

The attached guidance, "Seed Policy", was developed for use by Department staff when making decisions related to distribution priorities of tree and shrub seed from the state nursery program.

The policy is based on comment from a 2013 Request for Information (RFI) from the public regarding the state nursery program, comments from SFI/FSC certification audits on state and county lands, and program analysis from the Division's Nursery Team.

The Department is seeking comments on the proposed recommendations described in this document until December 2, 2013. Following public input, the policy will be finalized and implemented.

Comments related to this draft guidance document should be sent to Carmen Hardin,

Carmen.hardin@wisconsin.gov; (608)267-3139.

Division of Forestry – State Nursery Program SEED POLICY

The Seed Policy provides guidance for distribution priorities and use of seed collected, purchased, processed, and stored by the state nursery program. The program procures tree and shrub seed for conservation purposes to meet its operational needs, for those conducting direct seeding reforestation projects, and for other uses.

Seed acquisition goals are established annually and are influenced by seed production cycles, species priority, inventory quantities on hand, and volumes requested through applications. Seed may be sold or traded to a public or private entity based on a case by case determination, availability of surplus seed, and/or applications received. The program must approve all requests prior to seed distribution and reserves the right to determine the quantity available for any of the priority categories described. In general, requests will be handled on a first come, first served basis. The department makes no guarantee of the seed germination rate, but, if requested, may provide the most recent test results on seed lots of certain species if they are available.

Distribution Priorities

1. First priority – State Nursery Program

The state nursery program retains first priority for use of any and all of the tree and shrub seed procured, processed and/or stored, including improved seed, to meet its anticipated operational needs or other purposes.

2. Second priority – Direct Seeding Projects

Seed may be requested for direct seeding projects for reforestation purposes on DNR managed lands, county forest lands, and privately owned lands. Seed purchased for a direct seeding project may be used **ONLY** for this purpose.

Requests from private Wisconsin landowners require pre-approval of the DNR forester assigned to the county where the seed will be sown. The nursery will attempt to purchase quantities for private use based on applications received, but quantities distributed may be pro-rated if insufficient seed is collected; payments would be reimbursed as appropriate.

3. Third priority – Other Conservation Uses

This section includes seed requests by other governmental agencies or research projects not associated with direct seeding, and seed sold for non-WDNR nursery stock production. Seed may be used only for reforestation or conservation purposes such as production of forest products, creation of wildlife habitat, development of windbreaks and shelterbelts or implementing soil erosion control practices. Purchasers are responsible to acquire, at their expense, any and all required permits through the U.S. Department of Agriculture prior to the shipment of seed to an international location.

Seed Costs and Payments

The cost of seed sold will be determined by any of the following which apply:

1. All costs the program incurs to collect or purchase seed whether acquired from a private seller, by nursery staff or from seed orchards.
2. All costs associated with cleaning and processing the seed.
3. All costs of seed storage.
4. Fungicide or rodent repellent treatment for conifer seed, if requested.

Full remittance must be received prior to release of any seed. If an applicant opts to have the seed shipped rather than picked up at a state nursery, then it is his/her responsibility to pre-arrange with a shipping carrier and pay the full shipping fee in advance.

Seed Purchasing Application

Requests for seed are accepted year round, however, seed may be only seasonally available. Applicants must submit the Seed Purchasing Application, available from nursery staff or local DNR foresters, and must agree to its conditions. The

final quantity provided to the applicant will be determined by the state nursery program and may be less than that requested based on availability.

Contract Seed Processing

The state nursery program may process seed collected by others for their use as nursery staff time and resources allow. Quantities to be accepted and processed are at the discretion of the nursery program and require prior approval. Interested parties should plan to deliver and pick up seed by appointment. The program is not responsible for any damage incurred to seed during processing, will not store seed except during processing, and will not determine germination rates. Charges will be based on all costs associated with handling, processing, or temporarily storing seed.