



Quality of growing media

matters



Annual report 2025

COLOPHON

RHP

Galgeweg 38

2691 MG 's-Gravenzande

The Netherlands

+31 (0)174 - 62 03 60

info@rhp.nl

www.rhp.nl

Chamber of Commerce Haaglanden 41146015

© 2026. This is a publication of RHP.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	4
1. Board & Organisation	5
1.1 The organisation in 2025	5
1.2 Composition of the Supervisory Board	6
2. Strategic policy	7
2.1 Vision and strategy	7
2.2 Knowledge development and knowledge sharing	8
2.3 Collaborations	8
3. Key figures	11
4. Research and development	13
5. Quality marks	18



FOREWORD

It is with pride that we present our Annual Report 2025. We can look back on a year in which quality, safety and lower environmental impact of substrates once again came together prominently within the sector. Demand for reliable, high-quality substrates and raw materials remained strong, while at the same time the use of renewable substrate raw materials continued to increase. In 2025 as well, RHP remained committed to supporting the sector in this through knowledge, research and certification.

During the past year, challenges relating to the availability of key raw materials such as peat and coir for potting soil and substrates required additional attention. For RHP, this once again underlined the importance of up-to-date knowledge of raw materials, insight into their properties and a strong system of quality assurance.

Knowledge development and knowledge sharing also formed an important pillar of our activities in 2025. Through company contacts, RHP online research updates and other webinars, meetings and factsheets, RHP shared independent, technical knowledge on current topics relating to potting soil and substrates. In addition, further work was carried out on research into, among other things, the structural stability of raw materials, human pathogens, residues and the behaviour of packaged substrates, as well as on the development of practical tools for certified companies.

Further steps were also taken in 2025 in the development of quality marks and responsible production. As every year, the RHP and RAG product certification schemes were updated, further work was carried out on the development and practical testing of the scheme for Responsibly Produced Coir (RPC), and preparations were made for the organisational integration of the activities of Responsibly Produced Peat (RPP) into the RHP organisation as of 1 January 2026. In this way, RHP continues to evolve within a sector that is constantly developing.

All in all, 2025 was a year in which important steps were once again taken together with certified companies and other partners. In this annual report, we are pleased to tell you more about this. We hope you enjoy reading it.

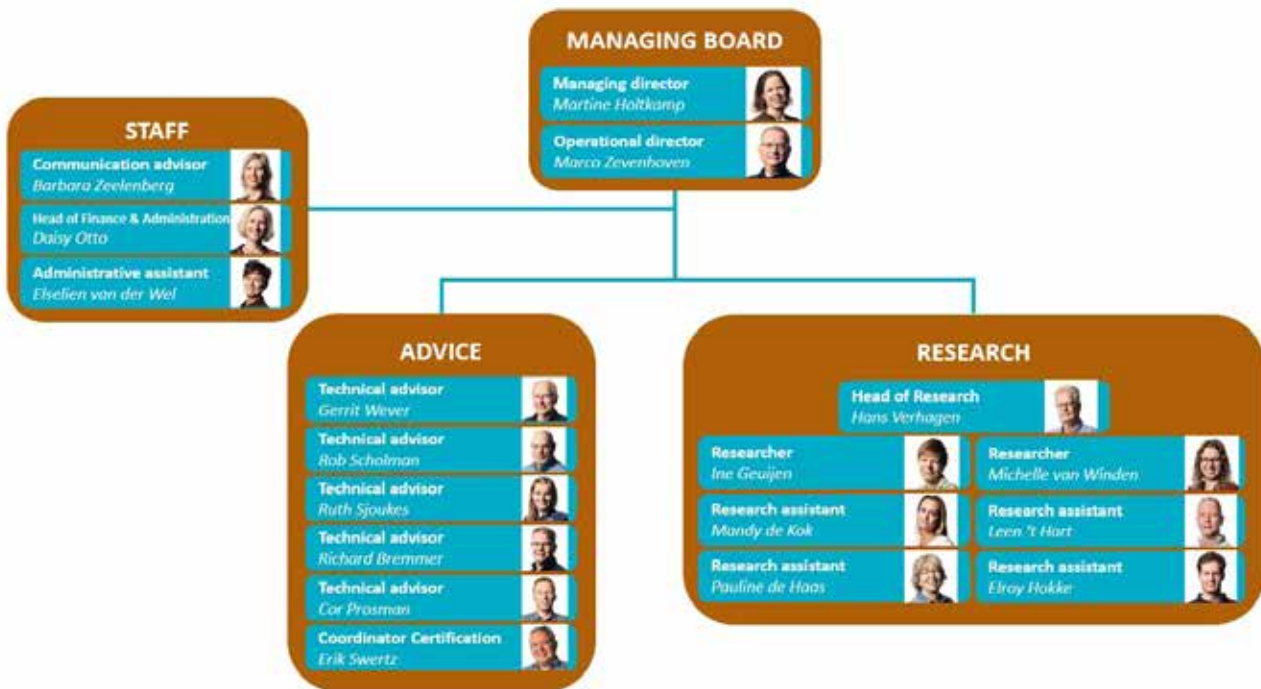
's-Gravenzande, The Netherlands, June 2026

