

Dear [CEO of company]

Re: Labelling and sales of peat-containing products

I am writing to you on behalf of consumers who have volunteered their time to be “Peat Inspectors”. These campaigners, who are your customers, have been looking into the labelling of products that may have been grown in, or contain, peat. They have shared what they found in store with us.

Peat Inspectors have visited a wide range of retailers across the UK and have discovered some encouraging good practice that helps consumers choose products that are less damaging to the environment. For example, you may have seen that B&Q made a public commitment to becoming peat-free and has ‘peat-free’ labelling on many plug plants and potted plants.

However, there is still work to do! Good labelling practice should ideally be consistent across all retailers, whilst the transition to peat-free products takes place.

More and better labelling on peat-containing and peat-free products by all suppliers is critical to allow consumers to make informed choices about the products they buy. As awareness grows more people understand that by avoiding peat-containing products they can support nature’s recovery. But you may not realise that in addition, providing peat-free products and clear labelling also supports responsible and sustainable business practices, and can contribute towards the UK’s net zero commitments.

The Wildlife Trusts would like to spotlight those retailers making these active changes.

Peatlands are unique habitats and important natural places for people and for wildlife. They help to clean 70% of our drinking water and to reduce flooding. Due to unnecessary peat use within products such as composts, mushrooms, plug plants, salads and herbs - as well as over-grazing and drainage - more than 80% of the UK’s peatlands have already been damaged. Lowland peat soils, where many of the UK’s fruit and vegetables, cereals and livestock are grown or grazed, also urgently need protecting for the same reasons.

The Wildlife Trusts, our Peat Inspectors and wildlife lovers across the UK look forward to hearing about your company’s plans to promote peat-free and to bring in labelling for consumers. We are ready to speak to you and your colleagues about how you can add 'peat-free' or 'contains peat' labels on the fresh produce and plants sold. We would also love to hear about how your company is supporting farmers transition to using less peat and reducing their reliance on peat-containing soils.

We look forward to hearing from you.