

Planting Pine Trees from Seeds

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For the longest time I had not seen any pine cones falling from the pine trees on my property. I thought that was strange at best however today as I was cutting the field, I noticed some lying on the ground. I guess in the past I had inadvertently overlooked them.

This immediately wet my curiosity as to growing a few seedlings of my own. Being a survivalist and prepper one of the wonderful advantages of having pine trees on your property is the tea you can make with the needles. This tea is simple to make and tastes good while providing a great immune booster.

Indigenous people have always valued pine needle tea for its refreshment and for its medicinal values. Pine needles contains 5 times the Vitamin C of fresh orange juice, and is extremely high in Vitamin A. Additional features include its use as an expectorant, decongestant, and as an antiseptic wash when cooled.

Over the years I have discovered that each variety of pine possesses its own particular flavor, thus you would have to experiment to see which one suits your taste best. A major point to keep clearly in mind is that all Pines may be evergreens, but not all evergreens are Pines. Make sure to positively identify your pine trees, then bring some needles home and try some tea.

Before I go into my growing experiment with pine seeds let me briefly explain to you how to make Pine Needle Tea.



Collect a handful of young green needles. Remove any which are brown or damaged. Chop the needles into $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch pieces. Heat up one cup of water to the boiling point and pour it into a cup along with a Tablespoon of chopped Pine needles. Allow the mixture to steep for 10 minutes, until the needles have settled to the bottom of your cup. Now drink it and enjoy it.

Most people will contend that you should not waste your time trying to grow a pine tree from seeds however as you many now know I am not most people. If nothing else then experience will be a challenge to me. Now if they are talking about planting a complete pine cone and expecting a tree to appear I might agree with them however I think my way just might work.

The reason you cannot just plant the cone and expect a small tree to appear is that first the cone is merely a woody container for the seeds. These seeds are released only if the proper conditions are met. The cones you gather likely have not released any seeds what-so-ever. The seeds require sunlight, which is unavailable inside the cone. Additionally, planting an entire cone would place the seeds much deeper in the soil and they would not be able to grow. They would not receive sunlight which they need to grow.

If you are determined like I am on growing a small pine tree you will need to harvest the seeds first. Harvest a pine cone in the fall. Place the cones into a paper bag and place it into a warm, well-ventilated room. Shake the bag vigorously every couple of days. When the cone becomes dry it will start to release the seeds. You will hear them rattling as you shake the bag. Take these pine seeds and place them in a Ziploc bag and store them in your freezer for a three-month period. This is called stratification which mimics the three months of winter. Once the three-month period has passed, plant your seeds in a 4-inch container filled with a good quality potting soil. You could make your own mix with equal parts of potting mix, sand, pine bark and peat moss. The container should have proper drainage hole in the bottom. Plant a single pine seed in each container and then cover it with about ¼-inch of potting mix. Place the containers in a sunny window and water as necessary to keep the pot moist. Never let the soil dry out, but be sure not to make it too soggy. Once your seedling is 8 inches tall, transplant outdoors.