



SEED SOWING INSTRUCTIONS

ASH

Treating and growing on seed

Need: Winged seed, polythene freezer bags, vermiculite (available from Garden Centres), growing tray or rigipot, peat free/John Innes seed or potting compost, sharp sand, liquid fertiliser. Optional: fine grit, watering tray.

1. STORAGE

Lay seed on newspaper to dry in cool conditions. When paper-dry, store seed in hessian sack, allowing them to breathe.

2. STRATIFICATION

Begin process at **start of October**.
Steps :

a] *Preparation*

Soak seed over 7 day period, to remove chemical inhibitors to germination. Alternate 24 hours in water / 24 hours out, draining off water with a sieve. Use fresh water each time.

Pretreat seed in a medium. Mix moist vermiculite and compost with seed at ratio of 3parts seed to one of compost/vermiculite, and place in polythene bag or use a suitable plastic container if rodents are a problem.

Add water until damp - not much required - use a beaker or similar container.. Label seed inside bag and tie off top of bag.

Mark up bag with seed collection details : species, collection site, date.

b] *Pretreatment*

i] Store in warm conditions [15° - 18°C **max.**] for 16 weeks - use cool airing cupboard / warm room, in light or dark conditions.

Once a week open bag : mix seeds allowing carbon dioxide to escape and oxygen in. Re-moisten if necessary and remove any mouldy seeds.

ii] Store in cold conditions [1°-5°C] for 16 weeks **or** as long as seed takes to 'chit' [produce a root] - use fridge.

Continue weekly routine as in i].

At first signs of chitting, check bag regularly for root emergence.

3. **SOWING**

Fill seed tray or rigipot cells with compost to 1-2 cms. from top of tray. Bang on table to firm.

Sow seed in growing tray/rigipot when root is about 1/2" long, using peat free sowing / potting compost .

Fill tray asap with chitted seed [keeps growth even].

Do not sow seed with too long a shoot in a shallow seed tray. Sow these in the rigipot that have deep cells.

Cover compost in cells with fine grit / coarse sand if available.

4. **GROWING**

a] Positioning of tray

Put trays of early seedlings on windowsill/in **warm** greenhouse to avoid winter cold/frosts; and if available move into cold frame/greenhouse in April/May, or else leave on windowsill. Grow outside during the summer.

Move trees outside in September to overwinter, avoiding excessive sunlight.

Ensure slugs / snails / rodents, etc. cannot get at the seedlings.

Turn the tray regularly to avoid bending of tree stems [seedlings grow towards the light].

b] Watering:

Water regularly- every 2-3 days in mid-summer. Water less regularly in winter, but enough to keep roots damp.

It is difficult to overwater in summer - if in doubt, be generous.

c] Feeding

Mix in liquid fertiliser (Miracle-Grow or Chempak No.3) when watering, if necessary. Ask for assistance if unclear.

6. **ADVICE SERVICE AND HELPLINE**

Please telephone COLIN CARPENTER if you have any queries, on :
01525 716371 OR MOBILE 07751 356094