



CARING & MAINTENANCE

Successful planting sites should have at least 90% plant survival. To achieve this, planting sites should have been prepared ahead of planting to reduce weed competition. Plants should have been planted correctly at the start of the wet season, and have been well watered. Planted trees should have had fertiliser and mulch mat treatment at the time of planting.

Risks to planted trees in the first 18 months:	}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot, dry, sunny conditions • Competition from weed regrowth • Fire during the dry season
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HOW TO REDUCE THESE RISKS:

Weeding and applying fertilizer

Weeding frequency depends on how fast the weeds grow. Weeds should be controlled at least 3 times during the rainy season. Control weeds before the weeds grow above the height of the planted trees.

If the fire risk is high, keep the plot completely free of weeds. Otherwise some weed growth after November will help to shade the planted trees during the hottest period of the year.

Weeding is essential to keep planted trees alive during the first two rainy seasons after planting.

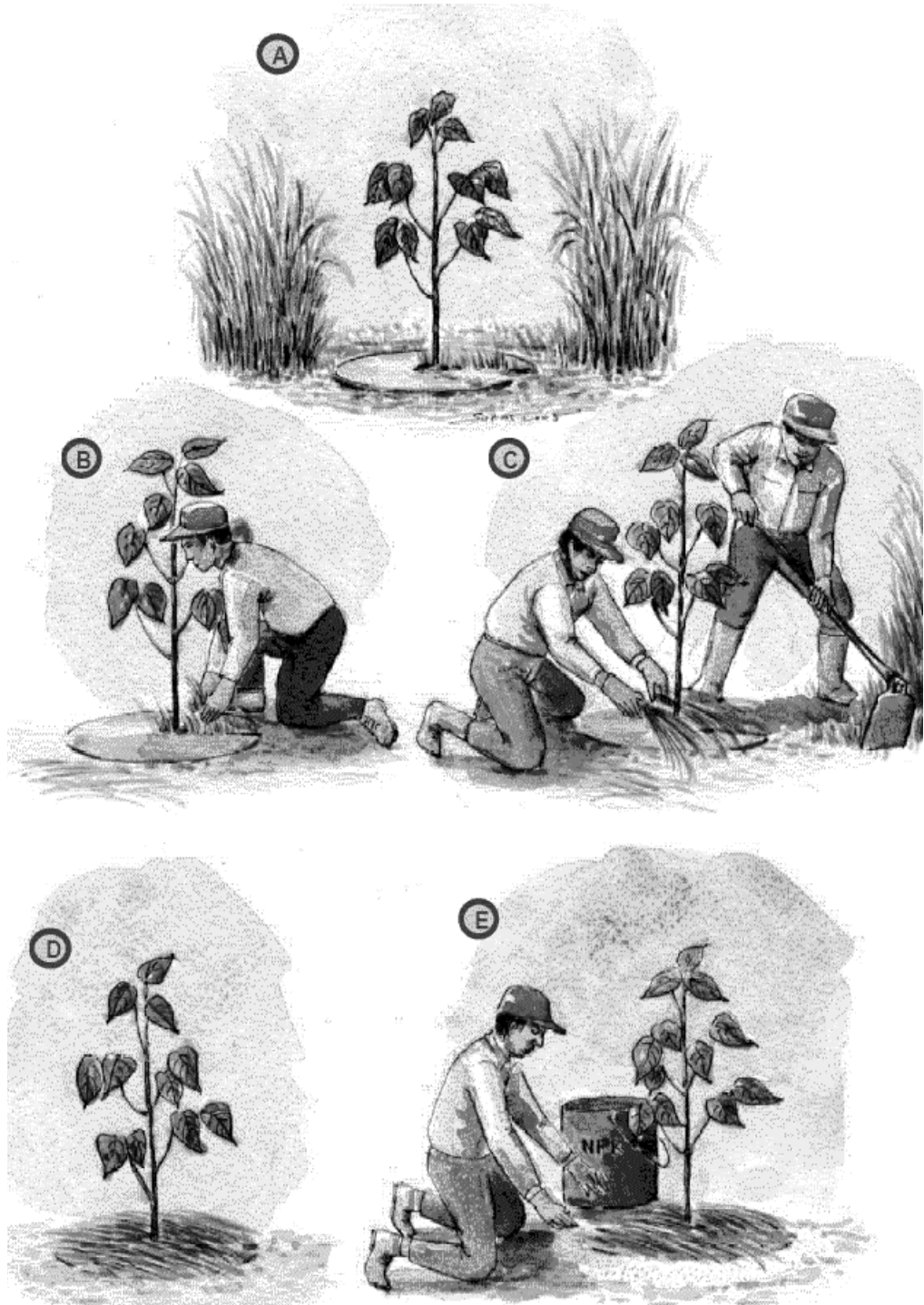
(A) A cardboard mulch mat can help keep weeds down, around the tree stem.

