



Pricking Out

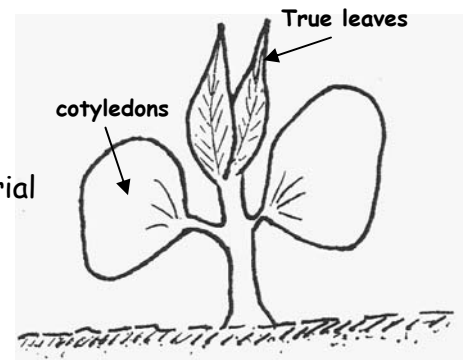
The seeds of some native plants germinate after a few days of being sown. Others may take up to six months or more. Seedlings should be transferred from the tray into individual containers to encourage root growth, reduce the risk of drying out and the spread of disease.

Germination and growth

- The first pair of leaves to appear are not true leaves but cotyledons. They are different in appearance to the parent's leaves.
- The next pair of leaves are the plant's true leaves.
- Once the seedling has its true leaves and is around 10-20-mm tall, it is ready to be pricked out.

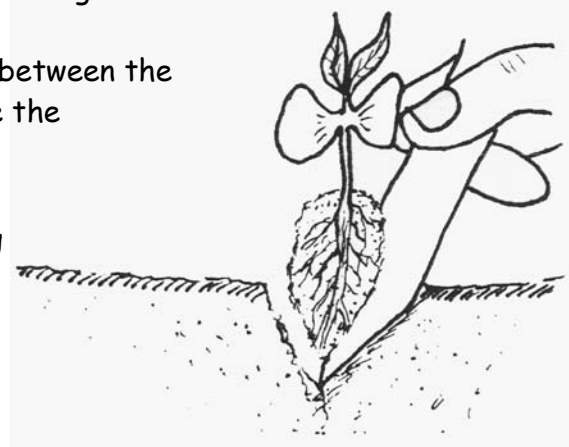
Equipment

- Bleach/water mix for sterilising
- Potting mix - 1:1:1 sand, peat, organic material
- Cup size tube
- Dibble - ice cream stick, shallow spoon
- Native osmocote (slow release fertilizer)



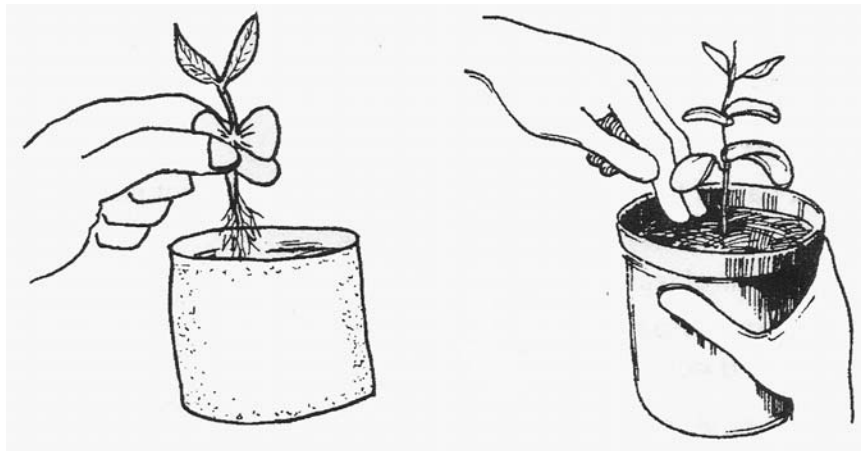
Instructions

- Wash recycled tubes in a sterile solution of bleach and water to kill bacteria and fungi.
- Moisten potting mix.
- Fill a tube with potting mix making a hole in the centre for the seedling.
- Holding the seedling gently between the thumb and fore finger, slide the dibble down to the bottom of the tray and carefully lift out the seedling keeping roots intact. If roots are damaged the plant may die.





- Lower the seedling into the prepared hole making sure the roots are hanging straight down not curled up.
- Fill the soil in around the roots and up to the level it was in the tray.
- Firm the soil around the plant gently with finger tips to support the seedling.



- Water the seedlings immediately.

Care

- After one week fertilise with half teaspoon of native osmocote and water in. Keep fertiliser away from the stem of the plant. (Native osmocote is the best fertiliser for native trees as it is low in phosphorous which native plants are sensitive to. Too much fertiliser will kill these young plants.)
- Water with a fine spray once or twice a day, ensuring the mix stays moist, not wet.
- Place the plant in a shady position initially until it develops new leaves, then gradually increase the sun exposure until it has full sun tolerance. Good results can be achieved by placing the seedlings where they receive the morning sun.