Martine Holtkamp
Managing Director RHP

1. BOARD & ORGANISATION

1.1 The organisation in 2025

RHP is located in 's-Gravenzande in The Netherlands and is a foundation. At 31 December 2025, RHP had 18 employees.



In 2025, several changes in personnel took place. Among other things, a new research assistant and an administrative employee joined the organisation, while a colleague retired after many years of service. Internal role changes also took place within administration/finance and technical advisory/research. These changes contributed to keeping our organisation future-proof and to the continuity of our services to certified companies.



Employees in 2025

Number of employees

18
15.45 FTE

Average age

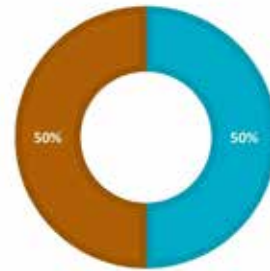
48.9
years

Duration of employment

10.7
years

Male/female

50% female **50%** male



1.2 Composition of the Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board is the supervisory body of foundation RHP. The Supervisory Board consists of persons who feel involved with growing media from their function or personal affinity. They represent substrate producers (certified companies), users and the chain. The Supervisory Board meets every quarter, together with the management of RHP. The composition of the Supervisory Board in 2025 was as follows:

Name: Bernard Koeckhoven
Position: chairman
Since: 1 January 2020



Name: Ronald Grootsholten
(Florpartners)
Position: member
Since: 22 September 2022



Name: Jaco Dijkshoorn
(Kekkilä-BVB)
Position: member
Since: 1 January 2020



Name: Daphne Bronckhorst
(Klasmann-Deilmann)
Position: member
Since: 1 January 2024



Name: Piet Kuivenhoven
(kwekerij Kuivenhoven Poeldijk)
Position: member
Since: 1 June 2024



2. STRATEGIC POLICY

2.1 Vision and strategy

In consultation with the Supervisory Board, a vision and strategic plan for 2024–2027 was adopted at the beginning of 2024. This framework also guided our activities in 2025. Our vision is: “RHP is the international centre for knowledge about and certification of growing media in the field of quality, safety and sustainability.”

Within this strategic line, we are working towards the “three-in-one” perspective:


1. Product safety and quality
2. Responsible production
3. Substrate footprint

These three pillars are explained below on the basis of the activities carried out in 2025.



 **Product safety and quality**
RHP & RAG, research and advice

 **Substrate footprint**
Advice and certification

 **Responsible production**
RPP (peat), RPC (coir), etc.

✓ **Product safety and quality:**

RHP supports substrate raw material and substrate producers (primarily) and chain partners (secondarily) with advanced knowledge on the safe use and consistent quality of both traditional and renewable raw materials.

✓ **Responsible production:**

In 2025, further work was carried out on the development of the scheme for Responsibly Produced Coir (RPC) and on its practical testing. This included, among other things, the continuation of the pilot in cooperation with participating coir producers, in which the scheme was tested and refined in practice. The insights gained are being used to further refine the certification system and prepare it for broader implementation. Steps were also taken in the collaboration and exploration with Responsibly Produced Peat (RPP). At the end of 2025, this led to the signing of an agreement stipulating that the activities of RPP will be brought under RHP organisationally as of 1 January 2026. The reason for this is to safeguard the continuity of RPP activities. The RPP scheme and certification standards will, however, remain fully independent and recognisable.

