

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 1999 was \$22.9 million. Crude ore production came from 11 mines operated by 9 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, 71%; horticultural aggregate, 10%; filter aid, 9%; fillers, 7%; and other, 3%.

<u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999^e</u>
Production ¹	700	684	706	685	726
Imports for consumption ^e	84	125	135	150	152
Exports ^e	40	38	38	42	42
Consumption, apparent	744	771	803	793	836
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine	27.93	28.25	33.04	31.91	31.59
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill	125	125	135	140	150
Net import reliance ² as a percent of apparent consumption	6	11	12	14	13

Recycling: Not available.

Import Sources (1995-98): Greece, 100%.

<u>Tariff: Item</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Normal Trade Relations</u> <u>12/31/99</u>
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: A recently opened mine in Utah was expected to be sold by yearend 1999. A perlite mine in Oregon was purchased by an Eastern coal producer. Closure and reclamation of a mine near Florence, CO, continued.

Perlite mining generally occurred 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.

Domestic perlite continued to encounter transportation cost disadvantages in some areas of the Eastern United States compared with Greek imports. However, Western U.S. perlite exports to Canada partially offset imports into the Eastern United States.

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

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

	Production		Reserves ³	Reserve base ³
	1998	1999 ^e		
United States	685	726	50,000	200,000
Greece	425	425	50,000	300,000
Japan	200	200	(⁴)	(⁴)
Turkey	150	160	(⁴)	(⁴)
Other countries	380	400	600,000	1,500,000
World total (may be rounded)	1,840	1,910	700,000	2,000,000

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

Substitutes: Alternate 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."