



To Treat or Not to Treat In Favor of Cold-Dry Seed Treatments

Our nursery strongly advises against cold-wet treatments for direct seeding into restoration settings.

Nearly all Taylor Creek seed is cold-dry stratified. Many seed lots have also been lightly scarified (brushed), de-hulled and/or debearded. Even though these are inherent in our handling and refining process we consider them part of seed treatment.

We consider these seed treatments because brushing, de-hulling, de-bearding cause thinning and interruption of the seed coat. That in turn causes quicker imbibition and more ready germination. Cold-dry storage (with periods at and below freezing) also prepares seed for ready germination.

When starting with cold-dry treated seed, we experience excellent results in the greenhouse with only a few days of cold-wet. Generally speaking, seed that has not been cold-dry treated needs at least 4-8 weeks of cold wet treatment. Of course, there are exceptions to this general rule and some species have lengthy complicated treatment protocols.



Because the risks of cold-wet treatments outweigh the benefits, we do not recommend wet treatment except for seed being sown for greenhouse growing or spring planted in a controlled nursery setting (irrigated).

Cold-wet treatments prime seed to begin germination at the first warm period it experiences. On the surface, that appears to be a benefit, but it can also lead to germination during periods which are non-ideal. Some agencies and individuals report success with cold-wet methods, but nearly every single instance outside of the controlled nursery setting with staff having personal knowledge has exhibited lower than average success. Therefore, our nursery strongly

advises against cold-wet treatments for direct seeding into restorations. Clients who have not taken that advice frequently report back saying they wish they had. While we have not conducted controlled experiments, we believe the body of anecdotal evidence is compelling enough for us to continue advising clients to avoid cold-wet treatments.

We advise against cold-wet treatments even for seed which has not been brushed, de-hulled, debearded, or cold dry treated. It is our opinion that treatments remove natural protections and offer opportunity to disease. We find that uniform germination is a hedge against poor growing conditions. If the first wave of germination fails, the second, third and so forth may succeed.