



Establishing New Christmas Tree Lots

Air, space, temperature, sunlight, water, nutrients, and time are considered the main parameters that all plants (including Christmas trees) need to grow. However, with enough effort, you can theoretically grow a tree anywhere. We can manipulate all of these essentials to provide ideal conditions for Christmas tree production but, it can be expensive and time consuming.

The Wish List for Growing Trees

- Avoid frost Pockets
- Flat to slightly sloping (accessible)
- Eastern or Northern Exposure
- Well-drained soils
- Fertile soils with Adequate SOM
- Ground Cover that is manageable

Site Preparation

1. Lot Style (3)
 - a. **Natural Regeneration:** Mainly Balsam Fir is reared by Natural Regeneration. Desirable phenotypes are left as seed trees to repopulate lots.
 - i. Advantages:
 1. Cheap
 2. Effortless seeding
 - ii. Disadvantages
 1. Seed tree are prone to pests and diseases



2. Limited control over density and planting location
 3. Harder to manage.
- b. Natural Regeneration w/ Interplanting:**
Desirable phenotypes are left as seed trees to repopulate AND seedling are planted to improve density.
- i. Advantages:
 1. Improves genetics within lot
 2. Improve density
 3. Planting control is improved
 - ii. Disadvantages
 1. Seed tree are prone to pests and diseases
 2. Harder to manage, terrain
- c. Plantations:** Seedlings are planted in rows like a crop.
- i. Advantages:
 1. Density is controlled
 2. Accessibility is improved
 3. Harvest is easier
 - ii. Disadvantages
 1. Requires frequent management (mowing)
2. Equipment Available
 - a. Baler, Shears, Backpack Sprayers, fertilizer, etc.
 3. How do you plan to maintain the site?
 - a. Schedule for the next eight to ten years.
 4. Does the site need initial inputs?
 - a. Roadways, turn spots, parking.



Options for Creating New Lots

1. Selectively harvest woodland, leaving balsam fir seedlings to grow and repopulate.
2. Selectivity harvest leave balsam fir and plant supplementary seedlings.
3. Clear or obtain cleared land and plant seedlings in rows.

Preparations for Planting

- i. What equipment or labour do you have available?



- ii. Do you have seedling stock available?
- iii. What type of spacing and density goals (~1,200 trees per acre), markets?

Equipment Options

- 1. By-hand, i.e., dibble bar
- 2. Manual Tree Planter
- 3. Mechanized tree planter implements

Options for Seedling Stock

- 1. Wildlings
- 2. Scott & Stewart Forestry Consultants Ltd., Antigonish
- 3. Strathlorne, Regional DLAF Offices
- 4. T & D, New Ross, NS

Options for Spacing

What is your market going to be? You spacing will depend on what type of trees you are growing.



Table top or tall and full or in-between? A recommended chart below.

Spacing (ft.)	Trees	Spacing (ft.)	Trees
6 x 6	1,210	7 x 10	622
6 x 7	1,037	8 x 8	681
6 x 8	908	8 x 9	605
6 x 9	726	8 x 10	544
7 x 7	889	9 x 9	938
7 x 8	778	9 x 10	484
7 x 9	691	10 x 10	436



Maintenance

- Control ground cover and competing vegetation.
- Limit browsing from wildlife.
- Provide adequate nutrient based on what is present in the soil.
- Encourage water retentions by building your soil organic matter.
- Prevent pest and disease damage.