✓ **Substrate footprint:**

In 2025, further steps were taken within Growing Media Europe in the development of the LCA tool for substrate products. Attention is focused in particular on improving the underlying dataset. In line with its ambition, RHP is monitoring these developments and continues to explore, together with GME and other stakeholders, what role it can play in further implementation, including in the areas of advice, verification and certification.

2.2 Knowledge development and knowledge sharing

Knowledge development and knowledge sharing are at the core of our role as a knowledge centre. In 2025, RHP continued to build on its research activities. The knowledge developed through these research projects was shared with certified companies via company contacts, online research updates, (on demand) webinars and meetings, with the aim of making insights as practically applicable as possible in day-to-day production and cultivation practice.

In addition, RHP published several factsheets in its public knowledge base in 2025. These factsheets provide independent, technical guidance on specific themes relating to potting soil and substrates and support prevention and correct interpretation of signals in practice. Examples from the 2025 factsheet series include: packaged growing media, weeds in cultivation, heavy metals and horsetail.

RHP also contributed to knowledge transfer through training courses. In 2025, RHP organised, among other things, Dutch-language and English-language editions of the Growing Media A training course, focusing on the chemical, physical and biological properties of substrates and their application.

RHP shares knowledge not only with certified companies, but also with parties further along in the chain. As in previous years, attention was given to dialogue with, among others, research institutions, trade associations, commerce, retail and professional growers. With substrates containing a growing share of renewable

materials, cultivation methods and managing expectations in cultivation have become relevant topics of discussion.



2.3 Collaborations

Further collaborations during the past year included:

Hort2theFuture

In the European collaborative project Hort2theFuture, which started in 2024, 28 European universities and organisations are conducting research into scalable, affordable and easy-to-use growing media based on EU raw materials with a low environmental footprint. In 2025, RHP continued its work within this project on the development of an online calculation tool for substrates.

Royal Association 'Stadswerk Nederland'

Knowledge was also shared in the context of public space and soil management, for example through webinars organised in cooperation with the Royal Association 'Stadswerk Nederland' on topics such as Japanese knotweed, the sustainability of tree substrates, soil biology and tender specifications.

Covenant Environmental Impact of Potting Soil and Substrates

In 2025, RHP also continued to contribute within the context of the covenant to the raw materials transition

through research into the quality and safety of renewable raw materials, the safeguarding of quality and (phytosanitary) safety, and the sharing of knowledge on raw materials and substrates with, among others, certified producers.

Roadmap and Opportunities Map

In 2025, the Roadmap and Opportunities Map for Renewable Raw Materials for Growing Media entered the implementation phase. This roadmap aims to develop a broadly supported,

concrete action list to achieve the covenant goals, with the focus in 2025 on the appointment of a programme manager and advancing implementation.

Expansion of RHP-recognised laboratories

In 2025, RHP expanded its network of recognised laboratories with Normec RobaLab in Deurne (The Netherlands). This official recognition enables both certified companies and RHP itself to have RHP analyses carried out by this laboratory. RobaLab has specific



expertise in nematode detection.

Public-private partnership project microbiome in growing media

RHP's participation in the Top Sector research project on the microbiological quality of growing media also continued in 2025. The knowledge and methodologies emerging from this project are relevant to RHP and its affiliated certified companies.

Project wAardewerk

In 2025, RHP collaborated with chain partners within the wAardewerk project on the application of circular residual streams in tree nursery cultivation, with attention to cultivation practices, water quality and regulations. RHP contributed by developing and substantiating an assessment framework for the certification of circular supplementary soil mixtures, and by providing expertise in the field of quality assurance.



3. KEY FIGURES

CERTIFIED COMPANIES



77

Including 3 new certified companies in 2025: **SIA Hawita Baltic** from Latvia, **WB Infra** from the Netherlands and **Knauf Insulation** from Slovenia.



431

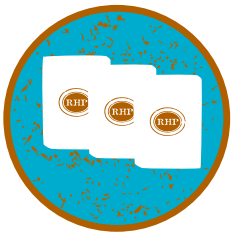
CERTIFIED LOCATIONS



16,831

PRODUCT ANALYSES

CERTIFIED RAW MATERIALS AND END PRODUCTS



29



11,250,000 m³

CERTIFIED PRODUCT

FINANCES

NETTO TURNOVER: € 2,559,413



RHP is a non-profit foundation. Part of the result is intended for laboratory renovation; the remainder is added to the reserves for the continuity of the foundation and research and development for the substrate sector.

