

1. LIMING SOIL FOR A TRUFFLE TREE

Initially have a soil test done to determine the pH. The pH is simply a measure of the soil's acidity or alkalinity. The scale goes from 0 to 14 with 7 being neutral. A figure under 7 and lower is increasing acidity and figure above 7 is increasing alkalinity. We need the truffle soil to be in the range of 7.5 to 8. A simple Soil pH test kit is sold in garden centres and hardware stores. This is a useful field test and will give you an approximate pH reading if the more elaborate (and expensive) laboratory soil test is not able to be used.

TABLE OF LIME TO BE AMELIORATED TO SOIL

The following table provides a rough guide of how much lime needs to be applied and incorporated.

NB/ Only a laboratory soil test can provide an accurate pH measurement and along with the other nutrient and mineralogy analyses then provide a more accurate lime recommendation.

This is a rough guide only. This applies for one tree.

Ameliorate to soil	pH under 6.5	pH 6.5 to 7.5	pH above 7.5
Agricultural lime	20kg	10kg	nil
Course lime (Buchan Grit or Shell grit)	20kg	10kg	10kg

POINTS TO FOLLOW

- Cultivate the soil around the planting hole (20cm deep and 2M diameter).
- Dig in the appropriate amount of lime or grits. Incorporate this thoroughly into the soil.
- The soil needs to reach a pH of 7.5 before planting (this could take several months).
- Take another pH test before planting.
- If the pH has not reached 7.5 at the time of planting it is advised to add 1Kg of Ag Lime (fine) and 1kg of Course lime into the soil in the planting hole (50 cm diameter and 20cm deep). Mix the lime thoroughly into this soil. This will ensure the new roots grow out into well limed up soil.
- Each year add more lime to the outside of the treated 2M area.

2. PLANTING A NEW TRUFFLE TREE SEEDLING

Loosen up the soil around the planting hole (200mm deep and 250mm diameter). Dig out an appropriate amount of soil so that the finished height of the root system is the same level as in the pot (see Fig 1)

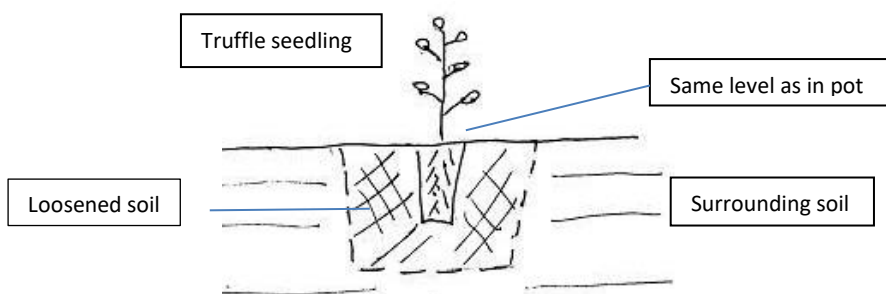


Fig 1

KEY POINTS

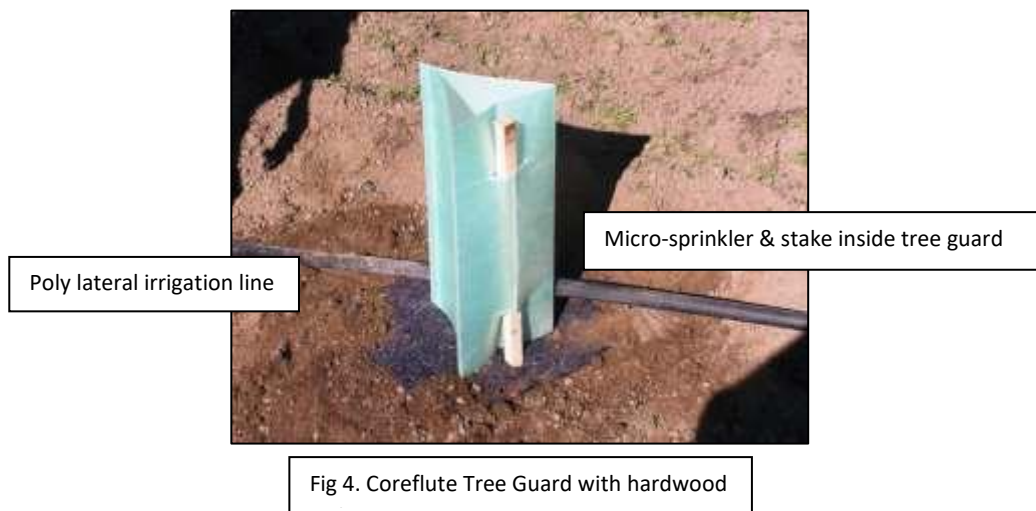
- On arrival soak the seedling root area in water for several minutes
- Add some Seasol (seaweed extract) to the water at the recommended rate, to aid root establishment. (do not use mineral fertiliser)
- Remove the plant from the tree tube. Loosen the root ball but do not remove or break any roots
- Place plant in the hole and gently firm the soil around (see Fig 2)
- Water in well to allow soil to settle and remove air pockets
- Protect the seedling by fitting a fibre weed mat (with slots for the plant to pass through and slots for the hardwood stake. (see Fig 3)
- Place the coreflute tree guard, insert the hardwood stake and hammer into the soil. (see Fig 4)
- Do not apply any organic mulch as this may acidify the soil.



Fig 2. Plant to the same depth as in the pot



Fig 3. Recycled Fibre Weed Mat



IRRIGATION

Fit the micro-sprinkler by threading the stake and micro-line under the tree guard so that it sits inside. Connect the bayonet of the micro-line into the poly lateral. (see Fig 4)

PRUNING

There is no need to prune the seedling at this stage, however remove any lower buds by rubbing (this will prevent basal branching)

STAKING

Staking is not important because the tree guard will protect from wind. However when the tree grows taller above the tree guard if wind becomes a problem then consider staking.