



Growing Media
Europe

**The growing media sector in the EU –
chances for sustainable horticulture in the political arena**

Stefaan Vandaele & Cecilia Luetgebrune
Baltic Peat Producers Forum, 5 September 2019

Growing Media Europe – the voice of the growing media sector on European level

- Founded 2016; international non-profit NGO
- Interest representation and focal point of GM producers in EU
- General Assembly (29 Members); Board of Directors (5 people)
- Working Groups and Task Forces
- Secretariat in Brussels



Growing your food & Greening your life!

Global Food Security in an Urbanizing World

By 2050, **2/3** of the world's population will live in urban areas.



In the next 20 years,



of the world's population growth will occur in developing nations.

80%



of food for cities comes from domestic sources in rural areas.

The poorest households in the developing world spend

60-80%



of their incomes on food.



Q&A: Berry chat with Driscoll's of the Americas president Soren Bjorn

November 01, 2017 Uppy

Substrate as a solution for **challenges for labor availability and labor cost**: *“The future of berries will be in substrate production. We have to go to labor production systems that are more efficient and also more efficient for the harvesters so it’s easier for the fruit to be picked.”*

Increase production *“when you go to substrate you actually get fruit production much faster and that’s the real big payback.”*

Create the **right climate and soil environment**: *“it’s also opened up regions where maybe the climate is right but the soil is very difficult, because blueberries are very temperamental. They need that low pH, and if that doesn’t naturally exist and the soil is heavy, it’s difficult to manage. If you go to substrate, you can get that right away.”*

▫ *Out of the soil growing in substrate*

Growing your food & Greening your life!

- Objectives of society
 1. Food security for a growing world population
 2. More fruits & vegetables for healthy nutrition
 3. Greener cities and living areas
 4. Afforestation for climate and biodiversity

- Challenges for growers
 1. Lack of labour
 2. Limited resources (water, fertiliser, land, ..)
 3. Extreme weather conditions

□ Growing out of the soil is THE solution for a more sustainable horticulture!

...and we need sustainable constituents to reach this goal!

Growing your food & Greening your life!

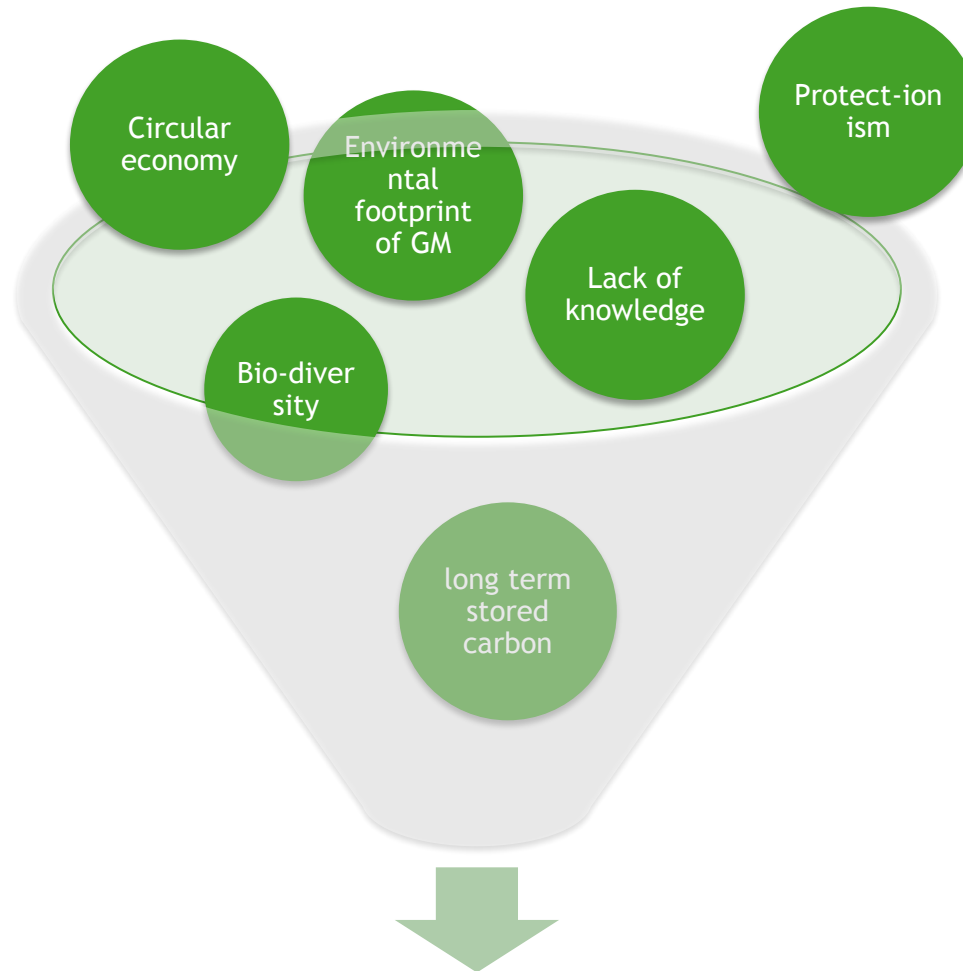
What is a “sustainable” growing medium?

