

 UI Extension Forestry Information Series

Seedling Terms From A to Z

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So you've finally gotten the ambition to plant trees on your place. Unfortunately, you may find yourself confronted by a dizzying array of technical jargon when ordering seedlings or materials to protect them. The following list is designed to help de-mystify some of the more commonly used terms.

ABC. Animal Browse Control. Small bags of chemical repellent hung up to discourage deer and elk from entering plantations.

1-0 seedlings, 1-1 seedlings, 2-0 seedlings, etc. The first digit is the number of years the seedling was raised from seed in a bed or container. The second digit is the number of years the seedling was raised in a transplant bed.

BGR. Big Game Repellent. A liquid sprayed on the seedlings to discourage deer or elk browsing.

Bare-root seedlings. Seedlings grown in the ground ("beds") at a nursery. No soil is attached to their roots at planting.

Caliper. The diameter of a seedling stem at slightly above soil level. Seedlings with larger caliper are more durable.

Containerized seedlings ("plugs"). Seedlings grown in small tubes, which are removed at planting. They are usually no more than one year old and have a plug of soil containing their roots.

Cuttings. Stems of hardwood trees (ex: hybrid poplar) which are planted directly into the ground. They sprout roots and leaves from latent buds.

FIP. Forestry Incentives Program. USDA cost-share program which partially reimburses landowners for tree planting. Program details vary from county to county.

Plug-1 seedlings. Seedlings raised in containers one year, then transplant beds a second year.

Rooted cuttings. Cuttings which are planted at the nursery to form roots before field planting.

Root-pruned seedlings. Usually applies to bare-root seedlings. Root-pruned seedlings have had a knife drawn under the beds they were planted in. Where roots are cut, new roots sprout, resulting in seedlings with more dense, fibrous root systems.

Shoot-root ratio. The balance between a seedling's shoot (the part above ground) and the roots. A slightly lower shoot-root ratio is better for drier sites.

SIP. Stewardship Incentives Program. A program of cost-shares for a wide variety of forestry activities, including tree planting.

Terminal bud. The bud on the top of a seedling. Terminal buds should be protected from animal browse or other damage, if possible.

Transplant. A seedling which is replanted at the nursery to help it form a more fibrous root system.

Tree Shelters, Tubex. Solid plastic tubes used to protect seedlings from animal damage.

Vexar. Plastic mesh tubes used to protect seedlings from animal damage.

Whips. 3-5' hardwood seedlings.

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