



**Growing Media**  
Europe

## Opportunities and challenges for the manufacturers of growing media

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Policy-related workshop EU fertilising products regulation GrowingMedia 2021

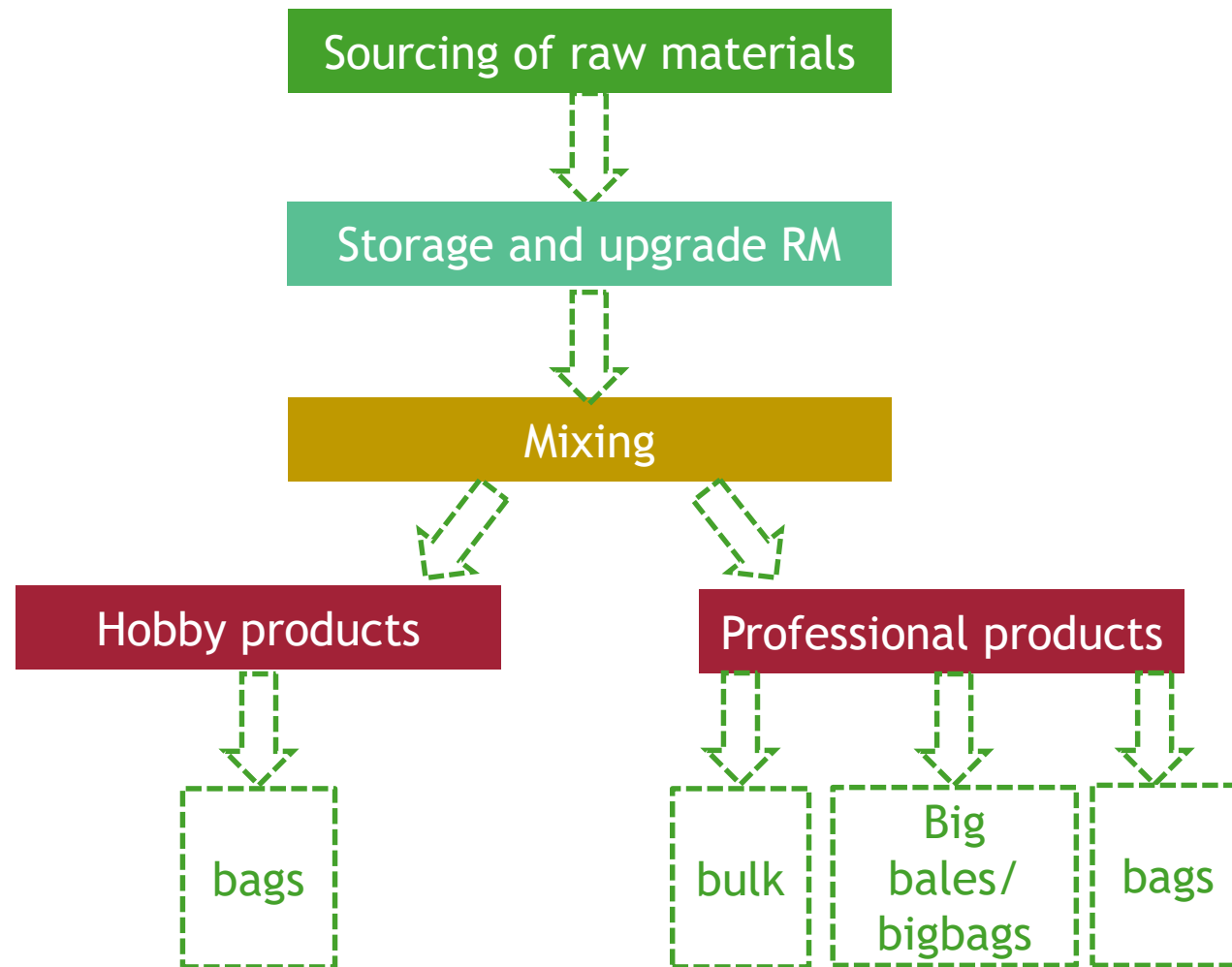
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## GME representing Growing Media industry

