

*AMORPHA FRUTICOSA* LINN.—A USEFUL SHRUB  
(A Note for Tree Planters)

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*Amorpha fruticosa* Linn. A deciduous shrub recorded by Parker (1915) in Lahore and Abbottabad was reintroduced in Pakistan about 15 years back. Although the species is actually a native of the USA and grows from mid west all the way to the south, the seed was imported from Japan, where it has been extensively planted to cover the bare hill slopes. The plant being leguminous improves and binds the soil and is a nutritious fodder.

The plants in the first instance were raised in Silvicultural Research Nursery, Lahore and planted in different climatic zones in the country. The sites include Bhurban in Murree hills, Islamabad, Peshawar, Changa Manga etc. The plant seems to have responded well to its new environment with luxuriant growth producing abundant seed and good natural regeneration at favourable site (deep sandy loam, 1000 mm rain or irrigation).

**Nursery practice.** The plant flowers in April, dark purple in terminal racemes, 15 cm long with ornamental effect. All the seed does not ripen at the same time but the process is spread over a period of 2 months starting from middle of August. Seed is 0.8 cm to 1.0 cm long, curved upwards at the tips. For raising nursery stock seed may be sown on raised beds, prepared with 50: 50 mixture of sand and sandy loam. If flow irrigation is available, water may be given by percolation. If it is sown directly in the tubes, watering may be done by a watering rose keeping the soil moist in both the cases till germination starts, which takes about a week when min. and max. temperature is 27°C and 35°C respectively. After that irrigation/watering on alternate days is sufficient, which can be reduced to a weekly irrigation/watering subsequently. Tests conducted in the Pakistan Forest Institute have indicated 20% germination for 1 year old seed and 30% for the fresh collection.

**Field planting.** One year old tube plants can be planted in the field in moist places ravines. However, in the chir zone it may be planted only in the monsoon season. Another method to propagate, the species is planting of root and shoot cuttings which can be prepared from 2-year old plants raised in beds.