

Establishing ground-durable eucalypts on grassland - guidelines

We recommend using good quality seedlings grown in root trainers. Root trainers give seedlings minimal root distortion and maximum active fibrous roots. Seedlings can be removed from the root trainers and packed in a carton for planting if required. The fine fibrous roots hold a 'plug' of potting mix together.

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

Deep ripping of most soils is beneficial for tree establishment. Make sure you rip at right angles to the prevailing wind if possible or cross rip the entire site carefully to get your spacing right. Preplant spray all planting sites with glyphosate.

Planting

Planting should not be before spring: October is optimal.

Break up any clods left after ripping with a spade until you have a fine tilth. Make sure the root plug is watered prior to planting. Do not break up or disturb the root plug. Handle seedlings with care and ensure they are well planted. Ensure the root plug is well covered with soil.

Use slow release granulated fertilizer 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.

For optimal survival and growth the seedlings need to be kept free of grass and weeds. If necessary, release spray 6 to 8 weeks following planting using Versatill and Gallant and/or Terbutylazine at the manufacturers label rates for eucalypts and again in late summer if necessary. Hand cut to clear any woody weed vegetation.

SUPPORTERS:

