**Growing Peat-free Webinar March 16th 2 -4:30 pm (Timings are approximate.)**

**2:05 pm Introduction from Jim Marshall, Collection Holder. 20 min.**

Jim Marshall Vice Chairman of Plant Heritage and who led the initial National Trust Peat-free trials over eighteen years ago. Jim will discuss Defra’s existing position on the use of peat and offer a brief introduction to the current Defra/RHS three-year peat-free trial. Jim will also share his experience of growing a wide range of plants peat-free, including three National Collections.

**2:30 pm Peat-Free Growing Media – a Manufacturer’s Perspective**. **Catherine Dawson of Melcourt. 20 min.**

Catherine Dawson of Melcourt will give a summary of the latest developments with peat-free media from both a Melcourt, and a wider industry perspective. Examples of successful growing without peat will be shown and considerations of what the future might hold for UK growing media will be discussed.

**2:45 pm Sam Green & Mercy Morris, National Collection Holders and Judith Conroy, Francis Rayns and Margi Lennartsson, Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, at Coventry University, 10 min.**

Sam Green and Mercy Morris, Plant Collection Holders for *Chlorophytum comosum,* Spider Plants, will share Mercy's peat-free recipe for potting mix of spider plants. Judith Conroy, Francis Rayns and Margi Lennartsson, Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, at Coventry University, have been investigating peat-free growing media for gardening and commercial horticulture as part of their research at Coventry University, as well as and in their former work at Garden Organic, supporting their longstanding campaign to end the use of peat in horticulture. They will talk about history of peat use in UK, current peat-free trials, and future research possibilities.

**Short 10-minute break.**

**3:05 pm Robert Hurst, Founder of Fertile Fibre, and grower at The Cottage Herbery.**

**Pre-recorded content. Approx. 15 min.**

An introduction about Fertile Fibre and an explanation of the differences between composts and growing media. Following on with a growing section about propagation, growing in containers and how to make the best use of Fertile Fibre with different types of plants.

**3:20 pm Neil Williams, Petersfield Growing Mediums. 20 mins.**

A brief history and context around switching to peat free growing mediums including examples of and reasons for success.

**3:45 pm Growing Plants Peat-free in the National Trust. Chris Trimmer, National Trust Plant Conservation Centre. 10 minutes**

A look at the challenges of the range of plants produced peat-free and the compost mixes used in over 30 years production without using peat.

**4 pm Q & A**

Q & A session will be at the end of the session once all presentations have been completed.