(B) Pull out any weeds growing near the tree base by hand (wear gloves) to avoid damaging the tree roots. Try to keep the mulch mat intact.

(C) Use a hoe to root out weeds in a circle around the mulch mat.

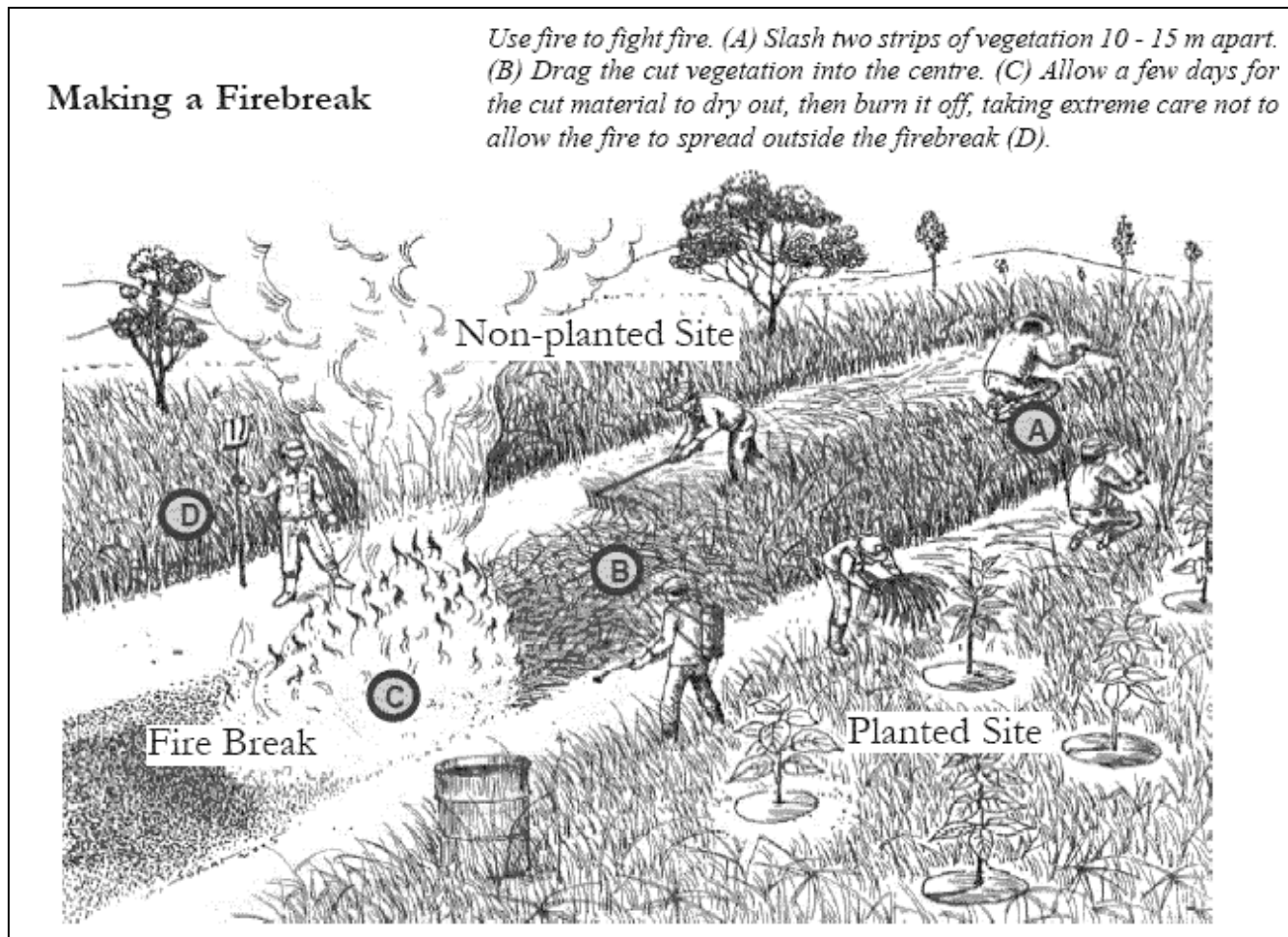
(D) Lay the uprooted weeds on top of the mulch mat.

