

2024 SEED COLLECTOR'S NEWSLETTER

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Reforestation Program continues to purchase from seed collection vendors.

Please contact the nurseries with any concerns or questions prior to picking.

Seed Origin: All seed purchased must be of natural origin. If a tree is large, old and well-established, it is probably of natural origin. Landscaping trees originating from a private nursery or landscaping company are not appropriate for seed harvest. Failure to adhere to this requirement may put a vendor's ability to sell seed to the nursery in jeopardy. All purchased seed must be separated by county of origin.

Conifers

Cones must be closed and mature. Do not pick conifer cones earlier than the approximate purchase date – be cognizant of the purchasing dates in the table. Some species are known to open and close quickly in response to humidity changes. After opening the first time, cones will disperse most of their seed.

Red Pine: Red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) plantations are found throughout the state, especially the sandy soils of central, northwest and northeast Wisconsin. The cones are mature when



Picture 1: Maturing red pine cones.

they have turned from green to purplish with red-brown tips. Use clippers to snip the cones from branches. Be sure to store in a cool, dry area to limit mold growth or cone opening. Do not mistake Austrian or Scotch pine for red pine; scotch pine bark is flaky, especially toward the upper part of the stem, and orange.

Cones appear twisted and green, even at maturity. Austrian pine tends to be found in urban environments, has a stocky appearance and darker bark compared to red pine and the cones tend to be larger than red pine.

White Pine: White pine (*Pinus strobus*) is found throughout the state, in plantations, scattered in forests and in open areas. The cones are concentrated in the upper tree crown and oozing with sap. When mature, they are a greenish-purple and plump. The large, open brown cones from previous years are not purchased.

Black Spruce: Black spruce (*Picea mariana*) is found on wet sites in northern Wisconsin. Cones are concentrated in the crown, nestled inside the branches. Don't confuse black spruce with Black Hills spruce – a variety of white spruce. Spruce is a common landscaping tree – do not pick these cones.

Hemlock: Eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*) has short, dark green needles. Bark is slate gray with lighter brown fissures. They bear small cones annually but have bumper crops every few years. Cones can be picked in late autumn when they turn from green to purple to brown but have not yet opened.

Hardwoods

Hard (Sugar) Maple: Of the common maples in Wisconsin, only the box elder, sugar and Norway produces a fall crop. Box elder has an annual heavy seed crop with very pointed, large, clustered seed crops. Norway maple (an introduced species) has large, thick leaves. The seeds are flat and broad and resemble the wings of an airplane. Sugar maple has green seeds and brown, dry wings that are connected in a U-shape, rather than a V-shape, like other maples. In years with heavy crops, placing a tarp under the tree, shaking the branches and collecting as the seeds fall, works well. Rodents are adept at gathering this seed, so gather it frequently to avoid losses.

Black Walnut: Only purchased at the Wilson State Nursery.

2024 STATEWIDE GOALS & PURCHASING DATES

SPECIES	Estimated Purchasing Goal	Units	2024 Purchase Prices	Approx. purchase date
Basswood	30	Lbs	\$20.00	Sept. 17
Butternut	35	Bu	\$15.00	Sept. 17
Cherry, Black	260	Lbs.	\$7.00	Aug. 1
Fir, Balsam	16	Bu	\$100.00	Sept. 1
Hazelnut, American	90	Bu	\$40.00	Aug. 22
Hemlock, Eastern	22	Bu	\$1000.00	Oct. 1
Hickory, Bitternut	10	Bu	\$50.00	Sept. 15
Maple, Sugar	60	Bu	\$70.00	Sept. 17
Oak, Bur	80	Bu	\$40.00	Sept. 1
Oak, Red	45	Bu	\$50.00	Sept. 17
Oak, Swamp White	105	Bu	\$100.00	Sept. 6
Oak, White	150	Bu	\$70.00	Sept. 1
Pine, Jack	710	Bu	\$65.00	--
Pine, Red	670	Bu	\$125.00	Sept. 6
Pine, White	1000	Bu	\$60.00	Aug. 13
Plum, American	45	Bu	\$50.00	Sept. 1
Spruce, Black	10	Bu	\$300.00	Sept. 1
Spruce, White	10	Bu	\$150.00	Aug. 20
Tamarack	40	Bu	\$500.00	Aug. 7
Walnut, Black	550	Bu	\$3.50	Sept. 21

Call The Nursery Before Collecting

Before collecting any seed, please contact one of the nurseries to ensure purchasing is still open for the species you intend to collect. Nursery staff can assist with species identification.

Griffith Nursery – Wisconsin Rapids	715-424-3700
Wilson Nursery – Boscobel	608-375-4123
Hayward Nursery – Hayward	715-492-1204

[Check our webpage for additional information.](#)

Get Permission

Checking regulations and following safe practices is important and will protect your ability to harvest seed from these properties for many years to come.

- **State Parks/Forests/Other state-owned lands** – All state properties have a property manager. Please contact them to get any required permits. Contact the DNR Call Center at 1-888-WDNRINFO (1-888-936-7463) or use the [DNR staff directory to find a state property manager](#).
- **County forests** – Contact the [county forest administrator](#).
- **Federal lands** – Contact the [USFS forest superintendent](#).
- **Private lands** – Obtain permission from the landowner prior to picking.

Buying Stations	Contact	Phone Number	Hours
Griffith State Nursery	Jeremiah Auer	715-459-1999	By appt.
Eau Claire DNR Office	Kyle Coopman	715-308-4193	By appt.
Appleton DNR Office	Tim James	715-701-8018	By appt.
Menomonie DNR Office	Rob Strand	715-505-0439	By appt.
Neillsville DNR Office	Chris Schmitz	715-937-0160	By appt.
Hayward State Nursery	Richard Nessler	715-492-1204	By appt.
Barnes Ranger Station	Jacob Coonen	715-816-0058	By appt.
Rhineland Ranger Station	Joshua Kunzman	715-499-5042	By appt.
Washburn Ranger Station	Joseph LeBouton	715-209-2149	By appt.
Wilson State Nursery	Jackie Knoble	608-485-0303	By appt.
	Roger Bohringer	608-485-1425	By appt.
Baraboo DNR Office	Paul Kloppenburg	608-604-4846	By appt.
Fitchburg DNR Office	Becky Gray	608-220-3022	By appt.
Horicon DNR Office	Randy Stampfl	920-382-0657	By appt.

Payment

The Reforestation Program reserves the right to refuse to purchase any seed if it does not meet our specifications. Payment is via a voucher system. The seller receives a copy of the voucher when seed is delivered to a buying station. A check to the seller is mailed in the following weeks.

Seed Cleaning

All acorns must be floated in water. Acorns that sink are generally considered viable; discard any that float. Rocks and rotten acorns must be removed. Bur oak, butternut, bitternut hickory and hazelnut are purchased with their husks/caps attached. Black cherry and American plum should still be enclosed in fruit. If any seed is not clean of debris, it may be rejected, or a price reduction applied.

Seed Storage

Store seed in a cool, dry location and deliver it to a buying station as soon as possible to prevent heating or molding. Storage should be in breathable containers.



Griffith State Nursery
473 Griffith Avenue
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
715-424-3700

Hayward State Nursery
16133 W. Nursery Road
Hayward, WI 54843
715-492-1204

Wilson State Nursery
5350 Hwy 133 E
Boscobel, WI 53805
608-375-4123

