

## **Quality Casuarina Planting Material - A Farmer's Dream**

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### **Abstract**

Puducherry is known for Casuarina (Savakku) cultivation and is considered the hub of Casuarina nurseries. The Puducherry and adjoining areas like Cuddalore, Tindivanam, Marakkanam, Veedur and other parts of Tamil Nadu State are largely planted with Casuarina. The popularity of Casuarina is due to various factors like resistance to drought and water stagnation, prevailing ready market, unseasonal rains and particularly it required less labour and field maintenance. The land area under cultivation of Casuarina is shrinking steadily due to low productivity and activities like urbanisation and construction of Highways encroaching the area suitable for cultivation. This necessitates that productivity need to be increased in the available land. To increase the productivity, quality seedlings are a prerequisite, as the proverb goes what you sow shall be reaped. However, availability of large quantity of quality planting materials is matter of concern. The planting materials are supplied from the nurseries present in and around Puducherry but improved seeds are not available to farmers and also the seedling materials are not available in right time. Awareness among farmers on the importance of quality seedling and the method of transportation and planting is low. Most of the seedlings are overgrown measuring more than 60 cm with poorly developed or lengthy coiled roots when planted. The bare-rooted seedlings are taken in bundles in two wheelers, or mini-truck to long distances in open conditions exposed to hot sun. Hence it is essential to train and create awareness on the importance of quality of seeds and seedlings, and transportation method and improved planting techniques to farmers and nursery growers.