

Fact Sheet

'Chiba'

Populus maximowiczii × *P. nigra* × *P. nigra*

NZ 5037



'Chiba' is a New Zealand-bred poplar hybrid cross of *P. maximowiczii*, a balsam poplar species from Japan, and *P. nigra*, a black poplar species from Europe.

Characteristics

'Chiba' is a very narrow-crowned poplar clone with light branching, and a straight stem, with good apical dominance. The tree stems have a wood basic density of 308 kg m⁻³. It is a female poplar clone, with bitter leaves that are resistant to possum browsing.

The leaves are broadly ovate in shape, with a dark-green upper and light-green lower surface. The leaf midrib and lateral veins are green, and the petiole is red. The leaves are resistant to infection by *Melampsora larici-populina* leaf rust fungi, and have a yellow colour in autumn.

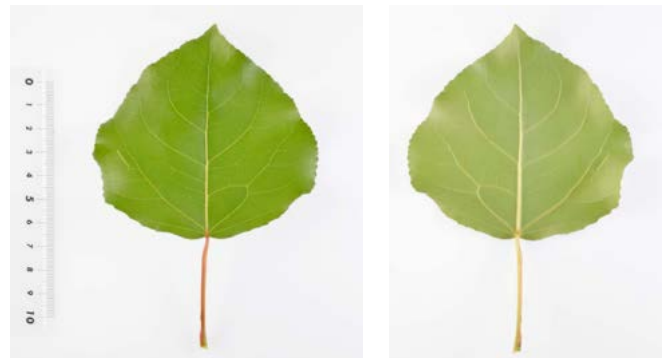
The poplar clone is named after Dr. Shigeru Chiba, the director of the Oji Institute for Forest Tree Improvement, Oji Paper Co. Ltd, who supplied the female parent clone of *P. maximowiczii* from Hokkaido, Japan.

Uses

'Chiba' was bred for use in shelterbelts, to replace the leaf rust susceptible *P. nigra* Lombardy poplar. It has performed well on peat soils in the Horowhenua district of the North Island. At 15 years old, trees on peat soils had an average height of 25 m, stem diameter at breast height (1.4 m) of 35 cm, and a crown width of 2m.



Young trees of the 'Chiba poplar growing on peat soils near Levin in the Horowhenua district.



Leaf of the 'Chiba' poplar clone, showing the upper (left) and lower (right) surfaces.