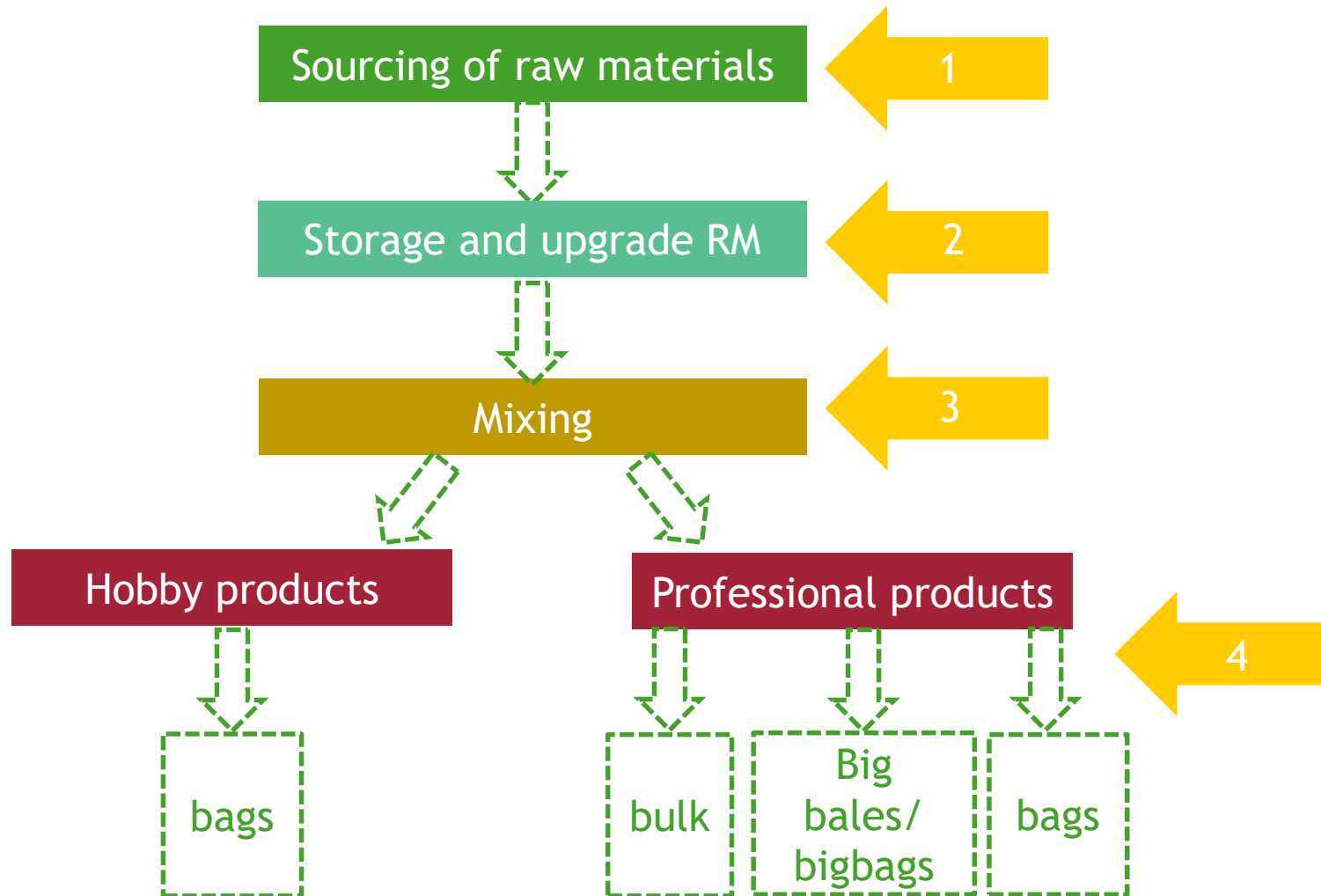


- Small industry
  - 1,3 billion EUR
  - Mainly SME's
  - Unknown to average consumer
- 
- BUT key role in horticulture, food production, afforestation, urban greening and gardening

## How are growing media produced?



## How is the FPR impacting the GM production?



## 1. Sourcing of Raw Materials

- Constant reduction of share of primary raw materials
- Focus on decreasing the environmental footprint of all RM
- **Circular products:**
  - Green waste compost, barks, plant fibers, coir products, coffee grounds, rice hulls, spent substrates, ...

