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How to Plant Hardwood Seedlings

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HOW TO PLANT HARDWOOD SEEDLINGS

Where To Plant

Highly productive soils are essential for rapid growth of hardwoods. The best areas are deep, well-drained loams, upland areas on east- and north-facing slopes, and coves and ravines on lower slopes. Do not plant in heavy clays, on dry ridges or open eroded fields, or along fences and roadsides.

Walnut and other tap-rooted species should not be planted on shallow-soils or soils with "pans" or other restrictions to root development such as a high water table.

It might be desirable to obtain technical forestry assistance in selecting planting areas for hardwoods. Remember, the wrong choice of soil and location has been the most common cause for the failure of hardwood plantations.

Plantation Care

Weed control is essential within 4 feet on either side of the planted trees for 4 years or more following planting. Weeds can be controlled with chemicals or shallow cultivation. Weed and brush competition can be further reduced by mowing the remaining area between the rows.

Protection

Remember, it is a waste of time to plant trees unless they are protected completely from fire and from all types of domestic livestock.

Source of Tree Planting Stock

Tree planting stock is available from state nurseries at the cost of production. Application forms are available, usually from September through March, from county Extension offices, Soil Conservation District offices, State service foresters and Extension foresters. They are also available from the State Division of Forestry, Room 607, State Office Building, Indianapolis, or the Department of Forestry and Conservation, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. These offices can also provide lists of commercial nurseries where tree planting stock may be purchased.

Ground Preparation

Preparation of the planting area is essential for good survival and fast early growth. Where possible the soil should be plowed deep and disced several times since complete control of competing vegetation is necessary. In woodland openings and where plowing is not possible competing vegetation can be controlled by chemicals. Obtain technical assistance before using chemicals.

Suggested spacing | Trees per acre | Remarks
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6' x 6' | 1210 | For black locust and erosion control plantings
8' x 8' | 700 | For planting in woods openings
10' x 10' | 435 | On good soils where trees are to be cultivated with tractors
12' x 12' | 300 |
If trees cannot be planted same day as received, open bundle and heel in.

HAND PLANTING (center-hole method)

1. Dig hole large enough to spread roots.
2. Partly fill hole and firm soil.
3. Add more soil and firm with foot. Be sure the tree is upright.
4. Add loose soil as mulch.

Plant to proper depth to insure optimum growth and survival.

Too deep.
Too shallow.
Right depth.

Do not prune the seedlings.
Do not bend or cut tap roots.