

## **Seed Use Efficiency Meeting**

Langley, BC July 30 & 31, 2008

**Al McDonald**

BC Timber Sales

### **Seed & Seedling Costs Over Time**

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Seedling Costs – seedling costs are based on the prices paid on competitive award contracts for seedlings grown for Ministry of Forests and Range programs over the previous ten years. Because of the large variety of species and container types, the two prevalent interior and coastal species with their predominant container types were chosen.

Interior examples – lodgepole pine 112's and 160's, interior spruce 77's and 112's.

Coastal examples – coastal Douglas fir 77's and 112's, western redcedar 77's and 112's.

These examples account for slightly more than 70% of all of the reforestation crops grown in the province over the last 10 years.

In spite of a constantly rising "BC Consumer Price Index", seedling prices have remained remarkably constant over the last decade, ranging from about \$.11 for pine 160's to about \$.33 for fir 77's.

Seed Costs – seed costs are based, for the most part, on the 'Surplus Seed' prices posted on the Tree Seed Centre website. These have been quite consistent with Ministry seed costs. However some adjustments need to be made, particularly in the case of lodgepole pine and some updated pine and interior fir prices have been calculated by Lee Charleson (Tree Improvement Branch). In pine, spruce, and fir, the seed costs have risen over the past 10 years as a result of the increasing use of seed orchard seed. As well, the increased cost of pine collections due to the escalating costs of helicopter collections has driven pine seed prices up.

Total Seedling Cost – the proportionate cost of nursery and seed in overall seedling costs varies with species and container sizes. In coastal Douglas fir, the seed price can be 30% the overall seedling cost and in small container pine, it can be 25%. In terms of western redcedar in large containers, it is as low as 8%.

Nursery costs have remained very stable over the last 10 year in spite of dramatically rising fuel costs and the shortage of nursery space in 2006 and 2007 and so it's likely that they will remain fairly constant. Some seed however, is becoming increasingly valuable and represents a larger portion of the total seedling cost. Depending on species, it's becoming more important that nursery and seed costs are taken into account to ensure that decisions are made so that seed is used as efficiently as possible