

# Protocol Information

Natural Resources Conservation Service -  
Appalachian Plant Materials Center  
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United States Department of Agriculture

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- Family Scientific Name: **Caprifoliaceae**  
Family Common Name: **Black elderberry**  
Scientific Name: *Sambucus nigra L.ssp. canadensis*  
Species Code: **SANIC4**  
General Distribution: **Widely distributed throughout most of the United States.**  
Known Invasiveness: **None**  
Propagation Goal: **Plants**  
Propagation Method: **Seed**  
Product Type: **Container (plug)**  
Time To Grow: **2 Years**  
Target Specifications: **A well developed plant suitable for transplanting with at least 12" of top growth and a healthy root system.**  
Propagule Collection: **Seeds were collected from multiple existing populations within the boundaries of the Monongahela National Forest. The seeds should be mature when the drupe turns black.**  
Propagule Processing: **Ripe fruit was collected in late August and placed in sealable plastic bags. The bags were placed in the cooler for 3 weeks to allow the fruit to ferment which aided in the separation of the seeds from the pulp. The fruit was mascerated by hand and placed on top of a series of screens (9, 1/12, 1/18). Water was then used to wash the seeds through the screens. The seeds were collected on the 1/18 screen and placed on kraft paper in a thin layer to air dry.**  
Pre-Planting Treatments: **No pretreatment was used.**

Growing Area Preparation/

Annual Practices for Perennial Crops: **Pro-mix BX with biofungicide was moistened and placed in heavy plastic trays. The soil was compacted somewhat to prepare a firm seedbed.**

Establishment Phase: **Seed was spread evenly by hand on the soil surface and then covered with 1/8 to 1/4 inch of additional soil. The top layer was pressed down slightly to ensure good seed to soil contact. The trays were placed in the greenhouse for 2 months to allow for the warm, moist stratification period. The trays were then moved outside to the shadehouse for 5 months to allow for the cold stratification period. The trays were then moved back into the greenhouse and allowed to germinate.**

Length of Establishment Phase: **9 months**

Active Growth Phase: **Germination began in the spring after the cold stratification period. Once the seedlings had sufficient root systems, they were transplanted into 1 gallon plastic pots filled with Metro-mix 510 growing medium.**

Length of Active Growth Phase: **6 - 9 months**

Hardening Phase: **Plants were moved back into the shadehouse to allow for hardening off before shipping.**

Length of Hardening Phase: **2 weeks**

Harvesting, Storage and Shipping: **Plants with sufficient top growth were loaded on trailers and shipped back to the Monongahela National Forest. Trailers were covered with tarps to prevent wind burn.**

Length of Storage: **1 day**

Outplanting performance on typical sites: **Black elderberry prefers moist, loamy soils for optimum growth. This species can tolerate some shade but prefers sunny exposures.**

References: **R.P. Karrfalt, 2008. The Woody Plants Seed Manual. USDA Forest Service. Agriculture Handbook 727.**

**USDA, NRCS. 2012. The PLANTS Database (<http://plants.usda.gov>, 12 July 2012). National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC 27401-4901 USA.**

**Citation:**

Lester, Randall K.; Vandevender, John C. 2013. Propagation protocol for production of

container *Sambucus nigra* L. ssp. *canadensis* plants; Natural Resources Conservation Service - Appalachian Plant Materials Center, Alderson, West Virginia. In: Native Plant Network. URL: <http://www.nativeplantnetwork.org> (accessed 19 March 2014). Moscow (ID): University of Idaho, College of Natural Resources, Forest Research Nursery.