

## 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 1997 was \$22.4 million. Crude ore production came from eight mines operated by six companies in five 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, 71%; filter aid, 9%; horticultural aggregate, 9%; fillers, 8%; and other, 3%.

<b><u>Salient Statistics—United States:</u></b>	<b><u>1993</u></b>	<b><u>1994</u></b>	<b><u>1995</u></b>	<b><u>1996</u></b>	<b><u>1997<sup>e</sup></u></b>
Production <sup>1</sup>	569	644	700	684	703
Imports for consumption <sup>e</sup>	70	70	84	125	125
Exports <sup>e</sup>	26	30	40	38	38
Consumption, apparent	613	684	744	771	790
Price, average value, dollars per ton, f.o.b. mine	30.63	30.03	27.93	28.25	31.82
Stocks, producer, yearend	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Employment, mine and mill	115	125	125	125	140
Net import reliance <sup>2</sup> as a percent of apparent consumption	7	6	6	11	11

**Recycling:** Not available.

**Import Sources (1993-96):** Greece, 100%.

<b><u>Tariff: Item</u></b>	<b><u>Number</u></b>	<b><u>Most favored nation (MFN)</u></b> <b><u>12/31/97</u></b>	<b><u>Non-MFN<sup>3</sup></u></b> <b><u>12/31/97</u></b>
Mineral substances, not specifically provided for	2530.10.0000	Free	Free.

**Depletion Allowance:** 10% (Domestic), 10% (Foreign).

**Government Stockpile:** None.

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**Events, Trends, and Issues:** Processed ore production increased nearly 3% in 1997 after decreasing 2% in 1996. Apparent consumption increased for the sixth straight year. New mines in Oregon and Utah were to be opened in 1997.

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 were being researched, which may increase domestic consumption.

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

	Production		Reserves <sup>4</sup>	Reserve base <sup>4</sup>
	1996	1997 <sup>e</sup>		
United States	684	703	50,000	200,000
Greece	350	375	50,000	300,000
Japan	200	200	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Turkey	160	170	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Other countries	286	290	600,000	1,500,000
World total (may be rounded)	1,680	1,740	700,000	2,000,000

**World Resources:** Too little 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.

<sup>e</sup>Estimated. NA Not available.

<sup>1</sup>Processed perlite sold and used by producers.

<sup>2</sup>Defined 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.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix B.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix D for definitions.

<sup>5</sup>Included with "Other countries."