- ✓ Fit for purpose = meeting agronomic efficiency criteria
- ✓ Low environmental footprint (product and production method)
- ✓ Economically viable
- ✓ Socially compliant

□ Peat is part of the solution!



If peat is part of the solution: Why is it considered being a problem?



Peat free is not the solution!
Let's help finding real solutions

Growing your food & Greening your life!

Focus of GME on END PRODUCT and its key role in sustainable horticulture

- LCA project (all constituents, whole value chain, link to horticultural sector)
- Sector study (data base on all GM production in Europe)
- All constituents (mineral wool, coir, bark,...)
- GME Sustainability Agenda and Code of Practice (all pillars of sustainability)

Sector needs to enhance communication and cooperation

- Memorandum of Understanding GME - CSPMA
- GME Board Member in RPP Board
- Closer cooperation GME - IPS
- Create “helpful science” and spread the message



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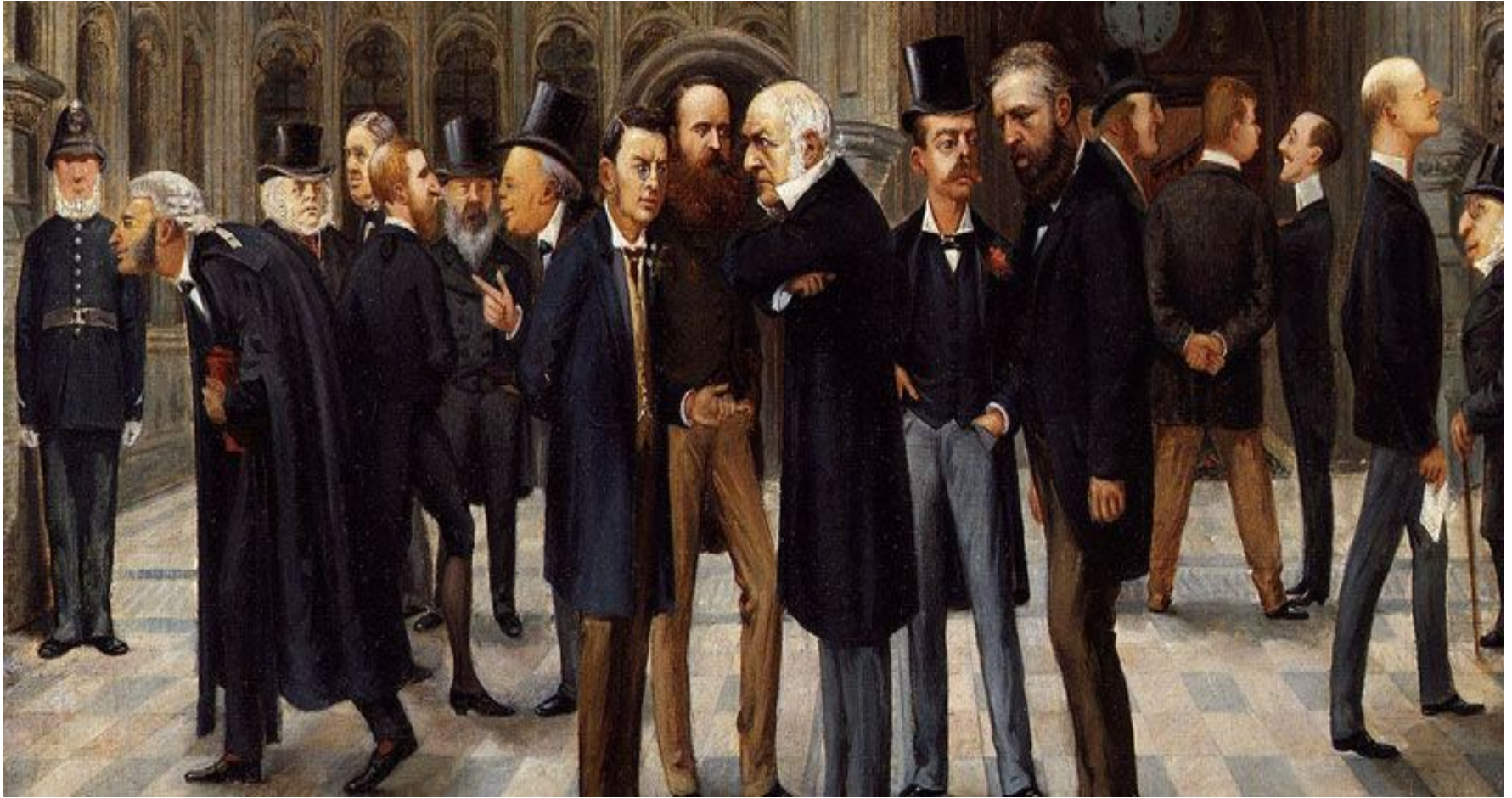
Parliamentary
evening



“Political
interest
representation”

“Networking
and Public
Affairs”

Growing Media Europe - a “lobby” organization



LOBBYIST



What my friends
think I do.



