

## Obtaining Tree Seedlings for Woodlot Licences

When planning reforestation to establish a free-growing stand, woodlot licensees have two main options for obtaining tree seedlings. Each option has advantages and disadvantages.

### 1. Order seedlings to be grown at a commercial forest seedling nursery

By ordering seedlings specifically for your woodlot, you can obtain the correct species and stocktypes for your site, and ensure that the seedlings have been produced from seed or vegetative lots are suitable for your planting site. This will ensure that you are in compliance with the [Forest and Range Practices Act \(FRPA\)](#) Regulations and Standards, specifically the, [Woodlot Licence Planning and Practices Regulation](#) and [Chief Forester's Standards for Seed Use](#).

When ordering seedlings, lead-time is required to grow the seedlings in the nursery before they will be ready for planting. Typically, seedlings should be ordered in September to November of Year 0, sown at the nursery in February/March Year 1, and will be ready for planting in the spring of Year 2 (see Figure 1). Therefore, ordering seedlings and arranging a contract with a commercial forest nursery will require some time and planning to ensure that quality seedlings are produced from suitable seed. Ideally the seedlings should be planned so that the delivery of the seedlings for planting is soon after harvesting or site preparation. On sites with competing vegetation, this is critical for optimum seedling survival and growth.

You must be prepared to make payments for: seed costs, seed services performed at the Tree Seed Centre, a seedling contract with a nursery, and cold storage and/or transportation costs for the seedlings once produced.

### 2. Purchase surplus seedlings from a major licensee or the Ministry of Forests and Range (MFR), or seedling overruns from a commercial forest seedling nursery.

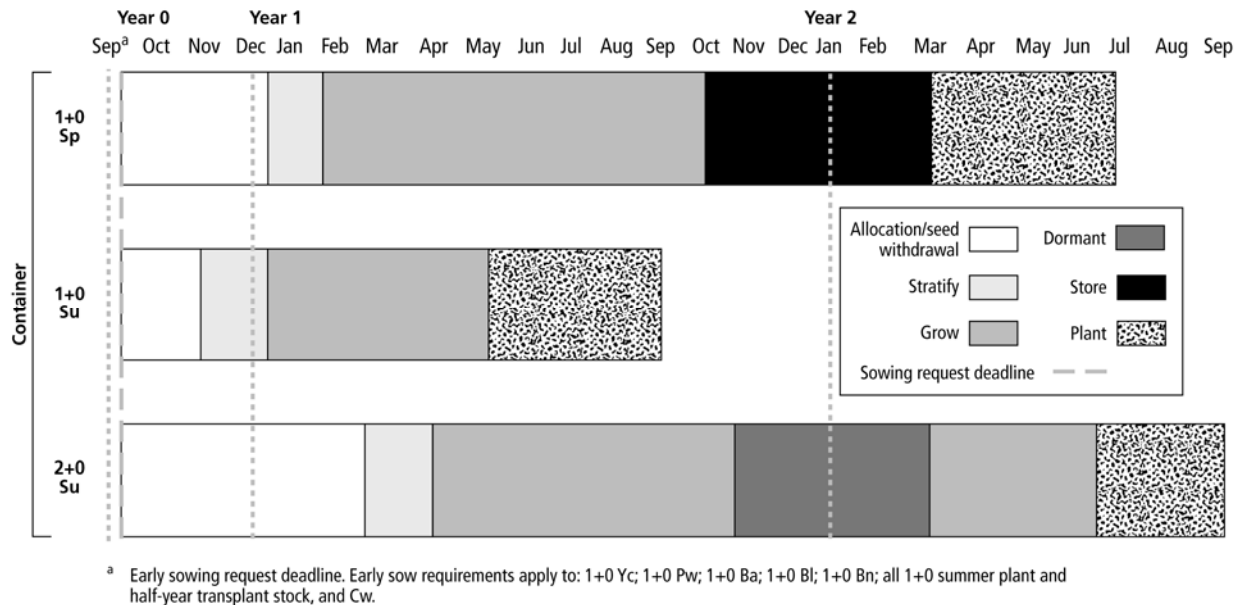
By purchasing surplus or overrun seedlings, you may be able to obtain seedlings for your site within a shorter period of time. This can save you some time in meeting your regeneration obligations if you were not able to order seedlings prior to harvest.

However, there is a significant risk that the surplus seedlings you acquire and plant do not meet the FRPA Regulations and Standards. The seed or vegetative material used to grow the seedlings may not be suitable for your site, according to the [Chief Forester's Standards for Seed Use](#).

When purchasing surplus seedlings, the costs for the seed, seed preparation, growing the seedlings at the nursery and cold storage may be rolled into one price. A single purchase price for surplus seedlings can be more straightforward than several payments associated with ordering seed and growing seedlings at a nursery. Separate costs and arrangements will be required for transportation of the seedlings. The downside to this option is, if the seed or seedlings planted do not comply with the FRPA Regulations and Standards, the requirement to produce a free-growing stand may not be met, which could mean costly replanting.

The intention of this article is to explain how to order seedlings to be grown at a commercial forest nursery (option A). However, there are precautions you can take to ensure that you are in compliance with the Standards if you follow option B. These will be discussed later in this article.

