

## Planning and Infrastructure

December 2015

### ITEM DESCRIPTION: Planting guidelines

#### General guidelines

- Select suitable sun hardened species from the [Arid Area planting](#) and [Tropical area planting](#) lists fact sheets. Best planting times are during spring for the Central Region and during the wet season in the Top End.
- Ensure your drip irrigation system is in place and operating prior to planting.
- Excavate a planting hole twice the width and twice the depth of the pot. Break up the sides and base of the hole. Fill the hole with water and leave to drain.
- Add good quality planting mix to help break up the soil, improve drainage and aeration.
- Supply and place an organic fertilizer suitable to the species you are planting into the hole as per manufacturer's instructions. Remember different species have different fertilizer requirements. It is recommended that slow release granules are placed on the surface.
- Remove plant from its container without damaging the roots and place the plant in the hole to a depth no greater than it was growing in the pot. Backfill the hole with soil. Gently firm down the soil. The top surface of the soil that was surrounding the plant in the pot should be at the same level as the ground surface and exactly the same amount of stem should be above the ground as when the plant was in the pot.
- Create a small dish around the plant with excavated soil to retain moisture.
- Apply mulch 100-150 mm deep (hay, wood chips or screened gravel) to a 1.2m diameter around the plant. Keep the mulch away from the stem or trunk of the plant to prevent rot.
- Deep water plant immediately. Quantity and frequency of watering depends on soil type, time of year and local rainfall. Deep watering twice a week is preferable to shallow watering every day. Deep watering encourages strong root systems that help your plant to withstand dry periods better. Shallow watering encourages undesirable surface roots.
- Stake the plant with two 50 x 50 x 1800 mm hardwood timber stakes or metal pickets and tie with a hessian tie. Insert stakes 600 mm into ground. Do not allow stakes to penetrate root ball. Use temporary tree guards if the new tree will be damaged by wildlife.

Grounds maintenance is part of the school operational budget. Schools may consider raising additional funds for landscape changes.