

Establishing ground-durable eucalypts on pine cut-over: guidelines

We recommend using good quality seedlings grown in root trainers or similar containers that ensure seedlings develop a 'plug' of fine fibrous roots and potting mix. Seedlings should have minimal root distortion and maximum active fibrous roots. Seedlings can be removed from their containers and packed in a carton for planting if required.

Try to ensure seedlings are planted within 24 hours after pick-up or delivery from nursery. If not, then seedlings will need to be placed in a shady and sheltered area and watered sufficiently to keep the root plug damp.

Sites and spacing

The choice of planting design, including plant spacing, should depend mainly on the site and the objectives of the grower.

Optimal sites for eucalypts

Optimal sites are moderately fertile loam or clay, well drained sheltered and warm with 800 mm plus rainfall per annum.

- **Sawlog** plantation - 2.8m x 2.8m spacing planted in diamond layout. This requires 1,275 seedlings per hectare.
- **Postwood** plantation
 - **Option One** – 2m x 2m spacing planted in diamond layout. This requires 2,500 seedlings per hectare.
 - **Option Two** – 3m x 1.5m spacing planted in diamond layout. This requires 2,221 seedlings per hectare.

Other sites

Other sites include those with poor or light soils, warm and exposed with 600mm - 800mm rainfall per annum.

- **Sawlog** plantation - 3.3m x 3.3m spacing planted in diamond layout. This requires 918 seedlings per hectare.

- **Postwood** plantation
 - Option One** – 2.5m x 2.5m spacing planted in diamond layout. This requires 1,600 seedlings per hectare.
 - Option Two** – 3m x 2m spacing planted in diamond layout. This requires 1,667 seedlings per hectare.

Site Preparation

On most cut-over sites a variety of weeds emerge that need to be dealt with by a carefully planned pre-planting spray regime. Weed species vary from site to site and region to region, so identifying the key weeds to be eliminated is crucial. Following harvest it is essential to ‘fallow’ the site and not replant immediately. Rather allow 6-9 months for pine seed to germinate and then aerially spray the whole site. Ensure spraying is timed to allow enough time for any chemical residues to dissipate completely before planting.

Take professional advice on all these matters.

Planting

Planting should not be before spring: October is optimal on most sites.

Ensure all seedlings’ root plugs are damp prior to planting. Handle seedlings with care and do not break up or disturb the root plug. Clear slash and pine needles from a planting spot to the width of the planting spade. Use several spade cuts to cultivate the planting site and then to create a hole for placing the seedling into, holding it upright by the upper stem and ensuring that it is planted with the stem straight. Ensure the root plug is well covered with soil. Use slow release granulated fertiliser or tabs placed down the planting hole. This will stimulate early root growth and the tree will establish quickly.

Seedling Protection and Maintenance

Undertake possum, rabbit and hare control through poisoning and shooting prior to planting. You can also spray your seedlings with LIQUID SHOTGUN before planting. Another option is to use planting sleeves to protect young trees. Further spray releasing of weeds maybe required. Seek professional advice on the best spray mix for your site and weeds.

SUPPORTERS:



Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