Figure 1. Seedling request timing for seed preparation and nursery production of 1+0 spring stock, 1+0 summer stock and 2+0 summer stock. Seedling requests should be initiated in the Fall of Year 0.



Following are the steps for ordering seedlings. Figure 1 shows the standard time frame for each of these steps.

1. **Obtain a BC Electronic ID (BCeID)** by following the steps on the [BCeID website](#). Then request [access to the Seed Planning and Registry system \(SPAR\)](#).
2. **Determine the species, stock type, container type, stock age, year and season of planting most appropriate for your site.** The publication [Provincial Seedling Stock Type Selection and Ordering Guidelines](#) or a forestry consultant with silviculture experience in your local area should be able to provide you with the assistance you need to make these decisions.
3. **Determine the quantity of seedlings of each species required.** If regeneration or leave trees are not present on the planting site, use the target stocking standards in the silviculture prescription or site plan for the area, to make your calculations. The number of tree seedlings to order per hectare may need to be reduced below the target stocking standard to take into consideration leave trees, existing planted trees or natural regeneration that may be present or anticipated.
4. **In SPAR, enter a Seedling Request for each species required.** For assistance with SPAR and the Seedling Request entry process, contact Tree Improvement Branch. For entry of a request, you will need the following information:

- ♦ Woodlot License Number and Client Name
  - ♦ Mean latitude and longitude of woodlot
  - ♦ Mean elevation of planting site (from your site plan or silviculture prescription)
  - ♦ Biogeoclimatic zone (from your site plan or silviculture prescription)
  - ♦ Species of trees you would like to order
  - ♦ Quantity of seedlings for each species to be ordered
  - ♦ Stocktype and container type for each species
  - ♦ Stock age, planting year and season
  - ♦ Preferred seedlot numbers (where the woodlot licensee owns seed).
5. **Review the suitable seed and/or vegetative lots available.** When a Seedling Request is entered in SPAR, a list of suitable seedlots is generated. If you do not have access to SPAR, the Tree Improvement Branch contact will email a list of suitable seedlots. There may be situations where no surplus seed is readily available if it is all held in reserve by ministry, licensee or private seed dealer owners. In this situation, you can contact the seedlot owner to inquire about purchasing some seed.
  6. **Arrange a contract with a commercial forest nursery.** Contact commercial forest seedling nurseries to obtain quotes for your seedling requests. A list of nurseries is available from Tree Improvement Branch. Some B.C. forest seedling nurseries have a standard contract that they can use for small orders. You will need to consider price per seedling, payment schedule and availability of cold storage facilities at the nursery if you have ordered spring plant stock. You should also consider the cost of shipping the seedlings if you can not arrange for pickup from the nursery. When negotiating the contract, ensure that you have an agreement regarding the quality of seedlings to be delivered (height, general health, etc.). To view the seedling specifications used for MFR seedling contracts, check out the [BC Timber Sales Nursery Services website](#). Look for the link to **Seedling Stock Specifications**. This website also includes a list of typical seedling prices in the **Commercial Equivalent Rate** table.
  7. **Approve the seedling request(s) in SPAR.** Once the status of a seedling request is set to “approved”, the Tree Seed Centre will withdraw the seed from storage at the appropriate time, prepare the seed with a pre-sowing treatment (stratification or pelletization), and ship the seed to the nursery in time for the nursery’s sowing date.
  8. **Receive and pay invoices for seed costs (from the Ministry of Forests or private owner) and Tree Seed Centre services.** For more information on the Tree Seed Centre services, refer to the [Tree Seed Centre website](#).
  9. **Make contact with the nursery during the growing season.** You should contact the nursery some time during the growing season to ensure that your seedlings are growing well and

that they expect to produce the amount of seedlings requested. If the nursery informs you that they may produce more seedlings than you ordered you are not obligated to purchase the surplus seedlings but there may be other woodlot licensees who want to purchase the seedlings.

**10. Make arrangements for delivery or pickup of your seedlings from the nursery or the cold storage site, then plant your seedlings!**

**If you plan to use Option B**, ie. purchase surplus seedlings from the Ministry of Forests and Range or a major forest licensee, or seedling overruns directly from a commercial forest nursery:

**1. Follow steps 2 and 3 as described above.**

**2. Ensure that the seedlot(s) used to produce the seedlings are suitable for your planting site.**

If you have access to SPAR, you can enter your planting site parameters on the Suitable Seed/Vegetative Lot screen to search for a list of suitable seedlots. Suitable seedlots are those that meet the [\*Chief Forester's Standards for Seed Use\*](#). If you do not have access to SPAR, contact Tree Improvement Branch for assistance. You will need to provide the following information on your woodlot: planting site mean latitude, longitude and minimum and maximum elevation.

**3. Check on the quality of the seedlings and ensure that the price is fair.** If possible, go to the nursery to check on the quality of the seedlings in person, prior to making an agreement for purchase. Check the website links listed in item 6 above for seedling stock specifications used by the MFR.

**4. Make arrangements for delivery or pickup of your seedlings from the nursery or the cold storage site.**

Information on the Ministry of Forests and Range Tree Seed Centre, Tree Improvement Branch, and the Seed Planning and Registry system is available on the internet:

<http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hti/>.

**For assistance and information, contact:**

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