

SAWTOOTH OAK PLANT MATERIALS PLANNING GUIDE

Sawtooth oak, Quercus acutissima, is an imported oak which produces acorns within a few years when planted on good sites. This oak grows to a large round-headed tree, to 50 feet in height, with chestnut-like foliage. Acorns are large, 3/8" by 5/8" to 3/4" by 1 1/4", 40-80 per pound when freshly fallen. For this reason it is primarily considered to be potentially useful for wildlife, especially for squirrels and deer.

Principal objectives are to make plantings in new pine plantings in the same manner that pines are planted, obtain a survival count over a period of years, record rate of growth each year, and note year acorns were first produced. In subsequent years observations of use of acorns by wildlife would be recorded.

Site conditions necessary would require an open area where a new slash pine planting is being made and preferably on a fertile, well-drained soil. The location should be in deer, squirrel, and turkey territory, it is desired that two rows be planted a few rows in from each edge of the pine planting and additional pairs of rows about 1/4 mile apart.

Establishment will be made from stock shipped from Americus Plant Materials Center as bare rooted seedlings. When they arrive, soak the roots in water if they appear to be dry, and then heel in in damp soil or wet sawdust. Plant as soon as possible after receiving plants. Seedlings will be planted in the same manner and spacing as slash pine seedlings when using a mechanical planter. Possibly the sword of the planter will have to be tun deeper for the oaks. Cultivation of the oaks will be desirable for the first two years. Fertilization of plants would be desirable. Apply 1 pound of complete fertilizer per plant the first year and 2 pounds the second year. Make applications in 12-inch bands around the trees one foot from the trunk.

Where a mechanical tree planter is not available, holes should be dug deep enough to place seedlings about an inch deeper than they grew in the nursery. Hold seedling upright in hole, add top soil until hole is 3/4 filled, pack well about roots, then complete filling hole with top soil and pack again.

Protect from grazing at all times.

Observations and measurements to be made:

1. Number of surviving plants each year for 3 years; again at 5 years, and finally at 10 years.
2. Amount of growth each period in 1. above.
3. Year trees produce acorns,
4. Observe what use is made by wildlife.

Continue observations for 10 years, at which time decision will be made if further study is needed.