
Co-ordinator



**Elaine Rose**  
Sales  
Administration



**Cindy Dorrell**  
Finance & Credit  
Control



**Sue Atley**  
Office  
Administration



**Tom Eustace**  
Production &  
Distribution  
Manager

All of the above can be contacted by telephone on 01666 502711. Catherine Dawson's telephone number is 01223 301748.



Melcourt Industries Ltd  
Boldridge Brake Long Newnton Tetbury Gloucestershire GL8 8RT  
Telephone +44 (0)1666 502711 Facsimile +44 (0)1666 504398  
Email [mail@melcourt.co.uk](mailto:mail@melcourt.co.uk) Web [www.melcourt.co.uk](http://www.melcourt.co.uk)