MEETINGS



PRODUCT GROUPS 23

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE 2

CENTRAL COLLEGE OF EXPERTS 2

WEBINARS 8 of which:

> for certified companies

- Online Research Updates (March, June, October) 3
- Webinars in cooperation with Royal Association 'Stadswerk Nederland' (February, June, October, November) 4
- hybrid meeting 'Research & Transition: The road ahead' (December) 1





IMPROVEMENT ANALYSES **220**

RISK ANALYSES **32**

HYGIENE PROTOCOLS **22**

INTERNAL AUDITS **35**

CONSULTATION IN THE
CONTEXT OF SUPPORT AND ADVICE **181**

DAMAGE/PRACTICAL PROBLEMS **27**



TRAININGS **6**

> for certified companies

- Training Growing Media A (Dutch) **1**
- Training Growing Media A (English) **1**
- In-company trainings **3**

> for auditors

- Training and harmonisation day for auditors of the quality marks RHP and RAG **1**



PRESENTATIONS

At various occasions in the Netherlands and abroad, RHP was represented. Where relevant, the organisation, its quality marks, ongoing research into raw materials and growing media, and sector developments were presented or discussed. This took place, among others, at:

- Treeport Zundert (December)
- RHS Peat Free Conference (December)
- Product meeting Cyclamen 'Glastuinbouw Nederland' (November)
- IVG Branchentag Erden & Substrate in Bad Zwischenahn, Germany (November)
- ISHS Growing Media Symposium in Freising, Germany (September)
- Baltic Peat Producers Forum in Riga, Latvia (September)
- Public Space Trade Fair in Utrecht, The Netherlands (September)
- GreenTech in Amsterdam, The Netherlands (June)
- BVOR demonstration days in Schijndel, The Netherlands (May)
- Substrate Knowledge Day "Sustainable substrates, route and opportunities" in Naaldwijk, The Netherlands (April)
- HortiContact in Gorinchem, The Netherlands (February)
- IPM in Essen, Germany (January)

Various presentations were also given throughout the year at and for certified companies, their customers and other stakeholders.



INTERNATIONAL VISITS

During the year, RHP received and visited national and international contacts, actively exchanging knowledge. These included, among others, sector associations such as the Dutch Association of Potting Soil and Substrate Manufacturers (VPN), the Association of Organic Residual Materials (BVOR), Growing Media Europe (GME) and the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), as well as retail organisations, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, knowledge institutes, and (potential) certified companies.



4. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

More insight into packaged growing media

In 2025, RHP continued its research into the behaviour of packaged growing media. During storage, chemical and biological processes may occur in substrates that affect the composition of the product. Which changes occur exactly depends, among other things, on fertilisation, storage conditions and the presence or absence of oxygen.

This oxygen balance is of major importance. Under specific conditions, anaerobic conditions may arise in packaging, which can alter the product and occasionally affect cultivation. Greater insight into these processes helps to better understand what happens in packaged substrates during storage and which factors play a role.

To map this more clearly, three new research documents became available to certified companies in 2025. These include a research report on the behaviour of packaged substrate, a technical note on oxygen measurements in big bales and a technical note on the effect of perforation on oxygen levels. This documentation provides greater insight into the processes that may occur during storage and into the factors influencing them.

Processes may occur in packaged growing media during storage that influence product properties.

In addition, RHP published a factsheet on packaged growing media in 2025. This factsheet informs certified companies and their customers and relations about the occasional occurrence of anaerobic conditions in packaging under specific circumstances, the possible consequences for cultivation and points of attention for the user. In this way, specialist knowledge on this subject has been made more widely accessible.

More insight into oxygen and anaerobic conditions helps to better manage quality changes during storage.

Through these efforts, RHP supports producers in better understanding storage processes and managing quality changes during storage. In this way, independent, technical knowledge directly contributes to the quality and safety of substrates in practice.





Collective research

Also in 2025, research on fundamental topics remained central within the collective research programme for affiliated, certified companies.

