

MAHOGANY TREE FARMING / MAHOGANY TREE CULTIVATION

Mahogany is a kind of wood, the straight-grained, reddish-brown timber. The three species of mahogany are: *Swietenia macrophylla*, *Swietenia mahagoni* and *Swietenia humilis*.

Mahogany tree grows in tropical America, Asia, and Africa. It's known for its redwood colour, strength, durability, water resistance and aesthetic appeal. The tree can grow over 60 feet high and reaching around 4–5 feet in diameter. The best mahogany plant develops in well drained deep alluvial soil. Land is prepared by ensuring site is cleaned of weeds. Pits of size 1.5ft by 1.5ft by 1.5ft are dug. The pit mixture is composed of decomposed organic manure, oil neem cake and top soil.

Pit filling and spacing

Pit mixture is prepared by mixing equal parts of organic manure and top soil along with 200g of oil neem cake. Pits must be filled at least two weeks before planting to allow for mixture to settle. A peg may be placed in the centre of the pit for identification during planting.

The recommended spacing for the planting of mahogany is 6 feet by 6.5 feet.

Irrigation and fertilizer application

Watering should be done immediately after planting. During the first two weeks, watering should be done on alternate days. Subsequently, irrigation should be done once in 3-4 days.

Apply fertilizer in 8 split doses. In the first year, NPK 17:17:17 and micronutrients 200 grams per plant per month except for dormancy period. This is done by making holes 1 ft

away from the plants and depth of the pit should be 1 ft. Apply fertilizer in the hole and fill with soil.

Best conditions and harvesting

Mahogany develops best on deep, well- drained and fertile soils. Moist, warm tropical climate with minimum and maximum temperatures of 25-44°C are favourable for its growth and a rainfall zone of 1200- 2500mm. Sandy soil is considered to be the best soil texture for mahogany.

Harvesting is done at 10 years of age with average diameter at 27.2cm and 23.2 metres in height. Tree per acre range between 1200-1500 and stem timber yield is 3600 cubic feet which can be sold.