What my parents
think I do.



What the other side
says I do.



What society thinks
I do.



What I think I
do.



What I actually do.

Lobbying – interaction with policy makers to directly or indirectly influence them

- Constant monitoring of EU Institutions and the general political atmosphere
- Building a strong network with all relevant stakeholders
- Gathering and providing technical expertise
- Public affairs strategy (position papers, public affairs events, bilateral meetings and expert groups, media campaigns etc)



Brussels – the second biggest lobbying hub in the world

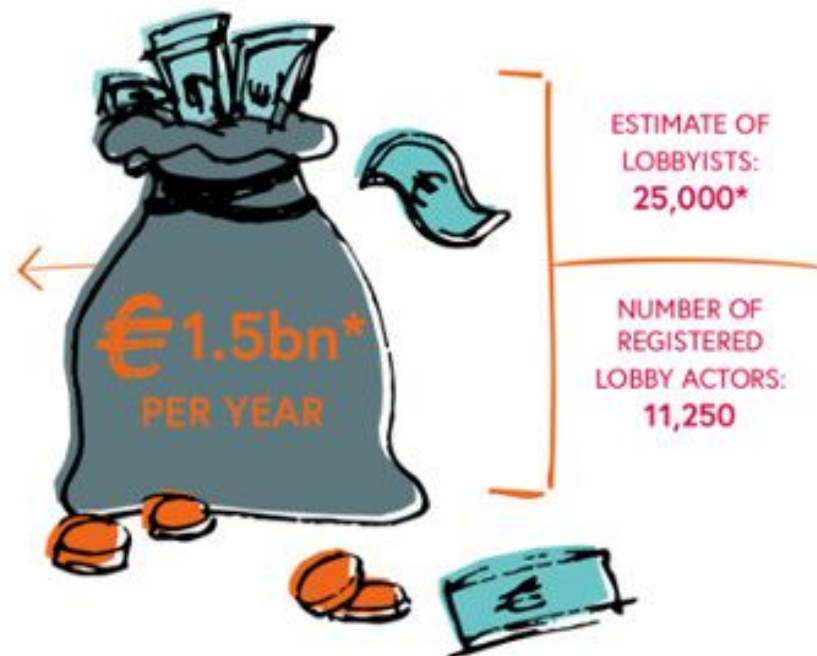
- Highest concentration of political power in Europe
- About **25,000 active lobbyists** representing single companies, industry and trade associations, civil society, NGOs and unions
- About **1.5 billion** spent on lobbying
- EU policies affect 510 million people in 28 Member States



LOBBYING THE EU IN BRUSSELS

BIGGEST EU LOBBY SPENDERS

1	European Chemical Industry Council	€12,100,000€
2	EUROCHAMBRES (Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry)	€7,600,000€
3	Fleishman-Hillard	€6,750,000 – €6,999,999
4	Insurance Europe	€6,750,000 – €6,999,999
5	FTI Consulting Belgium	€6,000,000 – €6,249,999
6	General Electric Company	€5,500,000 – €5,749,999
7	European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations	€5,528,906
8	Interel European Affairs	€4,750,000 – €4,999,999
9	EUROCITIES	€4,750,000 – €4,999,999
10	Association for Financial Markets in Europe	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
11	Bursan-Marsteller	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
12	ExxonMobil Petroleum & Chemical	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
13	Shell Companies	€4,500,000 – €4,749,999
14	Google	€4,250,000 – €4,499,999
15	Microsoft Corporation	€4,250,000 – €4,499,999
16	Verband Deutscher Maschinen- und Anlagenbau e.V.	€4,250,000 – €4,499,999
17	BUSINESSEUROPE	€4,000,000 – €4,249,999
18	European Banking Federation	€4,000,000 – €4,249,999
19	Verband der Chemischen Industrie e.V.	€4,000,000 – €4,249,999
20	Bertelsmann Stiftung	€3,750,000 – €3,999,999



All figures as declared in the EU Transparency Register on 1 June 2017. The ranking has been adjusted to exclude actors without access passes for the European Parliament, without meetings with the European Commission, and where gross mis-declarations of spending and/or staff figures seemed highly likely.

*Conservative estimates of the number of lobbyists (full time) and the amount spent by lobby actors on EU lobbying each year made by Transparency International EU (<https://transparency.eu/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Lobby-Meetings-European-Commission.pdf>)

But why bother?

- Fertilising Product Regulation
- Plant Health Directive
- LULUCF Regulation
- Organic farming Regulation
- Environmental Impact Assessment Directive (□ see Ireland!)
- Habitats Directive
-

80 % (!) of the national laws comes from the EU!

No industry can afford to sit back and hope for the best



**IF YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT EUROPE,
EUROPE TAKES CARE OF YOU**

...Growing Media Europe, YOUR voice in Brussels



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www.growing-media.eu