SEED STARTING MIX – INGREDIENTS – AND EXPLANATION OF WHY THEY ARE USED

COIR: A fibrous material made from coconut husks. It is sold in compressed bricks which expand greatly when wet. It is pH neutral and has no nutrients. Its role in planting mix is to hold moisture. Coir is the environmentally correct alternative to peat. Peat is mined out of peat bogs, which is a disruption of an ecosystem. Coir, meanwhile, is a by-product of the coconut industry. Of course, it has to be shipped in from the tropics, so is not particularly sustainable in that way. Nothing is perfect. So, if you have peat on hand or prefer peat you may use it in this recipe instead of coir, just substitute it,

PERLITE: Perlite is a volcanic glass which, upon being subjected to extremely high temperatures (850C +), puffs–sort of like popcorn, or a Pop Rock. Obviously, though its origins are natural, it is an industrial product, but it is very useful for making soil fluffy and light. You will recognize it as the "white stuff" that you see in the soil of nursery plants. As it is essentially a rock, it is a neutral player in the mix. It simply keeps things light.

DOLOMITE: Dolomitic lime, a starter organic fertilizer, mycorrhizae and an organic wetting agent are added to complete the mix. Lime adjusts the pH for optimum fertilizer availability; the starter organic fertilizer helps transplants establish; mycorrhizae assists in fertilizer uptake and the organic wetting agent helps peat moss absorb water better.

YUCCA EXTRACT: THIS EXTRACT FUNCTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

1. Wetting Agent (or Soil Penetrant): Makes the fertilizer solution and water "wetter" by reducing its surface tension and thus assisting the plant nutrients in penetrating the root zone more quickly.

2. Soil Flocculant: For best plant growth the soil should be in a "crumb" like form, rather than Fine Grained or hard adobe-like particles. The crumbs are known as "flocs". The YUCCA helps promote the formation of the soil "crumbs" and thus open up the soil for better plant absorption of nutrients and water.

3.Botanical Chelate: The base also function as a chelating agent in that it helps grasp the trace elements already in the soil and prevents their being leached out or locked up.
There are synthetic chelate's, but the botanical chelate's furnished in the organic base are of greater benefit.

4. Trace Elements: Minor Elements are available ion small amounts in the yucca base.
Iron, Zinc, Manganese and Copper are but a few minors that have been found in the extract base.