Development of the online calculation tool for growing media

In 2025, further work was carried out on the development of an online calculation tool for substrates. This tool is intended to enable the estimation of, among other aspects, the physical properties and fertiliser value of substrates based on their composition.

The tool is being developed within the framework of the EU project Hort2theFuture and is intended to support certified companies in the substantiated formulation and further development of substrates containing renewable raw materials.

In addition, work was carried out in 2025 on the development of a prescription for substrates containing renewable raw materials. This prescription is intended as a tool to support communication between growers and representatives on points of attention and possible changes in adjusted recipes that may differ from previous growing experience. The prescription will be introduced step by step in 2026.

Structural stability of raw materials

Structural stability of raw materials remained an important research topic in 2025. In this research, raw materials are tested in an incubation set-up, in which the loss of structural firmness over time is monitored.

This provides insight into the extent to which raw materials and blends retain their structure under relevant conditions. This knowledge supports producers in assessing (new) raw materials and contributes to a better prediction of substrate behaviour in practice.

Human pathogens in raw materials and growing media

Human pathogens in raw materials and growing media also formed part of the collective research programme in 2025. The research focuses on gaining further insight into the occurrence of human pathogens in raw materials and their possible development in substrates, so that risks can be more effectively assessed and controlled. This knowledge supports the substantiation of control measures and the demonstrable management of safety risks within the chain.

Behaviour of packaged growing media

The behaviour of packaged growing media was an important research topic in 2025. The focus was on practical measurements of factors relevant to preventing anaerobic conditions (oxygen deficiency) in packaging.

New research documentation became available to certified companies on this subject, including a research report on the behaviour of packaged substrates and technical notes on oxygen measurements in big bales and the effect of perforation. This knowledge supports the management of quality changes during storage and helps reduce risks of practical problems in cultivation.

Microbiome in growing media

RHP participated in a public-private partnership (PPP) project carried out by Wageningen University & Research on the microbiome in growing media. This multi-year research project, running until 2027, aims to gain insight into how the microbiome is influenced by the specific composition of substrates and, ultimately, its effect on the plant.

The research activities started in the second half of 2025 and will continue into 2026.



5. QUALITY MARKS

The foundation RHP manages 2 quality marks for substrates and potting soil, the RHP quality mark and the RAG quality mark, with a total of 6 different fields of application:



Certified for
Horticulture



Certified for
Mushrooms



Certified for
Consumer



Certified for
Landscaping



Certified for
Green Roof



Certified for
Soil Improvement

Further development of RHP quality mark

On 31 January 2025, the adjustments to the RHP product certification scheme were published. Each year, substantive changes are introduced into the scheme, partly on the basis of developments in the sector. Certified companies were then given three months to implement the amended requirements in their business operations and quality management systems. The new requirements entered into force on 1 May 2025.

The RAG product certification scheme was also renewed in 2025. The updated version was made available on 1 March 2025, after which certified companies were given three months to implement the amended requirements. The new requirements entered into force on 1 June 2025.

25 years of independent control and accreditation

In 2025, an important quality assurance milestone took centre stage: on 20 April it was exactly 25 years since RHP outsourced the control of the RHP quality mark to an external certification body. This created a clear separation between research and advice on the one hand, and control on the other. Thanks to this independent control, the RHP product certification scheme was accredited in 2000. Since then, control has been carried out by certification bodies under the supervision of the Dutch Accreditation

Council, and independent control and accreditation form an important pillar of trust in the RHP quality mark.

Uniform application of scheme requirements

To support the uniform application of the scheme requirements, the annual harmonisation day for auditors of the RHP and RAG quality marks was once again organised in 2025. During this meeting, the new and amended modules and standards were discussed, with attention to consistent interpretation and the sharing of practical experience.

Responsible production: RPC and RPP

In 2025, further work was carried out on the development and practical testing of the scheme for responsibly produced coir (RPC). Preparations were also made for the integration of the activities of Responsibly Produced Peat (RPP) into the RHP organisation as of 1 January 2026. The RPP scheme and the associated certification standards will remain independent and clearly recognisable.



RHP

Galgeweg 38

2691 MG 's-Gravenzande (The Netherlands)

+31 (0)174 - 62 03 60

www.rhp.nl



Quality of growing media

matters