



rePoRTER



In our news today:

- **SPRING INTO ACTION**
Tips to give this year's crop of spring seedlings the very best start.
- **RESERVE YOUR SPACE**
High demand on North American nurseries makes ordering early a necessity.
- **WE HEAR YOU**
PRT customer satisfaction survey confirms we're on the right track.
- **TAKING SILVER**
No, it's not the Olympics. It's the winner of our 25th Anniversary Photo Contest!



**SPRING INTO ACTION:
TIPS TO GIVE YOUR SPRING SEEDLINGS THE VERY BEST START**

Spring is an exciting time of year - a time of renewal for many of nature's cycles. Here at PRT, your seedlings will soon be waking up, becoming active and ready to take on the big, wild world.

"I have worked with seedlings for over 25 years and I still get excited when I see those first seedlings coming out of the boxes and returning to



their natural habitat," says Glenn Goodwill, PRT Customer Support Representative for Saskatchewan and Alberta. "Working together with our nurseries, customers, foresters, silviculturists, planting contractors and others to ensure these trees get their very best start and achieve the best field performance is what it's all about for me." Glenn has some great tips for those of you on the front lines.

TRANSPORT AND LOADING

The correct temperature for transporting PRT spring stock depends on whether the seedlings are frozen or thawed. For frozen stock, the reefer temperature should be set to -2°C (28°F). Do not allow the mercury to drop below -6°C (21°F) to prevent root damage. For thawed stock, the reefers should be 2°C (36°F), never freezing. *Seedling Loading and Transportation Guidelines* are posted at every PRT shipping location for quick reference.

The load should be well secured leaving a minimum of one foot between the top box and the roof so airflow is unrestricted. Frozen boxes can be packed tight together as they will not overheat during normal shipping. Thawed stock, however, is more prone to heating up because the seedlings are no longer dormant. Boxes should be loaded so that there are continuous tunnels throughout the load to allow for air movement.

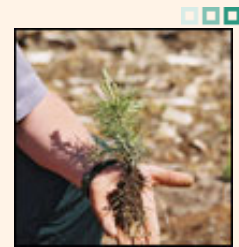
THOUGHTS ON THAWING IN THE FIELD

When seedlings are being thawed, they are especially vulnerable and need to be protected from extreme temperatures, moisture loss and physical damage. If seedlings are to be thawed outside, it should never be in direct sunlight. Even though our white boxes help keep seedling temperatures lower, all cartons pick up heat quickly. Thaw them in as much shade as possible - in a shade tent, on the north side of a building, under an elevated reflective tarp or under a canopy of coniferous trees. Completely thawed stock should be kept at 1°C to 2°C (34°F to 36°F) to conserve carbohydrate reserves and delay root growth until they are in the ground.

Thawing is best done with the cartons closed to retain humidity and reduce stress. Ensure the cartons are well spaced and inspected for temperature and degree of thaw at least once a day. Should the temperature inside the cartons rise above 10°C (50°F), open the boxes, inspect the seedlings for moisture, stand them vertically and keep them in the shade. Seedlings should ideally be planted within 10 days of thawing. Holding the seedlings for an extended period of time may affect survival and field performance.

EASIER YET, LET US THAW THEM FOR YOU

Most of our customers prefer to have their seedlings shipped already thawed. The process takes up to two weeks, so let us know at least two weeks in advance of your delivery date and we can have them ready to go in the ground as soon as they arrive! Of course, they'll still need some TLC. Thawed seedlings should be kept in a reefer at 2°C (36°F) right up until planting time. If not in a reefer, put them in a cool, shady area to reduce any temperature or moisture stress.



KEEPING HYDRATED IS IMPORTANT

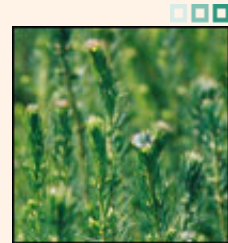
Tree planters know how to keep themselves hydrated and baby trees moist. Spring seedlings have been watered thoroughly prior to storage and should not need to be watered before planting. However, as the roots are very sensitive to exposure, keep the tree bundles wrapped right up to planting so as not to let the seedlings dry out. If they are going to be in a planting bag for a long period of time, some absorbent material such as moist paper towel or newspaper in the bottom of the bag can help reduce stress.

THE IDEAL SPRING PLANT

Good tree planters have it down to a science. The planting holes must be deep enough to accommodate the entire plug leaving the top of the soil plug flush with or slightly below the surrounding earth. Avoid bending the plug, and then tamp the soil gently around the seedling without applying too much pressure. Easy does it. Healthy seedlings, proper thawing, good stock handling and thoughtful planting all add up to success. Work with your planting contractors on microsite selection and have a safe and successful spring plant.

For more detailed instructions, see [Thawing and Planting Guidelines](http://www.prt.com/products-services/forest-seedlings/seedling-sales/thawing-planting-guidelines) at <http://www.prt.com/products-services/forest-seedlings/seedling-sales/thawing-planting-guidelines>

Your PRT Customer Support Representatives are great sources for additional information, so feel free to contact them. For other informative articles, visit our website at <http://www.prt.com/products-services/resource-library/articles> and <http://www.prt.com/products-services/resource-library/faqs>



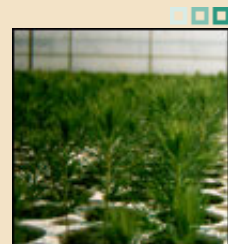
PLAN AHEAD AND PLACE YOUR ORDERS EARLY

Space, the final frontier. Not that long ago, there was plenty of growing space available in seedling nurseries across North America. But times have changed. With the recovering North American economy, there is high demand for nursery capacity in all of our markets, a situation that has been building for a few years now. Nurseries are filling up early leaving last-minute customers in danger of not finding space to grow their seedlings or space at their preferred location.

