

FACT SHEET

‘Wai-iti’

Populus deltoides × *P. trichocarpa*

NZ 5039

‘Wai-iti’ is a New Zealand-bred poplar hybrid cross of *P. deltoides*, a black poplar species from eastern North America, and *P. trichocarpa*, a balsam poplar species from western North America.

Characteristics

‘Wai-iti’ is a large-crowned poplar clone with large branching, and a straight stem. The tree stems have a wood basic density of 403 kg m⁻³. It is a female poplar clone, with bitter leaves that are resistant to possum browsing. It has the habit of suckering where there is no grazing.

The leaves are deltoid or triangular in shape, and rounded at the base, with a dark-green upper and light-green lower surface. The leaf midrib and lateral veins are green, and the petiole is red. The leaves are resistant to infection by *Melampsora larici-populina* leaf rust fungi.

It has performed well on dry summer pastoral hill country in the Wairarapa region with silt loam soils and 1100-1200 mm median annual total rainfall.

Uses

‘Wai-iti’ is suitable for soil conservation use as a spaced-planted tree, particularly in drier areas. At 37 years old, the trees in a field trial in the Wairarapa region had an average height of 28 m, stem diameter at breast height (1.4 m) of 64 cm, and crown width of 30 m.



Young trees of the ‘Wai-iti’ poplar growing on a farm in the Wairarapa region.



Leaf of the ‘Wai-iti’ poplar clone, showing the upper (left) and lower (right) surfaces.