

# BEECHQUAL

## Testing seed stands of Irish beech

### PROJECT TEAM

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### BACKGROUND

Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), although not a native broadleaf species, has been planted in this country since the 1600s and plays a role in broadleaf forestry in Ireland. In the past, seed price rather than suitability to Irish climatic conditions determined the source of most imported seed which resulted in low survival and poor quality stands.

### OBJECTIVE

The objective of this project is to establish a series of beech field trials comparing the growth and stem form of selected home-grown seed sources with continental seed sources.

### PROGRESS

Seed from 17 sources, including 12 home-collected as well as one source each from the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, Germany and the UK was included. Seed was sown in containers in a heated glasshouse in March 2007. Plants were removed from the containers and lined out in a nursery bed due to difficulties with sites combined with the lateness of the season. In December 2008 one trial in Camolin forest, Co Wicklow, was planted with this material.

### ACTIVITIES PLANNED

A second trial will be planted in early 2009 and the remaining plants will be lined out in a nursery bed for planting of an additional trial in the autumn/winter 2009/10.