



NEWS RELEASE

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Acorn Collection Season is Here

Drop off your acorns at any VDOF location by Oct. 14

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – As the temperatures finally start to drop and we begin our transition into fall, foresters and staff at the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) will soon be busy gathering and sorting this year’s acorn crop in preparation for growing the next generation of trees.

Every year, Virginians from all over the state collect and donate acorns and other seeds that VDOF staff plant at the Augusta Nursery, where more than a dozen hardwood tree species get their start. Successful seedlings are later sold to Virginia landowners, typically to reforest open lands. Trees that begin from homegrown acorns, nuts and seeds are much more likely to thrive in Virginia’s climate.

Collection guidelines remain primarily the same as last year, with some minor adjustments to the deadline and species list. **Please drop off acorns at any [VDOF office location](#) by Oct. 14.**

This year, VDOF’s collection priorities are:

- Black Oak
- Black Walnut
- Chestnut Oak
- Chinese Chestnut
- Northern Red Oak
- Pin Oak
- Shumard Oak
- Southern Red Oak
- Swamp Chestnut Oak
- Swamp White Oak
- Water Oak
- White Oak
- Willow Oak



“We are happy to report record-setting seedling production numbers at VDOF’s Augusta Nursery this year,” said State Forester Rob Farrell. “Thanks to additional funding provided by the General Assembly, and collection efforts by everyone across the Commonwealth last fall, we will soon have approximately 3.7 million conifer, and 2.7 million hardwood seedlings available for purchase. This represents an increase of 63 percent, or almost 2.5 million seedlings. Please support these encouraging trends by collecting acorns and donating them so we can collectively grow the forests of tomorrow.”

“Each fall, Virginia is covered with acorns and folks wonder what to do with them,” said Assistant Forestry Manager at the Augusta Nursery Josh McLaughlin. “Collecting acorns and donating them to VDOF is a huge help to us, presents a great activity for environmentalists of all ages and provides the perfect opportunity to learn more about Virginia trees. Our acorn crop varies from year to year, and you can help us ensure representation from all over the state.”

Drop-off details and locations:

Please drop off your collected acorns and nuts at any VDOF office location by Oct. 14.

To find your local office, visit the [VDOF website’s Find a Forester tool](#).

Keep these tips in mind:

- Safety first. Stay away from roadways.
- Do not collect on private property without permission.
- Collection from yards, sidewalks, driveways, etc., is recommended, to ensure collection of a single species. (Forest collection makes it difficult to determine the tree of origin and may lead to mixing of acorn species.)
- Do not collect damaged, cracked or dried out acorns/nuts.
- Avoid sticks, leaves, gravel and debris, but acorn caps are okay. (When the caps remove easily it means the acorns are ready for harvest.)
- Place in a breathable bag, such as paper (best), burlap or cloth. Do NOT use plastic bags.
- Use a separate bag for each species.
- Label the bag with the collection date and species if known (e.g.; willow oak). If you’re not sure, include a few leaves from the tree to aid nursery staff with identification.
- Don’t allow acorns to freeze, heat up or dry out.
- Place in a cool area until you’re ready to drop them off at VDOF.

For more information about acorn collection, or help identifying tree species, contact the Augusta Nursery at (540) 363-7000 or visit the [VDOF website](#).

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About the Virginia Department of Forestry

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) protects and develops healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. With nearly 16 million acres of forestland and more than 108,000 Virginians employed in forestry, forest products and related industries, Virginia forests provide an overall economic output of more than \$21 billion annually.

Headquartered in Charlottesville, the agency has forestry staff members assigned to every county to provide citizen service and public safety protection across the Commonwealth, which it's been doing now for more than 100 years. VDOF is an equal opportunity provider.