As North America's largest grower of container seedlings for reforestation, we operate an extensive network of 12 nursery sites, 11 in Canada and one in the United States. All PRT nurseries will reach capacity this year.

"It used to be okay to wait until November, or even later, to finalize orders. However, with the tightening up of space across the industry, early order placement minimizes risk," says Herb Markgraf, PRT Vice President of Marketing. "Scheduling, obtaining seed, stratification, sowing...it all takes time. Space, though, is the big issue."

At PRT, we don't want to disappoint a single customer. That's why we are



Book space for your seedlings

asking you to let us know your anticipated seedling needs for next year as soon as you can. "Orders can always be fine tuned later," says Markgraf. "But it helps enormously if we have an idea of a customer's plans by early September and those plans are confirmed by October."

Early ordering helps optimize nursery placement. We can match stock types to the best growing conditions, plan for efficiencies and meet the delivery dates you desire. ***Please let your PRT Customer Support Representative know your expected seedling requirements as soon as possible. Thank you.***

VAST MAJORITY VOICES SATISFACTION IN PRT SURVEY

In August 2013, PRT conducted its first online customer satisfaction survey. The invitation was sent to 304 primary and secondary contacts in our customer database and a total of 107 completed the survey - an excellent 35% response rate. Damian Sowa, Market Development Manager at PRT, breaks down the findings for us:

"More than 80% of the participants were very satisfied with the quality of support they receive from their CSR (Customer Support Representative) and CSA (Customer Support Assistant). In fact, less than 1% of customers were dissatisfied with PRT's level of service. We know customers value good service and we strive to provide it every day."

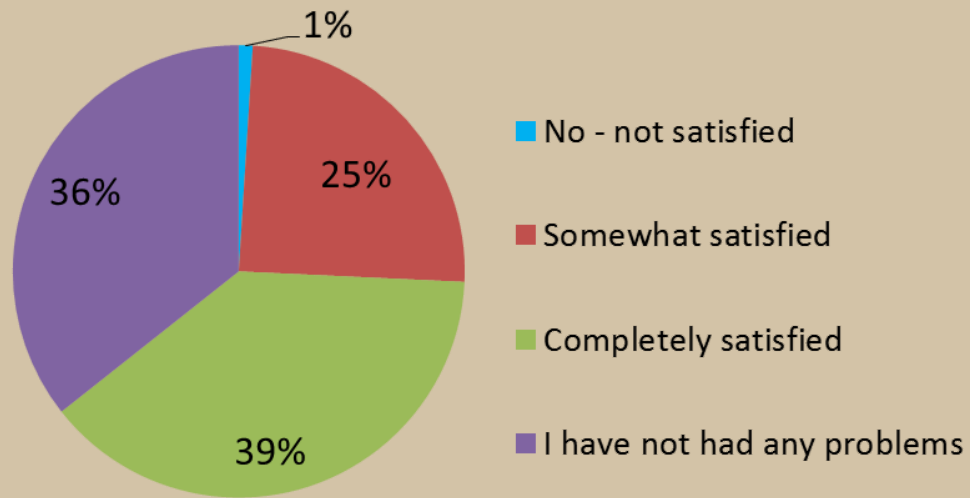
Sowa goes on to say that the most important items to customers were quality of seedlings (#1), reliability in meeting contract requirements (#2) and quality of service (#3). "Not surprising, quality of seedlings was far and away the most important aspect of meeting customer expectations. Seedling price, personal relationships and local presence were at the bottom of the list. Customers are becoming more secure growing trees in locations outside their local area so long as the product quality is high."

"The survey results were extremely gratifying," adds Herb Markgraf, Vice President of Marketing. "We were given a lot of A's and B's. As a company, we're going to focus on a few areas that were not at that level. The largest areas for potential improvement are our invoicing and administrative correspondence, and we have plans for these. For example, we have a project underway that is developing a new invoice format."

Once again, we would like to thank everyone who took the time to participate in our survey. Your feedback and the impetus for continuous improvement it provided us are much appreciated. In recognition of your kindness, a total donation of \$1,070 was made to the Canadian Cancer Society and the American Cancer Society representing \$10 for each completed survey.

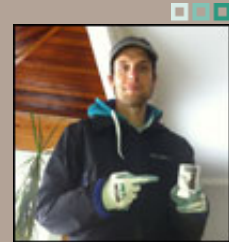
"The ultimate takeaway from this customer research is that PRT is on the right track," concludes Sowa. "Moving forward, we now have a good baseline to measure improvement and will continue to emphasize our core values: Reliability, Value, and Service."

Problem Resolution - Excellent



CREATIVITY AND TREE PLANTING GO HAND IN GLOVE

Congratulations to tree planter Jeffery Whittaker who literally "took silver" in the PRT 25th Anniversary Photo Contest. As part of our celebrations last year, we placed limited edition PRT gloves in various boxes of summer plant seedlings. The lucky recipients were asked to submit photos featuring the gloves for a chance to win a commemorative 10 ounce silver bar.



Jeffery Whittaker

Jeffery's entry was randomly selected from the wide array of inventive images we received, some from as far afield as Stonehenge and the Eiffel Tower. Working for Evergreen Reforestation, Jeffery planted for Western Forest Products (Powell River, BC) and BC Timber Sales (Beaverdell, BC) last year. The unsung heroes of our industry, tree planters are crucial to the future of forestry and we salute them for the challenging work they do - not to mention their creativity!

Check out all the original images in our photo gallery at www.prt.com/25th-anniversary-tree-planters

Contact Us

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