

How to Grow Nut Trees from Seed  
by Edward M. Sticht

Over the years I have tried to grow black walnuts, Carpathian walnuts and the European sweet chestnuts. I have succeeded in growing all three. I now have two large black walnut trees about 40 years old started by the method I will describe below. The trees are about 1 1/2 feet in diameter. About ten years ago, I was given ten Carpathian walnuts of which nine were grown. Two years ago the best one started to produce its own seeds.

In the case of the European sweet chestnut, I found that they germinated well enough, but died off in early autumn. I dug them up and found that the germinating area was a ball of mold. The following year I planted again, and, as soon as they grew out of the can, I removed the can by carefully cutting it out with a snipper. I now have two plants about 2 feet high. I had a lot of failures with chestnuts because I was trying to raise them within the root system of the large black walnut trees. The advice of all gardening experts is: do not attempt to grow anything near a black walnut tree or throw its leaves in a compost pile.

The nuts that I select for seed are put in a sealed container and kept in an unheated garage until early spring. They are planted about Easter time. Look for sprouts about the middle of July.

#### How to Grow

Take a coffee can and make a 5/8 inch hole in the bottom. Tamp in 2 inches of potting soil. Place the walnut or sweet chestnut in the center of the can with the top or stem end pointing toward the hole and in line with it. Fill the rest of the can with potting soil, rather compact. Plant the entire can, bottom side up, one inch below the ground level. The sprout will grow out through the hole. Your nut and future seedling is now safe from the squirrel above and the wall of the can is deep enough to keep out

any underground rodents.

In time the can will rust away. If you decide to transplant a walnut early, do not remove the can.