

COLLECTING AND STORING SCION WOOD

Scions should be collected when the tree is still dormant, usually February or early March. The best scion wood may come where pruning was done the previous spring; causing good vigorous growth last summer.

Good scion wood is always one year old wood; Wood that grew the previous summer. The wood can usually be found on the outermost ends of limbs or water sprouts from the trunk or large branches. However, avoid water sprouts that come from near the ground and below the old graft union. These may be sprouts from the unknown rootstock.

You can cut the new growth into pieces. Preferably, the pieces should be cut about pencil length and have about the diameter of a pencil or ¼ inch, if possible. Each 10 inch piece can make two grafts. If the water sprout wood is very long, the best scions will come from the middle and out toward the terminal bud. The best scion wood should have large predominant buds. Look for this when choosing wood. You may have to accept smaller diameter wood but do your best to find the wood that is not too small. The more selective you are the better the results.

Wrap your ten inch scions in a lightly moist paper towels, wrap that in plastic wrap or place them in a zip lock bag and seal. They should be placed in a refrigerator with temperatures between 34 and 40 degrees. They will keep well like this for 1-2 months. Be sure to package your collected scions by variety type and label each package clearly!

Avoid, if possible, putting the packaged scion into a refrigerator with apples or other fruit. Ethylene gas is emitted by the ripening fruit which can damage the scion. If you must use the same refrigerator try putting the bags in another container to double or triple bag the scionwood.

The quality of the scion makes a great difference in the grafting results.