

Site preparation for tube stock

SPRING

Spray out exotic perennial pasture

- If you are planting in perennial pasture dominated site, spraying the site the Spring prior to planting is the ideal preparation , and you may then only require one spray in Autumn

SUMMER

Order plants

- Order plants early to guarantee supply of desired species
- Consult with your local nursery and the “Southwest Slopes Revegetation Guide” ([online at www.holbrooklandcare.org.au](http://www.holbrooklandcare.org.au)) for appropriate plants for your area



AUTUMN

Control rabbits and hares at site and surrounds

- Coordinate with neighbours if necessary, deal with burrows and surface dwelling rabbits
- Avoid the need for labour intensive and expensive tree guards

Ripping—where appropriate

- Rip before the Autumn break, while the ground is hard and dry to get deep shattering of the soil
- Rip lines should be spaced a minimum of 4 metres apart and at least 40cm deep
- Do not rip under the drip-line of existing trees., through wet areas or where there is erosion hazard

Crash graze/slash grass and spray rip lines before frosts, but about 10 days after rain

- Seek appropriate agronomic advice on sprays and rates of chemical
- Spray rip lines only —broad scale spraying of site not recommended
- If no rip lines, spot herbicide application 1 square metre per plant

Re-spray one month prior to planting if required

- Only non-residual herbicides are recommended for use
- If no chemicals to be used, consider slashing/grazing again

Plant seedlings mid July to September

- For 400 plants per ha, plant every 6 m for rip lines that are 4m apart
- For 600 plants per ha, plant every 4 metres for rip lines 4m apart

Check for vermin or stock damage first week after planting

- Inspect for vermin such as rabbits, hares and **act** on any specific problems
- Check that there is no stock entry to plantation

Check plants regularly post-planting

- Watch and act on weed regrowth through Spring and early summer.
- Monitor insects such as grasshoppers, Rutherglen bugs etc. Spot spraying may be undertaken if necessary
- Damage can be caused by frost, birds , kangaroos and wombats
- Remember to shut the gate on the way out!!



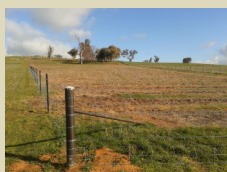
WINTER

SPRING

Ripping

Before ripping, landowners should contact Dial-Before-You-Dig to check the location of utilities.

- Ripping should be done when the profile is dry to **shatter** the soil (not slice) and reduce the risk of air pockets forming, especially in clay soils.
- Rip lines should be spaced 4 metres apart, and at least 40cm deep.
- If the rip has resulted in air spaces, running a tractor wheel or cultivating over the rip line may be appropriate.



- On undulating or hilly land, rip lines should be along the contour to minimise soil erosion.
- Mounding may be recommended in specific soil types, especially sites prone to waterlogging, but it is the exception rather than the rule.

When is ripping **NOT** appropriate?

Native grass sites—IF planting is appropriate at all, then native grass areas should be direct seeded to prevent disturbance and the invasion of weeds.

Steep Land— slopes must be safe to work on and the appropriate equipment used. If accessible, rip on the contour. Choose appropriate equipment (eg. bulldozer rather than tractor).

Erodible lands— sites with existing active erosion, erodible soil types (including subsoil) or at risk of sheet erosion. Rip lines can catch and redirect water if not designed properly. Seek advice before ripping in erosion prone areas.

Spraying

- The area covered by herbicide spraying should be no wider than 50cm along either side of the rip line.
- If weed regrowth is excessive, over spraying with some chemicals is possible at certain times of the year when the plants are dormant. Consult with your nursery or professional for advice.

What if I don't want to use chemicals?

Site preparation is about reducing the competition for moisture, light and nutrients for the seedling, and this can be achieved in other ways.

- **Reduce the biomass**—slashing or using grazing to knock down the grass load.
- **Scalping** (taking the top 1-2cm of soil off) the planting site may be appropriate in sites with low erosion risk. As you are scraping off the nutrients present in the top layer, there is usually some residual effect before regrowth occurs. Scalping over large areas is not recommended, except under VERY specific circumstances (eg sheep camp restoration).



Tree Guards?

Advantages

- Can provide protection from rabbits and hares where control difficult
- Can provide protection from frost

Disadvantages

- Significant cost per unit
- Significant labour cost to install
- Require maintenance and eventual removal



Watering?

Good site preparation and the timing of planting in late Winter/early Spring is recommended to eliminate the need for watering over the first Summer.

Assessing losses— Vegetation growth in the first Spring can often make it difficult to see the plants. Assess the site properly before making a decision. We recommend to wait until the end of the second or third Spring to assess for replanting UNLESS there has been a specific grazing incursion or insect attack.

For more information please contact Holbrook Landcare Network

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