



FORESTS

by Heartfulness

How to identify the right site
for planting trees?

USEFUL FAQ's

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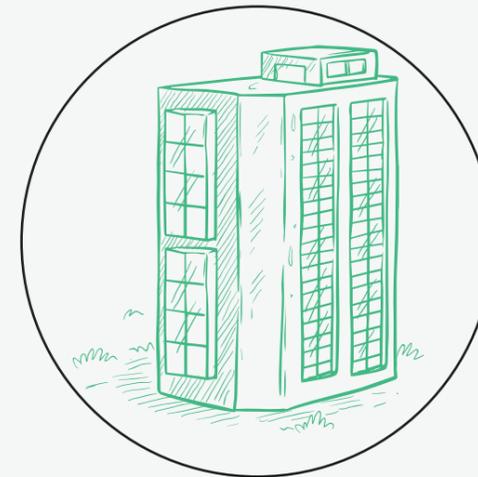
Which sites are most suitable for planting trees for FBH?

There is no one answer, but broadly here are the potential plantation sites.



Rural areas

1. Village lands owned by panchayats
2. Common grazing lands
3. Forest buffer zone
(land between villages & forests)
4. Farmer owned lands for agro-forestry



Urban areas

1. Common area in apartment buildings for dense Miyawaki style plantation
2. Along the streets for shade giving trees
3. Lake sides



Industrial areas

1. Industrial lands for greening areas outside production site
2. Mining lands post excavation or topsoil dumping sites



Government institutes

1. Educational institution grounds
2. Government establishments (offices, training centers)

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What to keep in mind when choosing a site?



Plantation permission: FBH should ensure permission from landowner before plantation. The owner should not have any other plans for that site besides growing trees.



Source of water: During first 2 years of plantation, trees need to be watered especially during dry seasons. An existing source of water (borewell, flowing canal, water body) is preferred. In the absence of any water source, watering should be done using tanker water which increases the cost of maintenance.



Maintenance responsibility: Every planted tree will need to undergo periodic maintenance to ensure healthy growth. This includes mulching, fence/stake support, watering, weeding and providing boosters. It is good to know who takes the responsibility of doing this maintenance. It could be FBH volunteers, appointed NGO, landowner, local community.



Benefit to communities: Ask yourself in what way the plantation benefits the local community. The more the benefit, the more support we get from local communities in terms of maintaining and expanding / replicating it. Benefits could be in the form of air quality, flowers & fruit, shade, increasing water table, reducing dust etc.



Accessibility: The site should be accessible to FBH teams for maintaining as well as monitoring the growth. The landowner should give our teams the permission to visit the site periodically.



Encumbrance to neighbors: The plantation should not cause a challenge to those living near it. Challenges could involve leaf fall, wildlife, unwanted shade, pollen etc. All involved people should be informed ahead of time.



Plantation style: There are 3 main kind of plantations including Miyawaki style (dense, forest-like, multi-level, diverse species), Block plantation style and Avenue plantation style (along streets, peripheries). It is important to determine this as it impacts the number of trees per area, as well as, cost of site preparation, plantation and maintenance.

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What is a model site?

A model site is typically a farmland site which is to demonstrate the benefits of agroforestry. Heartfulness practitioners can offer their land for this purpose. Ideally, the model site should be at least 5 acres in order to properly design earth works, water works and plant diverse trees. FBH team will suggest how to transform this land into a model agro-forestry site or permaculture site. A detailed document on designing and developing a model site will be prepared.

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How to approach landowners?

Most landowners will be willing to permit tree plantation on their land, especially if it poses no challenges to their long-term vision of what they want to do with the land. FBH team should convince the owner about benefits of tree plantation on their land including:

- * Increased soil fertility
- * Extra income (fruit, timber, medicinal herbs). The trees belong to landowner and NOT to FBH.
- * Microclimate (cooler in summers and warmer in winters)
- * Prevent soil erosion
- * Increased water table (trees slow water runoff, soak and store water in the soil)

FBH team will collate some videos showcasing the benefits for various kind of lands and provide to the volunteers.