

POPLAR PLANTING OPPORTUNITY



The Poplar Tree Company...

- Grows poplar plant material for sale from its registered nurseries.
- Has the rights to market many new poplar varieties that other nurseries cannot supply.
- Offers a free site appraisal and grant application service.
- Offers a unique joint venture partnership on suitable sites.
- Offers planting, weeding and pruning of poplar on a contract basis
- Develops new markets to provide the greatest possible return to the landowner.
- Can advise on woodland diversification and opportunities that can be taken advantage off.

The Opportunity

- Poplar is the fastest growing hardwood in the UK.
- Grants from the Forestry Commission and DEFRA are available to allow planting to be done without any capital outlay from the landowner. And in many cases there can be a capital gain for the land owner.
- The Poplar Tree Company processes and markets poplar timber and requires a sustained supply of good quality poplar trees.
- The Poplar Tree Company along with its sister company Certainly Wood has investing almost £500,000 in a peeler production facility that will require 5000 cubic metres/annum of poplar logs (a lorry load every day).

Grant aid

The Forestry Commission grant aids the planting of new woodland through the Woodland Creation Grant (WCG) which is part of the English Woodland Grant Scheme. Poplar planting is eligible for WCG under the Special Broadleaved Woodland category at the rate of £700/ha.

On eligible farmland Farm Woodland Premium will be paid for a period of 10 years at the rate of £300/ha for arable land and £200/ha for other improved land (different rates apply in less favoured areas).

Each English region has its own budget and priorities, these are reflected in each region having its own scoring system to rank applications, the highest ranked being taken forward to be considered for grant support.

With high scoring sites there is a fast track system with the aim of having a decision on the site prior to the year end.

Joint Venture Partnerships

This unique opportunity for poplar growers allows the landowner to enter into a 10 year joint venture partnership with the Poplar Tree Company. Both parties share the work and income from the grants, the landowner is assured a quality crop.

Poplar Tree Company obligations;

Mark out site, supply and plant 1.5m poplar sets at 5m x 5m spacing, fix 75cm spiral guards

Spray where needed for 4 years, replace losses as necessary

Prune for 10 years to a minimum height of 5m

Annual inspection for 10 years

PTC payment;

£700/ha as a single payment from the Special Broadleaved Woodland Grant

£75/ha for 10 years from the Farm Woodland Premium

Owners obligations;

Allow PTC access to the site

Control deer and hares and exclude livestock as necessary

Mow between the trees and chop up prunings (usually the same operation)

Owners payment;

Farm Woodland Premium payments for 10 years, less £75/ha/year;

Arable land £300 - £75 = £225/ha/year

Other improved land £200 - £75 = £125/ha/year

(different rates apply in less favoured areas). + your single farm payments on top.

Final crop of timber at year 20, approximately 400 cubic.metres /ha at a standing value of approximately £15/cubic.metre

= £6000/ha nett value (tax free)

PTC will consider managing the crop after 10 years for an interest in the final crop.

Other payments may be available following discussion with PTC.

The Poplar Tree Company currently operates more than 120 joint ventures involving over 2500 Ha across the UK. We are always looking for suitable sites

Poplar for commercial timber production

Poplar Varieties

The commercial poplar varieties are hybrids, the parent material for the breeding programmes being collected from the European *populus nigra* and the North American *populus trichocarpa* and *populus deltoides*.

The poplar varieties are bred to give a combination of fast growth, good form (straightness and light branching), resistance to disease and good timber characteristics.

We are currently planting the long established varieties of Ghoy, Gaver and Gibecq, all bred at the Belgian state breeding station at Geraardsbergen. We will also have 4 new varieties from Geraardsbergen - Grimminge, Muur, Oudenberg and Vesten. The names may sound strange but are all places in the vicinity of the town of Geraardsbergen.

In addition we will have 4 varieties from the private company of Alasia Vivai who are located in Cavallermaggiore, Italy, these are the more easily pronounceable A4A, AF2, AF7 and AF8.

Silviculture

Planting is done in the spring using a hand held auger or long metal bar. Trees are planted at 5m x 5m spacing in single variety blocks of 10 trees x 10 trees, i.e. 100 trees per block, as a mixture of the nine varieties above.

Protection trees are guarded with a spiral guard against rabbit damage. Further measures may be required to exclude grazing livestock or control deer.

Weed control An area around the base of the trees is sprayed with roundup to prevent competition for moisture from weeds.

