

# GREEN HARVEST

## Useful hints & tips for the garden

### The Care and Protection of Young Trees © Frances Michaels

Young trees need to be protected from grazing animals such as rabbits, wallabies, kangaroos, hares, sheep, cattle and horses. The nipping-off of the top growth on a young tree by grazing may deform the shape of the future tree by causing it to branch outwards rather than grow directly upwards. Continued pruning or ringbarking of a young tree will inevitably lead to the death of the tree.

The two choices are individual tree sleeves or fencing off the whole area. It is difficult to fence an area economically to keep out smaller animals such as rabbits and hares.

Treeguards also protect the young tree from wind, and increase the humidity around the tree; this reduces evapo-transpiration and therefore water loss from the young tree, aiding its establishment. Combining a treeguard with a weedmat or mulch gives a young tree the best chance of surviving into a healthy mature tree.

### Weed Control

Good planning ahead is essential for effective weed control. Ideally the area would be cultivated to kill weeds. The tree planting spots can be mulched and the rest of the cultivated strip sown to a green manure crop. Keeping young trees mulched and mowing regularly along the treelines will greatly enhance tree establishment. It is quite easy for a young tree to be completely shaded out by tall grasses in just one season.

### Watering

Always try to match tree planting times to expected rainfall times. Carting water to young trees can be difficult and time consuming. Deep ripping the tree planting row before planting will also help the young roots to grow quickly downwards and access a deeper soil layer that may stay moist longer. Try to water tree seedlings well at planting time and form a shallow saucer out of soil around the base of each young tree. During extended dry periods in the first year tree seedlings need approx. 20 litres of water every 4 weeks.



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