Tailor-made  
products in  
constant  
innovation



## 1. Sourcing of Raw Materials: woodfibers

- Innovative product
- Developed and finetuned over the last 5-10 years towards valuable raw materials for Growing media
- Very low environmental footprint



**Fiberisation  
Colouring and compensating N**



## 1. Sourcing of Raw Materials: woodfibers

- Initial 2019/1009 did not include fiberisation as process to treat plant materials (CMC2)
- Delegated regulation has included now fiberisation
- **BUT** Max temperature of 100° C and no additives except water
- Rationale found in strubias report for pyrolysis products (CMC14)

- Further steps
  - Sampling and analysis of products for CMC14 parameters
  - CMC 1 / Reach registration approach

## 2. Storage and upgrading of RM

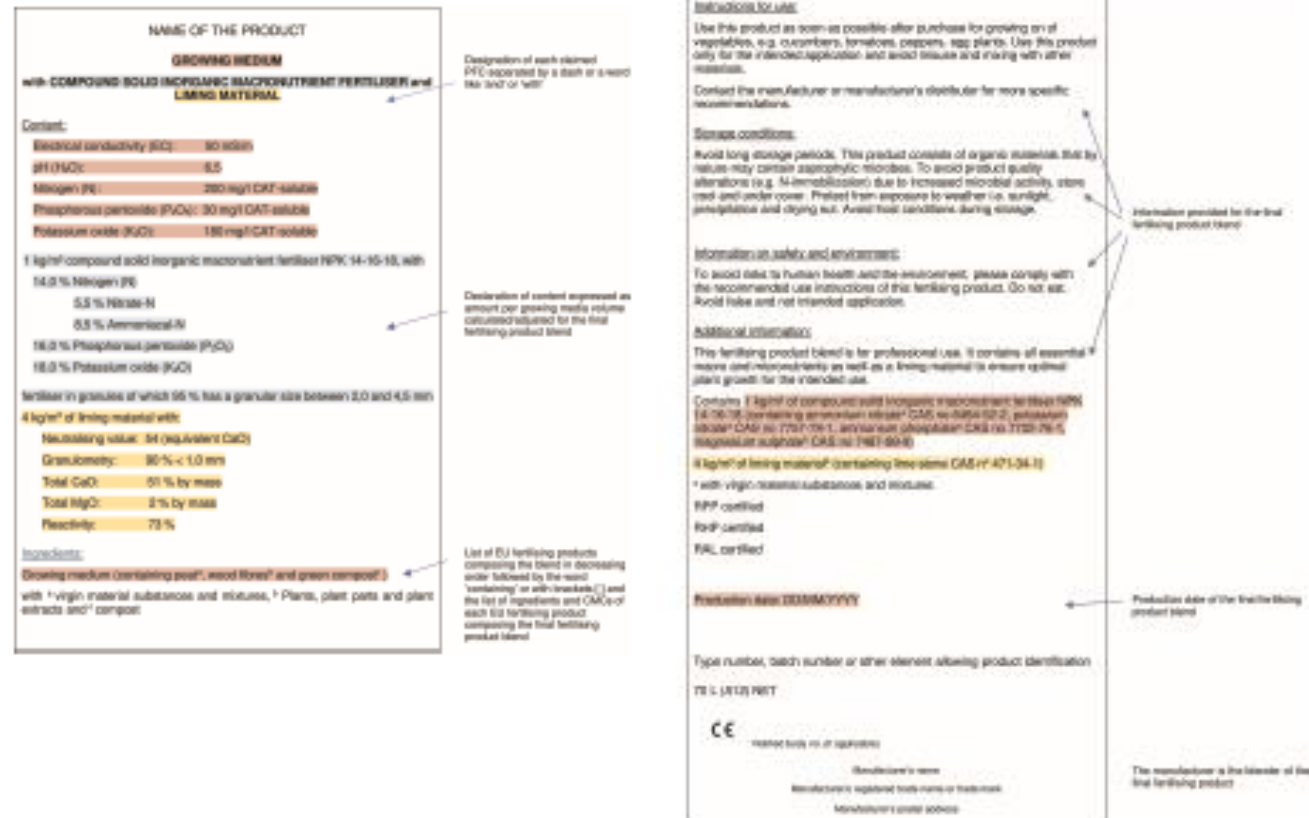
- Pathogen levels tested as a parameter to evaluate the effectiveness of the sanitation, prior to entering a growing media production site
- Potential regrowth of pathogens in RM during storage and mixing
- This does not necessarily mean that the fertilising product mix would automatically no longer be a compliant EU fertilising product

Rationale well explained in the FAQ issued by the EU Commission



### 3. Mixing

- 2021/C 119/01 states that a GM (PFC 4) cannot contain fertilisers, liming materials, plant biostimulants, or products belonging to other PFCs.
- Only blends (PFC7) are possible in
- Such type of blends should be lab constituent products
- Makes labelling complicated!



