



Charlevoix Conservation District
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Bundles of beachgrass

American Beachgrass is the best choice for initial stilling of moving sands. Stems from the plant form a mechanical barrier, which slows and then traps moving sand. It is a native plant to the Atlantic Coast and the Great Lakes. It is strongly rhizomatous, less sensitive to high temperatures and somewhat longer lived than European Beachgrass. American Beachgrass is a tough, coarse, erect perennial with hard, scaly, creeping rhizomes and dense, spike-like seed heads. Most eroding sandy areas and shifting dunes can be planted with American Beachgrass.

The Charlevoix Conservation District's beachgrass nursery is inspected annually by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) Plant/Pesticide Division. Beachgrass is harvested in the spring (May) and fall (October) while the plants are dormant.

Orders (to the extent possible) are harvested in coordination with the customer's planting schedule. The ideal situation is to harvest the order 1-2 days prior to pick up. The Charlevoix Conservation District sells beachgrass in bundles of 500 plants (culms/plugs).

This is **not an exact number**. Bundles are typically "generous" bundles of at least 500 plugs. Recommended spacing to plant beachgrass is in an 18"x18" grid pattern. However, most of our customers choose to space the plants closer together, reporting a 10"x10" pattern looks better. For large areas, where planting will extend over a period of seasons, it is usually best to start on the windward side first. The key to a successful planting is planting when soil conditions are their best, early in the spring or fall when the weather is cool.

A planting depth of 8-10" is suggested, so that the buds at the base of the stem do not dry out nor will plants blow out in a heavy wind. After planting, firm the soil around the plants with your heel. Enough moisture should be present so when an opening is made with a spade, the sand will not run back into the hole. A narrow tile spade or planting bar may be used for hand planting. Place one culm/plug per hole, or place 2-3 plugs per hole (strictly personal preference). Beachgrass spreads by sending new shoots (rhizomes) under the sand. It grows in clumps or bunches, which contain many culms/plugs, that may reach a height of two to three feet. Roots usually are NOT evident at the end of a plug of beachgrass. Roots will develop from basal nodes after planting. **Plant all the plugs in the bundle, even if they look dead!!!!**

They will grow!

A year or two after planting beachgrass, when all surface sand movement has ceased, adapted trees may be planted in the beachgrass.

