

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 2000 was \$21.9 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 61 plants in 31 States. The principal end uses were building construction products, 72%; horticultural aggregate, 10%; filter aid, 8%; fillers, 7%; and other, 3%.

<u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000^e</u>
Production ¹	684	706	685	711	675
Imports for consumption ^e	125	135	150	144	170
Exports ^e	38	38	42	47	50
Consumption, apparent	771	803	793	808	795
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine	28.25	33.04	31.91	33.40	32.44
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill	125	135	140	150	150
Net import reliance ² as a percent of apparent consumption	11	12	14	12	15

Recycling: Not available.

Import Sources (1996-99): Greece, 100%.

<u>Tariff: Item</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Normal Trade Relations</u> <u>12/31/00</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: Imports of perlite increased 18% compared with those of 1999. Sales of domestic perlite decreased about 5% compared to those of 1999. 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 are being researched, which may increase domestic consumption.

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

	Production		Reserves ³	Reserve base ³
	1999	2000 ^e		
United States	711	675	50,000	200,000
Greece	500	500	50,000	300,000
Japan	200	200	(⁴)	(⁴)
Turkey	130	130	(⁴)	(⁴)
Other countries	310	300	600,000	1,500,000
World total (may be rounded)	1,850	1,800	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."