**NAME OF THE PRODUCT**  
**GROWING MEDIUM**  
with COMPOUND SOLID ORGANIC MACROELEMENT FERTILISER and LIMING MATERIAL

**Content:**  
Electrical conductivity (EC): 30 µS/cm  
pH (pH): 5.5  
Nitrogen (N): 200 mg/l CAT-soluble  
Phosphorus pentoxide (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>): 30 mg/l CAT-soluble  
Potassium oxide (K<sub>2</sub>O): 180 mg/l CAT-soluble

1 kg/m<sup>3</sup> compound solid organic macroelement fertiliser NPK 14-15-15, with  
14.0 % Nitrogen (N)  
15.5 % Nitrogen (N)  
15.5 % Ammoniacal-N  
18.0 % Phosphorus pentoxide (P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub>)  
18.0 % Potassium oxide (K<sub>2</sub>O)

Fertiliser in granules of which 95 % has a granular size between 2.0 and 4.0 mm

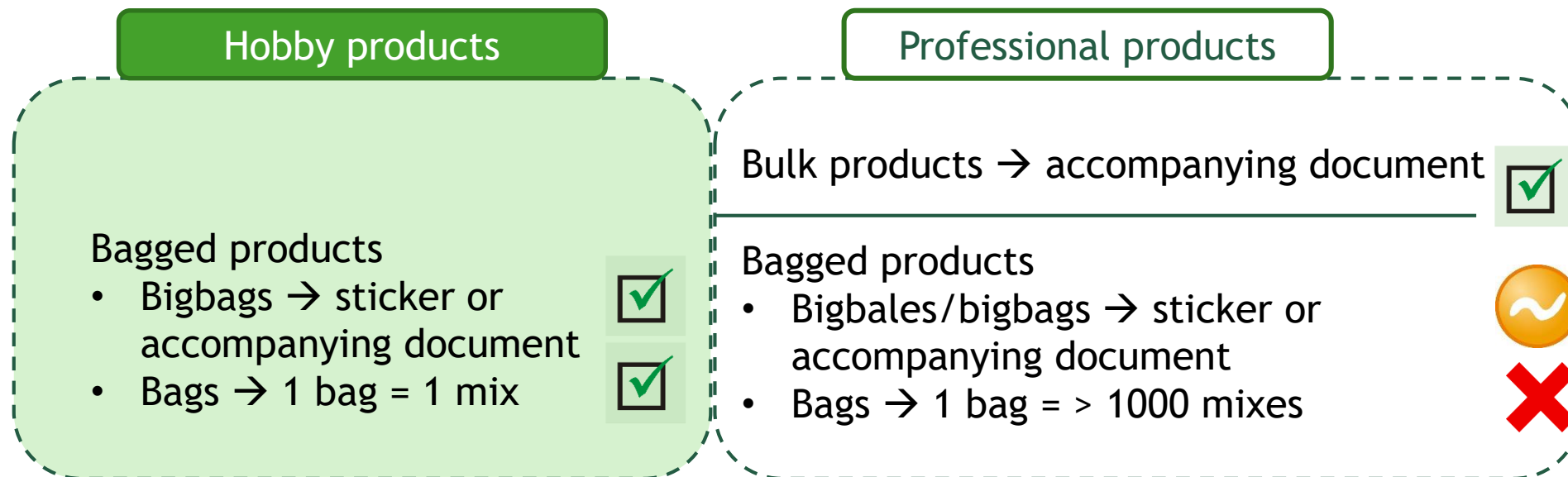
4 kg/m<sup>3</sup> of liming material with  
Neutralising value: 34 (equivalent CaO)  
Granulometry: 80 % < 1.0 mm  
Total CaO: 51 % by mass  
Total MgO: 2 % by mass  
Reactivity: 75 %

**Ingredients:**  
Growing medium (containing peat\*, wood fibres† and green compost\*),  
with † virgin natural substances and extracts, ‡ Plants, plant parts and plant extracts and †† compost

