



Sowing Seeds

Seed treatment

Many native tree species germinate readily when placed in a moist, warm environment. However, some seeds have a built in mechanism to delay germination and therefore require treatment before sowing. These treatments replace the natural processes seeds would undergo in the bush eg. fire, digestion from birds and animals, long periods in the sun and weathering.

A number of treatments/methods are available: Scarification - scratching, nipping or filing the seed coat, boiling water treatment, acid treatment. Contact us to find out the best treatment for your seed.

As a general rule seed with hard, shiny coats require treatment, eg. Acacia seeds require the boiling water treatment:

- Place seeds in a dish and pour boiling water over them.
- Leave overnight to soak. Most of the seeds will swell slightly. Some seeds will require a stronger treatment to break the seed coat (eg. add vinegar to the water and soak for a few weeks).

Equipment

- Seedling tray - use a commercial seedling tray or plastic container with holes punched in the bottom
- Seed sowing mix - eg. 1:1 cocopeat and coarse river sand or purchase a seed raising mix from your local garden centre
- Seed
- Water
- Labels

Tray / Mix preparation:

- Ensure seed trays are clean and free of dirt (wash with a sterile solution - 100ml bleach: 10 litres water)
- Make seed sowing mix with equal quantities of cocopeat and coarse sand. The peat holds moisture and the sand allows drainage so the mix will not be too wet or dry. The mix must not have any large particles as this may hinder / inhibit seed germination.



- Place cocopeat in a bucket and soak with water. This is important as the peat is difficult to moisten once placed in a container. Add an equal quantity of coarse river sand to the moistened peat and mix well.
- Place mix into the tray filling the tray to just below the surface. If the tray is only half full the seedling does not have much room for root growth.
- Gently bump the tray on a bench to settle. Firming the mix too much will make it difficult for the small roots to grow.

Sowing

- Sprinkle the seeds evenly over the surface and cover to a depth equal to their thickness. Seeds sown too deep will not germinate. Seeds sown too shallow may dry out and die.
- Avoid sowing seeds too densely as this may produce weak, spindly seedlings.

Care

- Keep the soil moist, never waterlogged.
- Avoid using fertiliser as seeds have their own food store.
- Place the tray in a position that receives filtered sunlight.
- Keep the tray off the ground to reduce insect attack and contamination from soil bacteria.
- Keep a watch on overhead irrigation or rain as large droplets can easily cause severe damage to the seedlings.