(E) Apply fertilizer (50-100 gm) in a circle around the mulch mat.

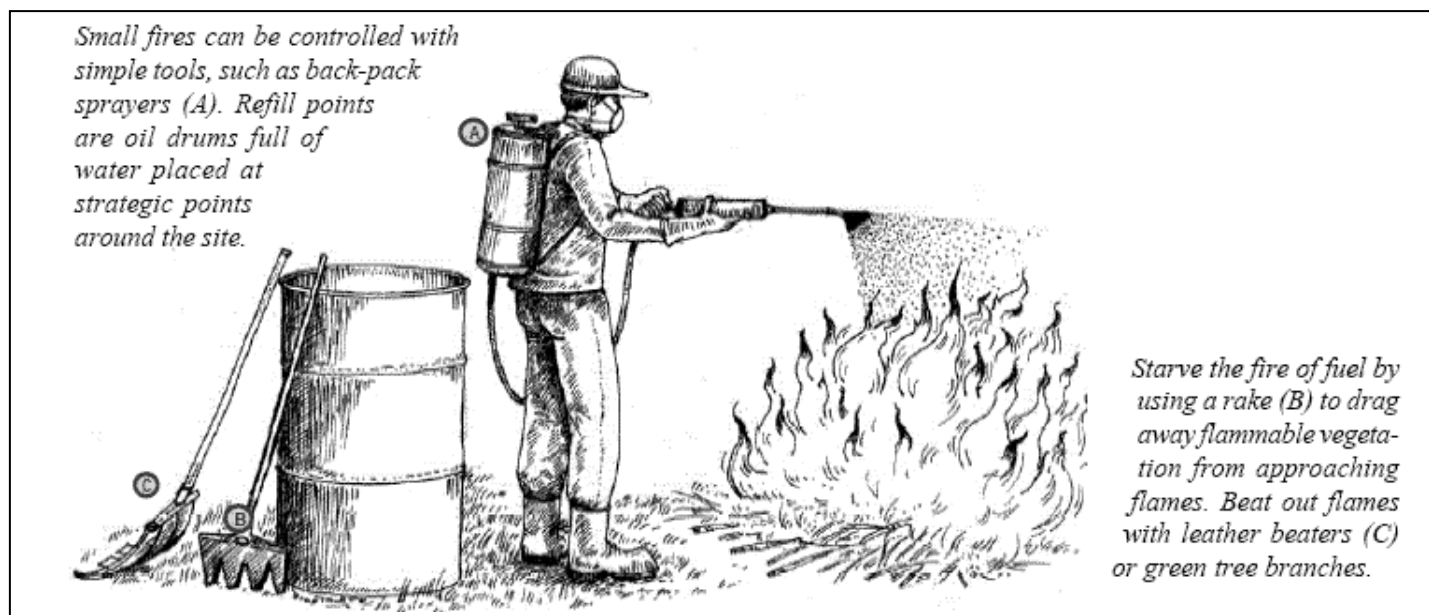


Fire prevention

Fire is an annual hazard and the most common cause of failure of forest restoration projects. Community-based fire control initiatives are important - public education and fire prevention measures including cutting fire breaks and organising fire patrols to detect and extinguish fires. Try to involve the whole community in fire prevention. Be ready to contact local fire fighting authorities if the fire gets out of control.



Fire Breaks are effective at blocking moderate, ground-cover burns. Make firebreaks just before onset of the hot, dry season (mid January in northern Thailand). Roads and streams also act as natural fire breaks.



What can be done if planted plots do burn?

Although no trees are fire-proof, many species can grow back, usually re-sprouting from dormant buds around the root collar; "coppicing". Larger, older trees are more likely to survive moderate burns: those with a root collar diameter of 5 cm or larger (usually reached after the third rainy season). Burnt, dead branches encourage pests and disease, so prune them back to a 5mm stump. Blackened surfaces absorb more heat, so lay mulch around young trees.

This sheet was summarised from 'How to Plant a Forest' Part 7 Section 4. Consult the book for more detailed information on caring and maintenance. The book can be downloaded at www.forru.org



Forest Restoration Research Unit
Planted Site Caring and Maintenance