

COMPARISON OF SEEDLING PACKAGING METHODS 1/

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Our assigned subject is one of great importance to all nurserymen and tree planters. The proper packaging of seedlings for shipment is but one of the few techniques nurserymen must master. It is the one thing vital, however, to placing a nursery's end product, seedlings, into the hands of tree planters in a condition so survival will be high. We all know that poor packing can cause low field survival. A nurseryman can use the best growing techniques available and he can keep abreast of the latest forest nursery research, adapting same to his operations but, if he fails to protect plants properly during shipment then his work has been in vain.

During July 1961, at the Nurserymen's Conference in Lake City, Florida, I had the pleasure of discussing seedling packaging methods. Prior to the Lake City meeting, I contacted a total of 26 forest nurseries in regard to their method of packaging plants for shipment. It was found that four primary type packages were being made. These were: (1) Standard Forest Service type bale, (2) A jelly-roll type bale, (3) A large wooden box, and (4) A wire-bound crate.

Prior to our present conference, a survey was made to determine what has happened to packaging since the 1961 Nurserymen's meeting. Today similar packages are being used throughout the forest nursery industry, however, a big change seems to be in the internal make up of the package. For example, moss has been replaced by cotton batting or some type fabric material, or mud slurry and the kraft-polyethylene lined bag.

To assist in this discussion of seedling packaging methods, we asked five of our co-workers to present information regarding a specific type package.

In reviewing information supplied by members of our panel, cost appears to be one of the major items in choosing a particular method of packaging. In view of this, I will begin our discussion by presenting data supplied by Carl Muller, on using the Forest Service type bale in Alabama. Illness prevented Mr. Muller from being with us today.

1/ This was a panel presentation. The papers of the panel participants are included in this report.