

Ideal growing conditions for Westland Horticulture see profits soar

Westland Horticulture, one of Northern Ireland's biggest companies, has recorded a sharp increase in profits and said it expects further growth in the coming months.

The Dungannon, County Tyrone-headquartered business notched up pre-tax profits of £25.6 million for the year to the end of August 2021, a jump from £14.5 million in the previous financial year.

Turnover also jumped, although more modestly, to £254 million from £208 million, the company said in a filing to Companies House.

Westland has grown to be one of the biggest players in the UK and Ireland gardening and horticultural market, selling so-called growing media – peat, compost etc – as well as fertilizer, seed, tools and other gardening products.

It is the parent company of Unwins, wild bird feed Packish, Nature's Feast and Bucktons.

It has also grown its presence across Europe with what it described as increased activity by its European subsidiaries.

In recent years that growth has been through organic means, as well as through acquisitions, including the purchase of Gardman Group in 2018.

In addition, headcount has also jumped by nearly 100 to 845 at the end of the 2021 accounting period.

It said the Covid-19 pandemic had created "unique challenges" for the business but it was confident of further growth in the

near future.

“The directors believe there are still opportunities for growth as new lines are introduced to the growing media and fertilizer market,” the company report said.