

Bare Root Seedlings Planting Guide



Essex Region Conservation
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Transportation

- Handle trees gently – don't throw, drop, stack or sit on bags.
- Keep the trees cool during transportation and do not leave in vehicle for extended periods.

Storage

- Ideal storage temperature for trees is 2-5°C. Store them in a cool area of the barn, garage or basement.
- Plant the trees within 24 hours.

Getting Ready

- Do not open bags until ready to plant.
- Never leave the roots exposed.
- Keep the roots moist by securely resealing partially used bag and returning it to a cool location.
- Cut the elastics around the bundles instead of ripping them off.
- Carefully separate the roots without damaging them; do not prune the roots.
- If the roots seem dry, dip them in water but do not leave them submerged.
- Keep the roots moist by placing them in a bucket or planting bag with a little water on the bottom.

Planting Site

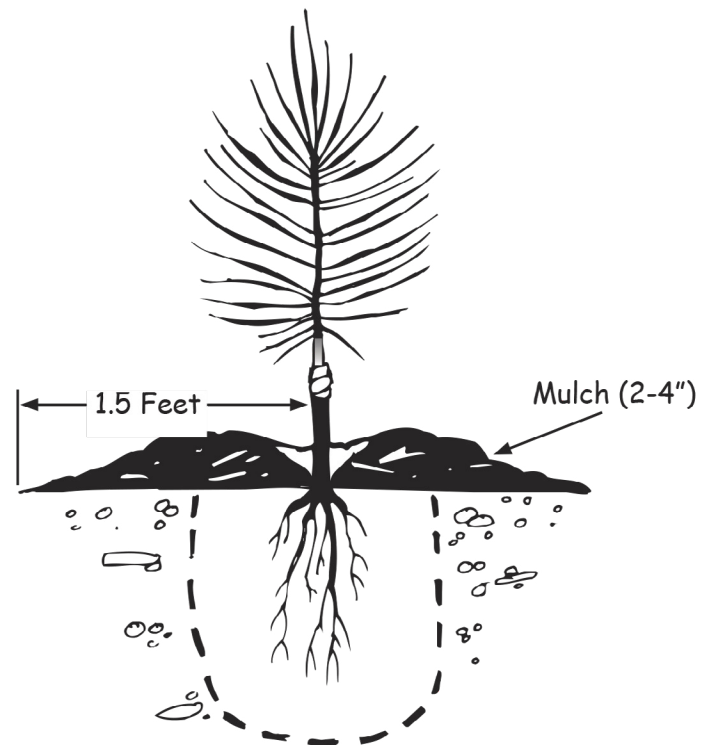
- Proper site preparation is essential to control weed competition; talk to ERCA forestry staff for advice
- Clear any debris (stumps, rocks, etc.) from planting site.
- Avoid planting in wet depressions.

Where NOT to plant:

- Under utility wires (plant at least 5 m/16 ft away).
- Within a road allowance.
- Over septic system.
- Under crown of a live tree.
- Close to buildings.
- Near field tiles or drain outlets.
- Follow municipal setbacks from drains.

Planting

- Remove sod prior to digging.
- The planting hole must be deep and wide enough to accommodate the entire root system, allowing the roots to hang straight down in the hole in a natural arrangement. Do not bunch, wrap, spiral or bend the roots.
- Check the seedling is vertical and cover the roots



with soil. The soil should be level with the root collar (a slight change in colour and/or a swelling on the trunk).

- To remove air pockets and prevent the roots from drying out, tamp the soil firmly with your toe.
- Do not bury any branches or leave any roots exposed to the air.

Mulching & Weed Control

- To reduce weed competition, either mulch with composted hardwood chips or apply herbicide.
- Mulch will also retain moisture and reduce fluctuations in soil temperature. Spread mulch in a circle around the tree to a depth of 5-10 cm (2-4 in), keeping it away from the trunk to avoid stem rot.
- Cut the grass between the rows two or three times during the growing season.
- Do not use string grass/weed trimmers around any trees, regardless of size.