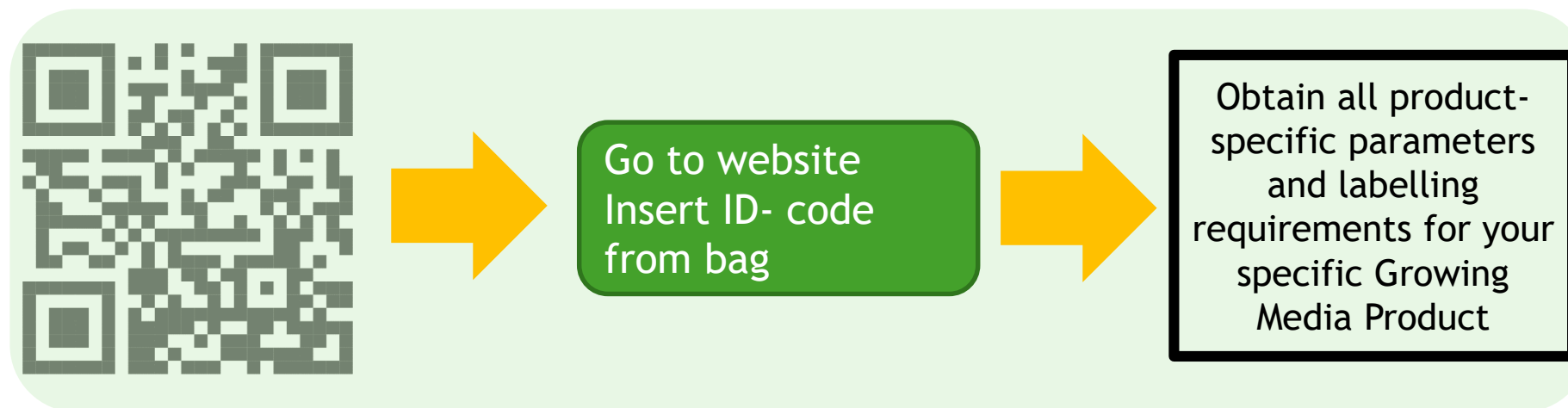
**Instructions for use:**  
Use this product as soon as possible after purchase for growing on of vegetables, e.g. cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, egg plants. Use this product only for the intended application and avoid misuse and mixing with other materials.  
Contact the manufacturer or manufacturer's distributor for more specific recommendations.  
**Storage conditions:**  
Avoid long storage periods. This product consists of organic material that by nature may contain saprophytic microbes. To avoid product quality alterations (e.g. N-immobilisation) due to increased microbial activity, store cool and under cover. Protect from exposure to weather (i.e. sunlight, precipitation and drying out). Avoid frost conditions during storage.  
**Information on safety and environment:**  
To avoid risks to human health and the environment, please comply with the recommended use instructions of this fertilising product. Do not eat. Avoid fumes and not intended application.  
**Additional information:**  
This fertilising product blend is for professional use. It contains all essential macro and micronutrients as well as a liming material to ensure optimal plant growth for the intended use.  
Contains 1 kg/m<sup>3</sup> of compound solid nitrogen macroelement fertiliser NPK 14-15-15 containing ammoniacal nitrogen CAS no. 4780-07-2, potassium sulphate CAS no. 7727-38-1, ammoniacal phosphate CAS no. 1122-76-5, magnesium sulphate CAS no. 7487-90-9  
4 kg/m<sup>3</sup> of liming material containing lime stone CAS (74-20-4)  
\* with virgin natural substances and extracts.  
BPP certified  
Eco-P certified  
FAL certified  
**Production date: DDMMYYYY**  
Type number, batch number or other element allowing product identification  
TIL 1 (1)(1) NIT  
CE  
Manufacturer's name  
Manufacturer's registered trade name or trademark  
Manufacturer's postal address

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## 4. Labelling of growing media products



## 4. Labelling of growing media products: approach



**Solution: digital labelling!**

## Other outstanding issues for GM

- Certification
  - Tailor-made products
  - >1000 mixes per production site
  - Product/batch certification impossible!!
  - Module D certification only workable solution
  - Notified bodies: status uncertain
- Compatibility with other regulations
  - Plant health regulation
  - Organic farming regulation



**Growing Media**  
Europe

**Thank you!**

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