

**Forest Service Manual
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**Forest Service Manual 3200 – Rural and Urban Forestry Assistance
Chapter 3220 - Cooperative Nursery Production**

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Approved by: Robin L. Thompson, Associate Deputy Chief

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Responsible Staff:

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Posting Instructions: Amendments are numbered consecutively by title and calendar year. Post by document; remove the entire document and replace it with this amendment. Retain this transmittal as the first page(s) of this document. The last amendment to this title was 3200-2002-1 to FSM 3200.

Digest: Following is an explanation of the changes throughout the directive by section.

3220: Replaces term “tree planting” with “native plant regeneration” throughout chapter.

3220.3: Recodes to this section policy previously set out in FSM 3223.

3220.5: Removes obsolete references to “forest tree seed.”

3221: Adds direction regarding nursery production assistance for timber and non-timber native plants and exotic species.

3221.1: Removes obsolete term “tree” from direction regarding purposes for which funds are provided.

3221.3: Changes the caption from “United States Forest Planting Report” to “Reforestation, Nurseries and Genetic Resources National Team” and sets forth new direction for the Team.

3221.4: Establishes code and recodes to this section caption and direction previously set out in 3221.3.

3222: Changes caption from “Seed Technology and Testing to “Native Plant Seed Technology and Testing,” updates the name of the seed laboratory, and sets forth new direction regarding protocols for timber and non-timber native plants and preservation of native plants.

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3220.2 - Objective

To help States, territories, and International Institute of Tropical Forestry (IITF) furnish an adequate supply of reasonably priced native plants for forest, shelterbelt, woodlot, agroforestry, wildlife, conservation, and other plantings.

3220.3 - Policy

The Forest Service will import and export seed, pollen, and tissue cultures as a means of exchanging living plant materials between the United States and foreign countries, except in cases where it is not possible to reproduce the plant adequately by seed. All shipments abroad must conform to regulations and restrictions administered by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the importing countries.

3220.5 - Definitions

Elite. Seed, cuttings, or planting stock from parents proven to be genetically superior to the average for a certain population of plants and capable of passing this superiority to offspring.

Select. Seed, cuttings, or planting stock from individual parents or stands possessing certain demonstrable desired characteristics. Select plants or stands have not been proven by research to be genetically superior to surrounding plants or stands; offspring may or may not exhibit observed desired characteristics.

Source-identified. Seed, cuttings, or planting stock of known origin. Includes select and elite categories of reforestation plant materials.

3221 - Nursery Production Assistance

Technical and financial assistance is provided to States, territories, and IITF to assist them in upgrading their nursery operations. Use funds to promote forestation on non-Federal lands by assisting States, territories, Tribes, and IITF to procure, produce, and distribute seeds and seedlings of timber and non-timber native plants or suitable exotic plants, for establishing conservation plantings, including forests, shelterbelts, woodlots, agroforestry, wildlife, erosion control, land reclamation, and other plantings. This includes helping implement the latest technology in nursery operations. Use source-identified seed and planting stock, or higher level of genetic improvement, in all planting programs. Federal nursery specialists shall supply technical advice to nursery managers on request. To avoid unintended ecological consequences, exotic species may be used only after careful consideration of the alternatives (FSM 2070.3, para. 2 and 3).

3221.1 - Purposes for Which Funds are Provided

1. To purchase and collect source-identified seeds that produce plants genetically and physiologically compatible with the intended planting area.
2. To purchase source-identified planting stock genetically adapted to the intended planting area.
3. To store seeds and planting stock.
4. To produce and distribute source-identified planting stock for conservation and restoration planting.

3221.2 - Program Restrictions

The program is limited to the procurement, production, and distribution of source-identified seed and planting stock intended for use as described in FSM 3221. Federal program funds may not be used to produce planting stock for ornamental planting or for producing plants grown for resale as live plants with roots attached.

3221.3 - Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources National Team

Regional or Area State and Private Forestry nursery or regeneration specialists and the Director of the National Seed Laboratory, along with representatives from the National Forest System, and Research and Development will form the Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources National Team (RNGR). The team has two objectives. The first is to work as a national team to efficiently and cost effectively focus regeneration expertise at the greatest regeneration needs irrespective of regional or area boundaries. The second is to maintain regeneration skills and expertise within the Forest Service. The team prepares an annual work plan and budget for its activities.

3221.4 - United States Forest Planting Report

The Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetic Resources Team shall prepare and print an annual summary of national forestation and tree nursery production accomplishments. Derive the data for the publication from appropriate Cooperative Forestry accomplishment reports and from information submitted by the National Forest System and by other Federal agencies.

3222 - Native Plant Seed Technology and Testing

The Forest Service National Seed Laboratory (NSL) is cooperatively funded as a national program by State and Private Forestry, the National Forest System, and Research and Development. The NSL shall:

1. Provide, at prices that reflect actual costs, service testing of native plant propagating materials (seeds, cones, pollen, cuttings) where such services are not readily available

from State or commercial sources. Testing must conform to the rules of the Association of Official Seed Analysis (AOSA) and the International Seed Testing Association (ISTA).

2. Serve as the national center of technical expertise and information about native plant seed and seed-related matters and effectively provide technical assistance, technology transfer, and information dissemination about such matters. Developing protocols for collection, cleaning, testing, germinating, and storing the seeds of native plants is part of serving as the national center.

Normally, region or Area nursery/tree improvement specialists provide technical assistance to the State and private sector. When seed-related problems are atypical or complex, the specialists shall consult NSL. Annually, through the RNGR work planning process, NSL personnel and nursery and regeneration specialists shall review technical seed problems encountered to ensure maximum exchange of information, ideas, and concerns.

3. Provide, to the Forest Service and its cooperators, ex situ germplasm preservation of all U.S. native plants through long-term storage of seeds or other suitable reproductive materials such as pollen, buds, or tissue cultures. This work is carried out through cooperation with the Agricultural Research Service, National Center for Genetic Resource Preservation. Samples must be stored for long term back up and for distribution to U.S. and foreign researchers.

NSL acts as a clearinghouse to expedite the filling of foreign research native plant seed needs with the following exception. When a cooperative research effort is underway with foreign researchers, Forest Service research stations fill some requests directly.

4. Provide Forest Service liaison to the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) on tree seed-related technical matters. The U.S. Department of State has designated the AMS as an accreditation authority to ISTA. AMS has designated the NSL as an accredited seed-testing station specializing in tree seed related matters. Personnel from the laboratory represent the Forest Service at ISTA meetings.

3223 - International Exchange of Seed

All requests received from foreign countries relating to the shipment of native plant seed must be directed to the NSL with the aforementioned exception (FSM 3222, para. 3).

3224 - International Seed Trade

To ensure uniform quality and genetic identity, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) established standards and procedures for the control of forest reproductive materials moving in international trade. This is commonly referred to as the OECD Scheme for Forest Reproductive Materials.

The Forest Service has the authority, delegated from the U.S. Department of State through the U. S. Department of Agriculture, for implementing the OECD scheme in cooperation with the official State certifying agencies. The staff of the NSL represents the Forest Service in this capacity. Through a Memorandum of Understanding between State agency and the Forest Service, the Forest Service may delegate authority to the State to operate independently under the OECD scheme. All interactions with the OECD need to be properly coordinated with other appropriate agencies within the U. S. Department of Agriculture.