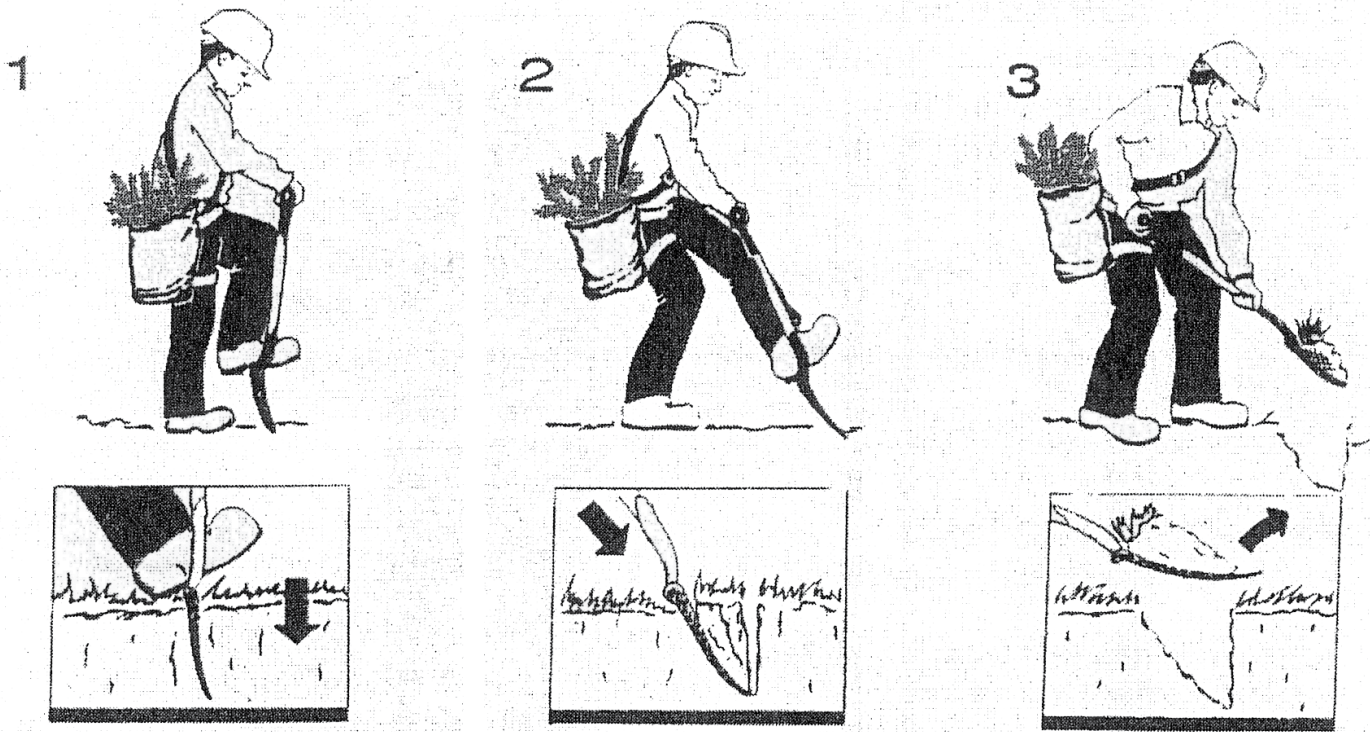
Watering

- Water the trees if there is an extended dry spell.

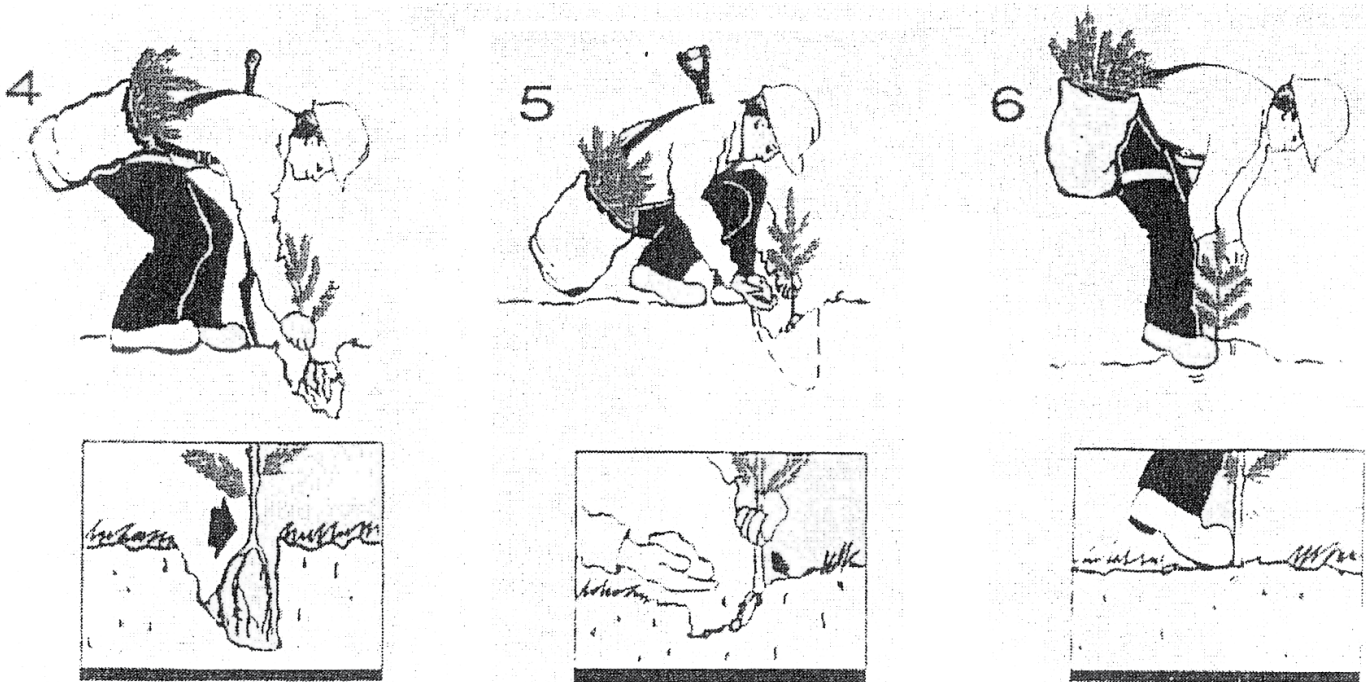
Markers

- Place stakes outside the last row of trees to protect them from being cut or plowed under.

Planting the Trees



Figures 1-3: Prepare a planting hole by removing a wedge of soil. Dig one side of the hole straight down.



Figures 4-6: Place roots in the planting hole. Spread soil around the roots, ensuring good contact. Tamp the soil around the base of the seedling with your toe.

For more information:

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