

Fact Sheet

'Kawa'

Populus deltoides x *P. yunnanensis*

PN 35 NZ 5006



THE NEW ZEALAND
POPLAR & WILLOW RESEARCH TRUST

'Kawa', bred in NZ in 1974, is a cross between *P. deltoides* and *P. yunnanensis* from China. It was released commercially in 1986.

Characteristics

'Kawa' leaves are heart-shaped, and green on the upper surface and pale grey-green below. The midrib and petiole are tinged pinkish red on the upper surface. Due to the *P. yunnanensis* parentage, the leaves remain on the tree for much longer than the *P. x euramericana* hybrids, and turn bright yellow before leaf fall.

'Kawa' has a narrow crown, excellent apical dominance, and a high basic density of 360 kg/cubic metre. 'Kawa' is male.

Uses

'Kawa' favours moist areas that do not get excessive wind, and is not very frost tolerant. It is suitable for soil conservation, amenity purposes, firewood blocks and timber. 'Kawa' should be planted in sheltered sites such as valley floors, gullies and terraces. It is widely used in western and northern regions of New Zealand.

It has good possum resistance, and rust resistance in most situations.

Performance

Widely-spaced age 9 'Kawa' at two moist fertile river terrace sites in Gisborne (ann. rainfall 1100 mm) had an average height and diameter (dbh) of 17.3 m and 24 cm respectively, while the same-aged trees replicated in a trial on exposed hill country had an average height and dbh of 13.5 m and 22 cm.

The Fan Nelder trial (below left) is age 7 on a sheltered site in Gisborne, and average height is 14.5 m and dbh is 18 cm for trees spaced at 4-11 m apart.

Similar growth rates of 2 - 2.5 m per year have been recorded in the Bay of Plenty, Waikato, and Northland. Lower growth rates of 1 - 1.5 m per year are more typical in cooler or drier regions such as Manawatu, Wairarapa and Hawkes Bay.



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