

LARGE-SIZED SEEDLING CARE

The *Trachycarpus Fortunei* Palm seedlings were all grown from seeds collected from the best trees that we could find in Richmond, Vancouver, and Victoria, B.C. These mature trees have withstood decades of harsh winters and produce good quality palm trees. Other varieties, such as *Wagnerianus* (Waggie) Palm, and certain *Trachycarpus* hybrid seeds were purchased from Jeff St. Gelais, the vice president of the Pacific Northwest Palm and Exotic Plant Society. Jeff has been growing Waggie palms in Victoria, B.C. for over 30 years and hand-pollinates the palms to ensure pure seeds.

The *Trachycarpus Fortunei* Palms are easy to grow and the following growing instructions for the *T. Fortunei* seedlings are also appropriate for palms in the *Trachycarpus* family, including Waggies and hybrids.

Transplanting:

These large seedlings are over a year old and spent the last winter outside. They are ready to be planted into the ground or can be potted individually into 1-gallon pots.



Good quality soil will provide faster growing and healthier seedlings. A good quality potting soil, such as Miracle-Gro potting soil will give the seedlings a good start if they are to be potted up into 1-gallon pots.

The plants can stay in the 1-gallon pots for two-years until being potted up to the 2-gallon size or planted directly into the ground.

The potted plants are not as cold-hardy as plants that are in the ground, as the roots are more susceptible to freezing. The potted palms should be either kept in an area that will not freeze, such as beside the house, in a garage or basement near a window, or the pot should be protected with bubble-wrap or similar insulation. During the first year, the seedlings can be kept as house plants.

Fertilizing:

The palms should be fertilized in the growing season with a slow-release fertilizer such as Osmocote Plus 15-9-12. The slow-release fertilizer is applied March 21, June 15 and August 15. Avoid fertilizing the palms after August.

Watering:

The growing medium should be moist, but not wet, and the top $\frac{1}{2}$ " to 1" should be allowed to dry out somewhat between waterings.

Growth Rate:

Palms start relatively slowly, and the rate of growth increases with the size of the plant. Palms grow faster in the ground than in a pot. Once established, a mature Trachycarpus Palm can grow one foot, or more, per year.

Other questions about palms and tropicals? See our other articles on the site. Visit www.cherrypointpalms.ca for more.

Happy palm growing!

Steven Read