



SEED SOWING INSTRUCTIONS

DOGWOOD

Treating and growing on seed

Need: Seed, cleaning equipment [see 2.a)], polythene freezer bags, vermiculite [available from Garden Centres], seed tray/rigipot, peat free potting compost, sharp sand, liquid fertiliser. Optional: fine grit, watering tray.

1. STORAGE

Store seed in hessian sack//bag in cool conditions [e.g. garage], allowing seed to breathe.

2. STRATIFICATION

Start process at **beginning of October** . Steps:

a] *Preparation*

Clean flesh off seed.

Technique: place berries in bird feeder with 1/4" mesh and blast with high pressure hose, **or** sieve / rolling pin / food blender are good alternative tools.

Wash seed thoroughly to remove all flesh [which can contain inhibitors to germination].

Mix vermiculite and compost with seed at ratio of 3 parts seed to one of compost, and place in polythene freezer bag .

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 8 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 12 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 tray cells with compost to 1-2 cms. from top of tray. Bang on table to firm.

Sow seed in growing tray when root is about 1/2" long, using peat free/John Innes sowing / potting compost .
Fill tray asap with chitted seed [keeps growth even].

Do not sow seed with too long a shoot in shallow seed tray. Plant out seed with long roots in rigipot.

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; if available move into cold frame/greenhouse in April/May, or else leave on windowsill.

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 3-4 days in mid-summer. Water less regularly in winter, but enough to keep roots damp.

Best technique is bottom up, i.e. sit trees in watering tray.

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

- c] Feeding

Mix in liquid fertiliser 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