

## **GRAFTING ACER PALMATUM 'BLOODGOOD'**

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**Potting procedure.** We use 2-year-old seedlings of *Acer palmatum* as the understock. We bring in the understock plants in March so we can clean the tops and cut the roots. They are then placed in a bucket of water that contains captan (3 tbls/gal) to help control any disease. The understock is potted into a 2½ in. clay pot no deeper than it was growing in the ground in a soil mixture containing: soil - ½ yd, sand - ¼ yd, peat - 4 bu, fertilizer - 1 lb. of 5-10-10, and limestone - 1 lb. The potted understock plants are placed into flats, moved outside into a sand frame, covered with sand to a depth of 1 in., and then watered. The frames are shaded.

Leaves are removed the first week in October and any excess poor shoot growth on the bottom of the rootstock is removed. The rootstocks are then placed in a cool greenhouse with no heat so the buds do not break. In late December the pots are cleaned and the rootstocks are placed in flats for grafting in January.

**Grafting procedures.** Grafting is begun the first week of January. The understock is brought up from the greenhouse and the upper third of the tops are cut off. Scions, which contain 4 nodes, are cut two days before. We graft only the 'Bloodgood' cultivar.

We use a very sharp Tina grafting knife dipped in alcohol frequently to keep the knife clean. We make an incision 1 in. long on the rootstock and a reverse slice is made on the scion to make sure it is a smooth fit. The graft is held together securely with a grafting elastic that is stretched slightly and not twisted when wrapping it around the graft.

**Benching procedure.** Completed grafts are brought into the grafting house and placed in a high bench (12 in.) with 1 in. of moist peatmoss on the bottom. They are set erect, covered with moist peatmoss to a level 1 in. above the graft union and Kraft crinkle paper is placed over the grafts. We use bottom heat at approximately 75°F. After 4 days we check for excess moisture. If it is too damp we take the Kraft paper off and let the bench dry for ½ hr. We do this every 3 days. When scion buds start breaking we take the Kraft paper off and syringe them. We leave the paper off for 1 hr. so the new growth will start to harden, then we put the paper back. When the growth is 1 in. long, the paper is taken off completely. On hot, sunny

days we mist twice a day, once in mid-morning and again in the afternoon. The grafts remain in the bench for 6 to 8 weeks.

**Taking grafts from the grafting house.** At this time the understock is cut off and the grafts are placed back into a greenhouse at 65°F. The soil in the beds is loosened up and leveled off before plunging the pots half way down and set 1 in. apart.

**Taking grafts from the greenhouse to the beds.** During the last week in May or first week of June we plant the maple grafts outside. The grafting elastic is cut off and after watering, the grafts are brought to the outside beds. The outside beds are 6 ft wide and the grafts are placed 12 in. apart. They are planted by trowel and then shade is applied.

**From the beds to the field.** After two yr. the maples are dug from the beds in the second week of May. After pruning the tops and roots, they are then watered, placed into boxes, and taken to the field for planting. They are planted 30 in. apart in 36 in. spaced rows. After three years the grafted maples are sold as 18 to 24 and 24 to 30 in. stock.

## QUESTION BOX

The Question Box Session was convened at 9.00 a.m. with Ralph Shugert and Joerg Leiss serving as moderators.

**MODERATOR LEISS:** What is the shelf life of a rooting compound, such as the various Hormex formulations, provided you keep them in a cool, dry place? Will they break down after a certain period of time?

**DICK WOLFF:** If it is kept cool and in the dark there should be no deterioration. I have had some cans for 6 and 7 years but finally threw them out because I was concerned, even though I was successful.

**PETER VERMEULEN:** We were approached by the maker of Hormodin who was working on labeling. During the course of the conversation we were advised that Hormodin had an excellent shelf life if kept cool, sealed, and out of the light.

**JOERG LEISS:** Does it make any difference in relation to heat buildup when using two layers of plastic, whether the clear or the opaque layer is to the inside?

**JIM CROSS.** Dick Bosley did a study years ago. The best combination in cool areas was white on the inside and clear on the outside for heat uptake.