

Using the Chilcotin-pak

When Reforesting Dry Sites

The Chilcotin-pak

The purpose of using RTI's Chilcotin-pak is to enhance seedling establishment and reduce transplant shock on harsh sites with growing season moisture deficits. Under these conditions, seedlings will benefit from the Chilcotin-pak. The pre-measured 10g teabags contain a balanced blend of controlled release fertilizer that will supply extra nutrients to the seedlings for two to three growing seasons. Also included are kelp and humic acid that will stimulate growth of the root system.

Importance of Placement

Nothing is more critical to obtaining the benefit of the Chilcotin-pak than its placement. Do it correctly and you will be amazed at the results. The Chilcotin-pak serves two functions: to supply nutrients and to stimulate root system development. Keeping this in mind is very important when placing the teabag. The nutrients are released from the Chilcotin-pak in the same manner that tea leaves in a teabag diffuse the liquor into the teapot. If the Chilcotin-pak is too close to the seedling plug it will supply too potent a brew and can damage the seedling. If the Chilcotin-pak is placed too far away, the solution is too weak and the benefits that produce growth will be lost. There is also the risk that the roots and soil will dry out before they can get to it.

Spacing

Because of the new coating technology, the Chilcotin-pak is different from other RTI teabag products, and provides you the opportunity to do something you can't do with the other teabags: place them in the same hole as the seedling. If done carefully, and under the correct soil moisture conditions, the teabag can safely be placed quite close to the seedling plug.



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Chilcotin-pak planting procedure

As per the photo below, place the seedling at one side of the hole and the Chilcotin-pak at the opposite side, leaving a small space of approximately 1” between the two. The space can consist of either air or soil. The slit in the ground made by the shovel should provide an easy highway for the roots to get to the Chilcotin-pak. If the teabag touches the plug accidentally it should not (but not 100% guaranteed) damage the seedling, so you will want to monitor the planters closely.

Soil conditions must be moist to wet at the time of planting. Given you don't want to be planting dry soils anyways, this shouldn't be much of an issue. Planting the Chilcotin-pak in a separate hole 1-2” away from the seedling plug can also be done, but is not recommended in dense silty/clay soils as the roots can not penetrate these soils quickly enough before they dry out to access the teabag.



Depth

Placement needs to be 2” below the soil surface. You don't want the Chilcotin-pak lower than 2” as the soils are cooler at lower depths and lower temperatures will inhibit the release of the fertilizer. Tell the planters to make sure the planting hole is closed at the top but not to pack it shut.

Field Handling and Storage of Chilcotin-paks

The plastic bags that contain Chilcotin-pak are relatively waterproof and should protect the Paks from exposure. However, as a precaution, Chilcotin-pak must be covered during periods of rain or they can turn into mush. Any product that is not used should be stored undercover in a cool, dry location away from moisture. They can be safely stored this way for years.

Safety Information

MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) are available by contacting Darius Bucher of Integral Forest Management Ltd. (integralfm@telus.net).

Other Safety Information

RTI tests and monitors “Heavy Metal” content in all our products and lab reports are available upon request. A planter health study looking at potential exposure when handling teabag fertilizer has also been conducted jointly by FERIC, Work safe BC, and the Western Silviculture Contractors Association. There is little risk to planters being exposed to the fertilizer in our products if proper, common sense precautions summarized in the report are taken. Copies of the report are available by contacting Darius Bucher of Integral Forest Management Ltd. (integralfm@telus.net).

Feedback

We always welcome feedback regarding the performance of our products. Further questions can be answered by sending an e-mail to Darius Bucher of Integral Forest Management Ltd. (integralfm@telus.net). We would love to hear from you!

