**PRESS RELEASE**

The advantages of Perlite in cannabis farming

**5 October 2021:** The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has unveiled a masterplan to industrialise and commercialise the R28 billion cannabis industry. The masterplan focuses on the cultivation of hemp and marijuana. South Africa legalised marijuana for personal use in 2018, setting the wheels in motion for the government’s masterplan to regulate and formalise the industry.

This has resulted in cannabis becoming a key focus for sustainable farming practices. Thus, a Perlite-based horticultural growing medium like [Pratley](http://www.pratleyminerals.com) Grolite® stands to play a major role in the burgeoning cannabis farming sector. “Using this product is a highly cost-efficient means to boost yields for sustainable small-scale and large-scale farming practices,” comments Pratley Marketing Director **Eldon Kruger**.

Pratley Grolite® is available nationwide in various grade sizes to cater for specific blends. The fact that it is free of weeds and pathogenic microbes makes it an ideal horticultural growing medium. In addition, it promotes water drainage while still retaining an ideal moisture content level in the root zone.

Pratley actively produces and processes a local mineral called Perlite, which is actually a volcanic glass. The Perlite raw material is processed in proprietary furnaces to produce products like Grolite® that enhance agricultural practices and increase crop yields. Tiny micropores on the surface of the expanded Perlite particles capture nutrients and water molecules.

The capillary action in the voids between the particles ensures uniform distribution of water and nutrients, resulting in consistent crops. Grolite® also maintains optimal soil aeration. This is a critical factor in normal plant growth, as the supply of oxygen to roots in adequate quantities is essential for healthy plants.

Pratley Grolite® is processed at temperatures in excess of 950°C, resulting in a completely sterile and safe product. Unlike ordinary horticultural Perlites, the strong surface structure of Pratley Grolite® means it does not deteriorate during transportation or when it is mixed. This unique feature means hydroponic farmers, for example, can reuse the product for more than one season, increasing its cost-effectiveness.

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**Notes to the editor**

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**About Pratley**Established in 1948 by George ‘Monty’ Pratley, the various companies in the Pratley stable rest on a foundation of research and innovation in both the manufacturing and mining sectors. The various Pratley companies, drawing from 73 years of experience, have filed over 350 patents worldwide, and are ISO 9001 certified. Operating divisions are Pratley Adhesives, Pratley Electrical, Pratley Minerals, Pratley Craft & Decoupage, and Select Hairdressing Supplies.

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