

RUBBER BANDS FOR BUNDLING SEEDLINGS

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Many nurseries count and bundle seedlings into units of 50 or a multiple thereof. Generally, bundles are held together with twine that may be applied either by hand or with a tying machine. Hand tying and machine tying have many disadvantages. Hand tying is slow and costly. Machines frequently get out of adjustment.

N. D. Pearce, of the Auburn Nursery, found that rubber bands were as effective as twine in securing the bundles. In 1951-52, a 2 foot section of 6 inch stove pipe was mounted on the grading table. A supply of rubber bands was stretched over the pipe. Roots of the seedlings in a bundle were inserted into the pipe and a rubber band was pulled off the pipe onto and around the bundle.

In 1953, a section of galvanized sheet iron was shaped into a funnel and welded to a short section of one inch pipe. The other end of the pipe was screwed into a tee mounted distance above the grading table. Several hundred rubber bands could easily be placed on the pipe within a few minutes.

At the Auburn Nursery each grader, working individually, grades and counts full bundles. A rubber band holder is available for each grader. When a bundle is filled, the grader puts the roots into the funnel, pulls a rubber band over the stem, and sends the bundle on to the packer.

During the 1953-54 season, the Edward A. House Nursery substituted rubber bands and holders for twine and tying machines.

A size 14, 16, or 18 rubber band is sufficiently large and strong for most bundles of seedlings.

Planters have been satisfied with the bands. Most of those asked say they prefer rubber bands to twine.

