

A METHOD FOR ASPEN AND COTTONWOOD SEED EXTRACTION

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Increased importance of aspen in the Lake States and cottonwood on bottomland areas in the Midwest and the South has resulted in the need for producing these species of Populus from seed. One of the problems involved in seedling production is the extraction of the seed from cotton. The simple method described produces extremely clean seed with little seed injury and a high percent seed recovery.

The materials needed consist of a 4- to 6 inch section of 6-inch diameter paperboard tubing, a small circle of plastic window screen fastened

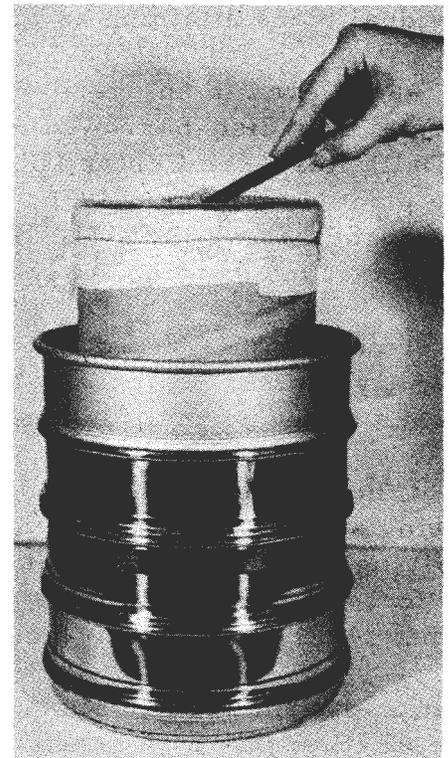
over the top of the tube and a small piece of polyethylene sheeting in which a 1-inch slit has been cut as illustrated. The paperboard tube with the

window screen on top and catkins inside is placed on a series of standard sieves. The sizes used in

extracting aspen seed are from top to bottom, 20-mesh, 20-mesh, 40-mesh and 60-mesh. Next, the sheet of polyethylene is placed over the window screen to

prevent the seed from flying out. A 30-pound compressed air line is directed at high velocity through the slit in the polyethylene and into the paperboard tube. After a few minutes of rapid tumbling the extraction is complete and the seeds are collected

on the 40- and 60-mesh screens. Cottonwood seed being larger requires larger mesh screens.



If very clean seeds are desired or the catkins to be extracted are not open fully, the cotton should be removed from the catkins and only the cotton with the attached seed should be placed in the extractor. If, however, there are large numbers of fully opened catkins or the seed doesn't need to be especially clean, the catkins can be placed directly into the extractor.

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