PLANTING
SEEDLING TREES

FORESTRY FACT SHEET

Planting seedling trees is a relatively easy and enjoyable task. Following these guidelines will help you ensure the survival of your seedlings.

Site Selection
- Choose a site free of water holes, stumps, and rocks.
- Do not plant underneath the live crown of larger trees or underneath utility wires.
- Do not plant too close to roads, walkways, or buildings.

Planting
- Dig a round hole that is deep enough for the root system.
- Place the seedling in the hole and spread the roots out evenly in the hole; don't bunch, spiral, double over, or bend roots.
- Plant the seedling upright being careful not to bury any of the live branches or foliage.
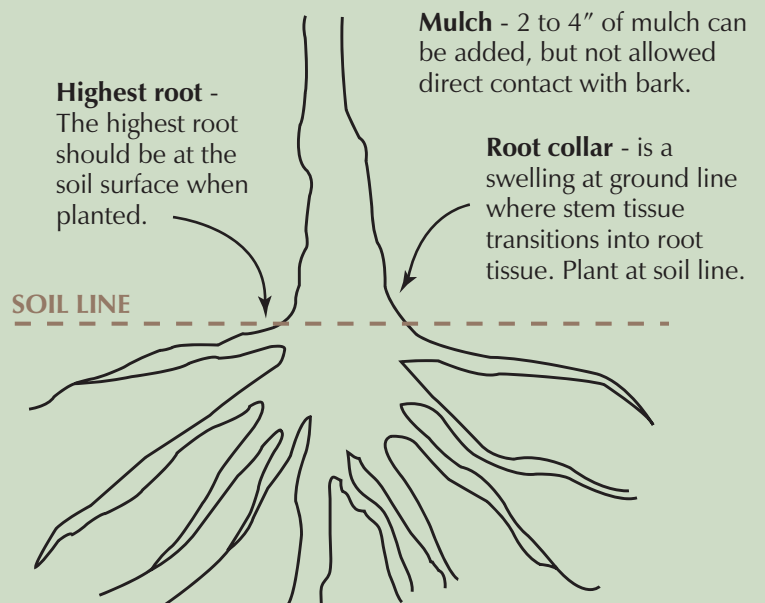- Pull loose soil back over roots, and gently tamp the soil to remove any air pockets.

Watering and Fertilizing
- Water after planting to help settle the soil around root systems and to remove air pockets in the planting hole.
- Water periodically afterwards, especially if weather is dry. A thorough soaking is best (6 litres of water per seedling).
- Fertilizing after planting is not required; bonemeal can be mixed with the backfill soil to improve rooting.

Weed Control
- Remove all competing vegetation within 25cm of the seedling. This can be accomplished by hand, by spraying a herbicide (making sure not get any on the tree), or applying a layer of mulch.
- In the fall, remove or mow over-topping grass and vegetation to minimize snow load and rodent damage.

Proper Planting Depth

Highest root - The highest root should be at the soil surface when planted.

Mulch - 2 to 4" of mulch can be added, but not allowed direct contact with bark.

Root collar - is a swelling at ground line where stem tissue transitions into root tissue. Plant at soil line.

SOIL LINE

It is extremely important that you don't plant the seedling either too deep or too shallow. Seedlings should only be planted as deep as the root collar, which is often indicated by a swelling in the stem or a change in the stem colour between the leaves the roots.

Grand River Conservation Authority