

Volunteer Instructions – Planting Hemlock Saplings

THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING to participate in this project to plant hemlock saplings. The planting involves use of a special amendment mix to enhance the soil structure and nutritional content, a moisture retention product to help drought-proof the little trees, and a special initial watering mix containing root stimulator and 5-year protection from the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA).

1. **Dig a hole** 3 times the width of the container (i.e., you could place the pot in the hole 3 times in a triangle) but only 2” deeper than the dirt in the container. Pile the removed dirt next to the hole.
2. **Get a bucket of soil amendment and combine it with the native soil** you removed from the hole plus the contents of the baggie containing fertilizer and ironite. Put 2 – 3 inches of this soil mix back into the hole.
3. **Remove the tree from the container** carefully and tickle the root hairs so they’re facing outwards. If the roots are pot-bound, use a sharp tool to make several half-inch-deep scrapes all around the root mass to free them. Place the tree in the center of the hole, and be sure it’s sitting a couple inches above grade.
4. **Refill the hole halfway** with your soil mix. Then **sprinkle a small amount of Soil Moist** water retention crystals all around the roots of the tree (about 1 tsp per gallon of root ball size).
5. **Fill the hole the rest of the way** with your soil mix so that it just covers the root ball. Firm the dirt with your foot to eliminate air pockets. The tree should now be sitting exactly at grade, level with the surrounding ground.
Note: Don’t create a “watering saucer” around the tree unless it’s on a steep hill; if this is the case, the watering saucer should be smoothed out after the first year..
6. **Apply 2-3 inches of shredded hardwood mulch** from the trunk out to the drip line, pulling the mulch back couple of inches so it’s not actually touching the trunk. This is to maintain stable soil moisture and temperature.
7. Immediately after planting, **water thoroughly** but slowly right at the base of the tree, using 1 gallon of initial watering mix. Two or three hours later, firm the dirt again with your foot to eliminate any remaining air pockets and **water again with plain water**, using 1 gallon of water per gallon of root ball.



Save Georgia's Hemlocks • 37 Woody Bend • Dahlonega, GA 30533
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