

Ash Seed Collection Instructions

The following recommendations are intended to aid in the successful collection of ash seeds. They will help in the identification, harvest, handling, and shipment of ash seeds.

1. **Tree Identification** – Tree identification is critical to successful seed collection. Ash trees can be identified by leaf, bark, stem, bud, and general structure characteristics. Refer to the enclosed resources to determine the identification of the four Ash species. **IT IS NECESSARY TO IDENTIFY ASH TREES TO THE SPECIES.**
2. **Mark Trees for Seed Collection** – Mark selected Ash trees with a weather resistant paint, plastic ribbon, or other method that will withstand the effects of weather and wildlife. A map of the area marked with the location of specific trees is also recommended. GPS technology may also be helpful in determining the location of specific trees.
3. **Determine Seed Production on Marked Trees.** Ash trees produce either pollen or seed, but not usually on the same tree. Ash trees may not produce seed in a given year, so monitoring trees for two to eight years may be necessary to identify and collect seed from a given tree. Seed production begins in mid-summer and seeds come to maturity in late-summer to early-autumn.
4. **Seed Harvest** - Harvest seed from marked trees when seed is mature. Mature seed will be tan to brown in color and will easily separate from the tree. Try to collect a minimum of 500 seeds from a population. Seeds from multiple trees can be combined to create the collection. Harvesting seed directly from a marked tree (instead of the ground) is desired. This minimizes the potential for disease or mold contamination and insures that the harvested seed is identified by species.
5. **Complete an ASH SEED COLLECTION FORM.** Include the completed form with the seed shipment to the Rose Lake Plant Materials Center. Complete a form for each species or population collected.
6. **Seed Storage and Shipment** – Place harvested seeds into a cloth or paper bag and label the bag to accurately identify the sample. **DO NOT** store seeds in a plastic bag. **KEEP SEED OF EACH ASH SPECIES IN A SEPARATE CONTAINER.** Store seed under cool, dry conditions until shipment. Ship seeds to the Rose Lake Plant Materials Center within 24 hours of harvest if possible. Next-day delivery is preferred. Include ASH SEED COLLECTION FORM with the seed shipment.

Seeds are to be shipped to: **USDA-NRCS Rose Lake Plant Materials Center**
7472 Stoll Road
East Lansing, MI 48823