

SAFETY GEAR

Although regulations vary by state, workers who use chain saws to thin brush and trees are generally required to wear hard hats, ear protection, safety goggles, protective chaps, sturdy gloves and slip-resistant boots. But deep in the forests, safety equipment is not often worn – or is worn out.



NO EAR PROTECTION

GOGGLES

Nonexistent or hanging around necks, with no enforcement from foremen

GLOVES

No gloves or ragged cloth gloves without fingers

CHAIN SAWS

- Unsafe cutting of trees because of poor or nonexistent training
- Unsafe cutting by experienced workers because of complacency in dangerous situations.
- Workers cutting trees in close proximity to other workers
- No first-aid kits

CHAPS

Riddled with saw cuts; chaps too short to protect legs

BOOTS

Run-down, with little or no tread

HOEDAD

Hoedads replace shovels in rocky terrain, but hitting a rock sends jolts up workers' arms



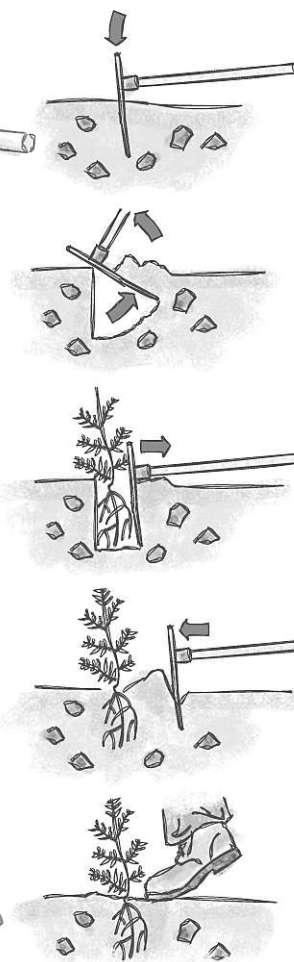
BACK INJURIES

Workers strain their backs by stooping and slamming, day after day

PLANTING BAG

Pineros carry seedlings in bags strapped to their waist. There are two pouches, one for each side of a planter's waist. Together the pouches weigh up to 50 pounds. Depending on the terrain, pineros can plant from 600 to more than 2,000 seedlings per day.

Every year pineros plant millions of seedlings by hand on government and private land across the United States. It is generally regarded as the toughest job in reforestation because of the weight of the seedlings, the pace of the planting, the bending and stooping and the rough terrain covered.



1.

Hoedad is slammed vertically to full depth into the ground.

2.

Pinero pulls up on handle to break loose soil at bottom of hole.

3.

Pinero inserts seedling into hole, then holds seedling in place while removing hoedad. Loose soil falls into hole.

4.

Pinero pushes soil against seedling with tip of hoedad blade.

5.

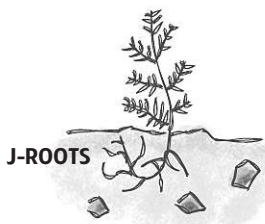
Pinero removes hoedad completely and uses foot to tamp soil on top of seedling.

Forest Service inspections

The Forest Service inspects sample plots for planting quality and ranks them based on violations for such things as improper planting, spacing and wasted trees.

A rating below 90 percent means companies' pay is reduced; below 80 percent, companies may not be paid.

Common violations:



- "J-roots" – in which planters jam trees into shallow holes, causing the roots to curl or "J" toward the surface
- Stripping or cutting roots to make them easier to plant
- Burying extra seedlings in planting holes to lighten the load of the seedling bag.