Pruning is carried out to remove branches as these form knots in the timber, regular pruning ensures that knots are only present in the central core of the timber. Pruning intensity is a delicate balance, if done too heavily the growth of the tree will be reduced and the tree is likely to form small epicormic branches requiring further pruning.

Poplar for other uses

Poplar for windbreaks and screening around polytunnels

Planting poplar for windbreaks and around polytunnels can give 3 main benefits to the farmer, shelter from the wind, visual screening and environmental.

Shelter from the wind

The primary effect of a windbreak is reduction in windspeed and subsequent moderation of climatic extremes.

The effect on crops is a reduction of winter kill in severe winters and reduction of the effect of hot dry winds during summer drought periods which can cause high evaporative demand.

For polytunnels the main benefit is reduction in windspeed providing protection from damage by storms and high winds.

Visual screening

Planting poplar screens around polytunnels, farm buildings and other developments ameliorates their visual impact on the landscape, resulting in a better perception both for planners and the general public.

Environmental

Although not a native tree poplar host a large number of invertebrate species and provide nesting opportunities particularly when bird and bat boxes are sited.

Poplar and free range hens

- Hens are the descendants of jungle fowl
- Fear of large open spaces prevents birds venturing outside
- Trees provide overhead shelter
- This encourages use of the full range area
- A field full of hens presents an excellent image to the buying public
- Flocks that spend a lot of their day on the range are productive and healthy and lay more top quality eggs

Biomass

Poplar and willow are the only two species eligible for the DEFRA Energy Crops Scheme. This pays an establishment grant on areas of at least 3 hectares provided the applicant can demonstrate an energy end use for the crops. The Poplar Tree Company have not been convinced of some of the financial projections that have been used in such projects in the past. Currently however the introduction of new technology, particularly for farmers producing chips for their own use or local markets, and the new poplar varieties available, make this an area in which we can see significant potential developments in the near future.

Your Questions Answered

Q. How do I decide whether to enter into a joint venture with The Poplar Tree Company or do the work myself?

A. The joint venture scheme guarantees that the crop will have our management and experienced input for 10 years and you will not have any capital outlay. If you have the interest, the time and the labour there is no reason you cannot manage the work yourself.

Q. Can I plant the crop myself and get advice from The Poplar Tree Company?

A. Yes, we are very flexible in how much or how little involvement we have. Typically we can offer a management package of an annual visit plus unlimited telephone advice for £150/year (+VAT).

Q. Can I plant other crops or graze animals under the trees.

A. If you are receiving payments from the Farm Woodland Premium you are precluded from any form of agricultural production, although game crops and other forms of revenue such as horse riding by licence are permitted. If you are not receiving Farm Woodland Premium there are no such restrictions, but you do need to be careful about what your objectives are and which crop takes priority.

Q. If I plant a new poplar woodland how will my Single Farm Payment be affected?

A. If you plant a new poplar woodland under the English Woodland Grant Scheme you will still be able to claim your Single Farm Payment

Q. What happens when the poplar crop is felled?

A. This will depend on Government policy at the time, if food is in short supply you may be encouraged to reconvert to agriculture. If the situation stays as it is however, with a focus on environmental schemes, the site would be replanted. It is best to assume that once planted the area will remain under woodland in perpetuity.

Q. How should I get started?

A. Get in touch and we will help you make the decision that is best for you.

Prices and Sizes

The following prices for trees and guards are for guidance only and are subject to change depending on availability.

Please note that Grimminge, Muur, Oudenberg, Vesten, A4A and AF2 will be subject to breeders royalties yet to be confirmed but likely to be in the order of 12%.

Size	Recommended Use	Price £			
		0 – 99	100 – 499	500 – 999	1000+
25 cm cutting	Biomass	0.16	0.14	0.13	0.12
1.5m Set	Commercial planting	0.80	0.75	0.73	0.70
2.5m Set	Windbreaks	1.40	1.20	1.10	1.05

We also supply spiral guards to protect against vermin, these are specially made for poplar and are brown with no holes.

Size	Recommended Use	Price £			
		0 – 99	100 – 499	500 – 999	1000+
0.6m	rabbits	0.18	0.17	0.16	0.15
0.75m	hares	0.20	0.19	0.18	0.17

The cost of delivery and VAT will be added to all orders.

The Poplar Tree Company, Lower Lulham, Madley, Hereford, HR2 9JJ
Tel 01981 250253 Fax 01981 251211
e-mail: info@poplartree.co.uk
website www.poplartree.co.uk

Members of

