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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO CEN REPORT (PrEN 12577 & PrEN 1278)

In October 1996 prEN 12577 *Soil improvers and growing media - Labelling* and prEN 12578 *Soil improvers and growing media - Specifications - Product schedules* were submitted to Public Enquiry with the intention that they should be published as European Standards. However, Working Group 1 of CEN/TC 223 (which was responsible for prEN 12577 and prEN 12578) concluded at its second Comments Resolution Meeting (CRM) in September 1997 that the Technical Committee should stop work on these two work items and withdraw the studies with the establishment of a CEN Report (CEN/TC 223 N173).

The reasons for their decision were reported by the Convenor of the Working Group in CEN/TC 223 N173. Essentially the two items, prEN 12577 (Labelling) and prEN 12578 (Specifications - Products schedules), although not mandated had given rise to national conflicts as these areas are covered in several countries by legislation. Requests for A-deviations with accompanying text had been received by France and Germany during the Public Enquiry. Austria had not prepared any text for A-deviation, but had indicated their intention to have A-deviations to prEN 12577 and prEN 12578<sup>1</sup>. During the plenary meeting of TC 223 in June 1997, Spain and the Netherlands indicated their intent to submit A-deviations if possible at this stage. The CRM Convenor reported that countries with legislation wanted full covering standards from the day of implementation, including all methods of analyses, and not a step by step procedure as presupposed in prEN 12578. The specifications and the obligatory and optional declarations which required measurement, had been limited to those parameters for which TC 223 prEN draft analytical methods were available. TC 223 had agreed that once further analytical methods were available the specifications and the obligatory and optional declarations would be extended (see Introduction). The CRM Convenor also reported that no country with legislation was, in the process of European Standardization, willing to, or able to, change any of the specifications laid down in their legislation (for example maximum limits of undesirable substances).

The CRM recommended that the best solution to continue harmonization of trade with soil improvers and growing media in Europe, was to stop the standardization on the two work items and to publish the revised prENs as a CEN Report. It recommended that the CEN Report be sent to the European Commission as the basis for further harmonization in this politically influenced area.

Another obstacle was the development of a system of specific product schedules. As the scope of prEN 12577 and prEN 12578 covered all soil improvers and growing media, the list of products had increased substantially. It became clear that a maintenance agency would need to be established in order to frequently revise the list and in effect provide a product registration system. This was not practical and it was not the intention of TC 223 to have such a system.

Results of a questionnaire prepared by the Working Group Convenor showed that all countries replying had supported the CEN Report decision.<sup>2</sup> The results also showed overwhelming support for the continued standardization of methods for sampling and analysis.

PrEN 12577 and prEN 12578, revised in accordance with the technical and editorial decisions taken on the Public Enquiry comments, were merged into one document as the two items were inextricably linked.

The unanimous TC 223 decision to produce a CEN Report is recorded in CEN/TC 223 Resolution 044/1998/00 taken by correspondence on 1998-04-18.

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<sup>1</sup> A-deviation text from Austria was produced at the TC 223 WG 1 meeting in April 1998 and it is appended to the CEN Report.

<sup>2</sup> Spain changed their vote from objection to approval for the publication of a CEN Report, which gave unanimous approval from Members voting.

## **Foreword**

This CEN Report is published by the European Committee for Standardization. It has been prepared by CEN/TC 223/WG 1 and contains the text of prEN 12577 and prEN 12578, merged, and revised in accordance with decisions taken during the Public Enquiry. It is published for information only and does not have the status of a European Standard. The subsequent text in this CEN Report, starting with the Introduction, is in the style of a European Standard but it is for information only.

## **Introduction**

The requirements in this CEN Report are limited to some chemical and physical parameters for which analytical methods are already described in available drafted documents (drafts of prEN's). The committee which is responsible for the CEN Report is aware of the need for further details concerning nutrient contents, the suitability or otherwise for organic farming (e.g. sewage sludge, mineral fertilizer, pesticide residues etc.) and for the assessment of harmful effects caused by unavoidable pollutants.

The preparation of suitable analytical methods is on the way. They will be published as soon as possible. An extended version of this CEN Report will be drafted when the analytical methods are available.

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## 1 Scope

This CEN Report gives labelling and specification requirements for soil improvers, soil improver constituents, growing media and growing media constituents. Specifications for designated products are given in product schedules in annex A.

This CEN Report does not apply to liming and other materials covered by CEN/TC 260.

## 2 Normative references

This European Standard incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. These normative references are cited at the appropriate places in the text and the publications are listed hereafter. For dated references, subsequent amendments to or revisions of any of these publications apply to this CEN Report only when incorporated in it by amendment or revision. For undated references the latest edition of the publication referred to applies.

EN 12580 <sup>1)</sup>	Soil improvers and growing media - Determination of a quantity
EN 13037 <sup>1)</sup>	Soil improvers and growing media - Determination of pH value
EN 13038 <sup>1)</sup>	Soil improvers and growing media - Determination of electrical conductivity
EN 13039 <sup>1)</sup>	Soil improvers and growing media - Determination of organic matter content and ash
EN 13040 <sup>1)</sup>	Soil improvers and growing media - Sample preparation and determination of dry matter content, moisture content and laboratory compacted bulk density
EN 13041 <sup>1)</sup>	Soil improvers and growing media - Determination of physical properties - Dry bulk density, air volume, water volume, shrinkage value and total pore space
ISO 7409	Fertilizers - Marking - Presentation and declarations
ISO 11260	Soil quality - Determination of effective cation exchange capacity and base saturation level using barium chloride solution
ISO 11277	Soil quality - Determination of particle size distribution in mineral soil material - method by sieving and sedimentation

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this CEN Report the following terms and definitions apply :

### 3.1

#### **soil improver constituent**

material which is suitable as an ingredient of soil improver

### 3.2 soil improver

material added to soil in situ primarily to maintain or improve its physical properties, and which may improve its chemical and/or biological properties or activity

### 3.3 growing medium constituent

material which is suitable as an ingredient of growing media

### 3.4 growing medium

material, other than soils in situ, in which plants are grown

### 3.5 organic materials

materials of plant and animal origin

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<sup>1</sup> In preparation