## 6.2 Manual Handling

Manual handling refers to any activities where your body is used to exert force. This includes lifting, pushing, pulling, holding, lowering, throwing, carrying, packing, assembling, cleaning, sorting and using tools. Many activities undertaken by SEEDS employees will involve a variety of manual handling tasks.

Some hazardous manual handling tasks that SEEDS employees may encounter involve:

* Repetitive or sustained application of force, awkward postures or movements
* Tasks that people would find difficult due to the degree of force applied
* Exposure to sustained vibration
* Manual handling of unstable loads that are difficult to grasp or hold

Manual handling hazards do not only exist lifting heavy objects but can exist while moving light objects, particularly if awkward postures, repetitive movements, sustained efforts or sustained vibration are involved.

*Special care needs to be taken when handling boxes and trays of plants.*

* Always hold trays close to body
* Avoid twisting when loading and unloading trays
* Avoid overreaching when lifting
* Do not hold trays out at a distance from the body, this is a particularly bad posture that puts strain on the lower back and can happen when loading, unloading and in particular putting trays over a fence or low rail even. Pass trays to someone on other side rather than bend with a load out front of body.

*Special care needs to be taken when using axes for frill/kill*

* When maintaining and sharpening axes be sure to tag axes that have been sharpened so users are aware
* Use axe head cover when walking with axes
* Do not use axes when in close proximity to others
* Be careful of awkward angles when using axes
* Carry axe just under axe head with head facing aware from you rather than dangling by handle and potentially injuring legs whilst walking
* Use two hands on axe or keep spare hand away from frilling location
* Refer to section 6.4.12.1 Cut and paint in Chemical Handling for details of chemical use

SEEDS are committed to eliminating as far as practicable all hazardous manual handling tasks and where elimination is not possible to reduce the risk as far as is practicable by:

* Changing the workplace environment or the systems of work
* Changing the objects used in the task
* Using mechanical aids
* Providing Information, training or instruction to employees on controlling the risk

SEEDS require all employees to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their work by:

* Using manual handling equipment properly
* Following workplace policies and procedures
* Attending health and safety training
* Not taking shortcuts that could increase manual handling risks
* Notifying SEEDS Management of any hazardous manual handling tasks as soon as practicable.

In accordance with their obligations under the Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Act 2004 SEEDS is committed to:

* Consulting with their employees when identifying hazardous manual handling tasks and making decisions about risk control
* Working with their employees to find all manual handling tasks that may be considered hazardous
* Work with their employees to control hazardous manual handling tasks
* Regularly review risk controls to ensure they are implemented correctly and to monitor their effectiveness