

PERLITE

(Data in thousand metric tons, unless otherwise noted)

Domestic Production and Use: The estimated value (f.o.b. mine) of processed perlite produced in 2001 was \$20.5 million. Crude ore production came from 10 mines operated by 8 companies in 7 Western States. New Mexico continued to be the major producing State. Processed ore was expanded at 62 plants in 31 States. The principal end uses were building construction products, 69%; horticultural aggregate, 12%; filter aid, 8%; fillers, 7%; and other, 4%.

Salient Statistics—United States:	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001^e
Production ¹	706	685	711	672	650
Imports for consumption ^e	135	150	144	180	185
Exports ^e	38	42	47	43	39
Consumption, apparent	803	793	808	809	796
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine	33.04	31.91	33.40	33.78	31.55
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill	135	140	150	150	145
Net import reliance ² as a percentage of apparent consumption	12	14	12	17	18

Recycling: Not available.

Import Sources (1997-2000): Greece, 100%.

Tariff: Item	Number	Normal Trade Relations 12/31/01
Mineral substances, not specifically provided for	2530.10.0000	Free.

Depletion Allowance: 10% (Domestic and foreign).

Government Stockpile: None.

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Events, Trends, and Issues: Production¹ of domestic perlite decreased 3.3% and imports of perlite increased 2.8% compared with that of 2000. Domestic perlite continued to encounter transportation cost disadvantages in some areas of the Eastern United States compared with Greek imports. However, U.S. perlite exports to Canada partially offset imports into the Eastern United States.

Perlite mining generally took place in remote areas, and environmental problems were not severe. The overburden, reject ore, and mineral fines produced during ore mining and processing are used to reclaim the mined-out areas, and, therefore, little waste is produced. Airborne dust is captured by baghouses, and there is practically no runoff that contributes to water pollution.

New uses of perlite that are being researched may increase domestic consumption.

World Processed Perlite Production, Crude Ore Reserves, and Reserve Base:

	Production		Reserves ³	Reserve base ³
	2000	2001 ^e		
United States	672	650	50,000	200,000
Greece	500	500	50,000	300,000
Hungary	250	250	(⁴)	(⁴)
Japan	250	250	(⁴)	(⁴)
Turkey	130	150	(⁴)	(⁴)
Other countries	210	200	600,000	1,500,000
World total (may be rounded)	2,010	2,000	700,000	2,000,000

World Resources: Insufficient information is available in perlite-producing countries to estimate resources with any reliability.

Substitutes: Alternative materials can be substituted for all uses of perlite, if necessary. Long-established competitive commodities include diatomite, expanded clay and shale, pumice, slag, and vermiculite.

^eEstimated. NA Not available.

¹Processed perlite sold and used by producers.

²Defined as imports - exports + adjustments for Government and industry stock changes; changes in stocks not available and assumed to be zero for apparent consumption and net import reliance calculations.

³See Appendix C for definitions.

⁴Included with "Other countries."