

# Minnesota Nurserymen's newsletter

Prepared by

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Institute of Agriculture

- Agricultural Extension Service
- Horticulture Department

In Cooperation with

- Minnesota Nurserymen's Association
- Minnesota State Horticultural Society



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## DEPRECIATION OF PAST DUE ACCOUNTS

According to credit authorities, here is what has been found to be true of the diminishing worth of an average account:

Sixty days past due . . . . .	90¢ on a dollar
Six months past due . . . . .	75¢ on a dollar
One year past due. . . . .	60¢ on a dollar
Two years past due . . . . .	50¢ on a dollar
Five years past due . . . . .	2¢ on a dollar

FROM: CONSTRUCTION BULLETIN  
Lansing, Michigan  
Submitted by: Ted Smith

## NOTES TO THE NURSERYMEN

Walter P. Trampe

### Dutch Elm Disease

Scouting work has been carried on by the Department of Agriculture during the past summer for the small European elm bark beetle and the Dutch elm disease. Although additional funds for this type of work have not been added, the Department has had one man on full-time duty since July 1, 1961. An additional man from the city of St. Paul has given part-time help.

The smaller European elm bark beetle was found in a tree in St. Paul. Another location was found where the same insect had infested a tree at another place in this city. A total of 55 samples of suspect elms were taken. To date, no confirmed cases were found in this group; however, many of the reports of the cultures which were made have yet to be returned. This work was done mainly in the city of St. Paul, much of it near the area where the case of Dutch elm disease was identified by the Department of Plant Pathology. The plan is to continue these scouting activities throughout the growing season.

Representatives of the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture met with members of the St. Paul City Council and other city officials on August 21, 1961. Preliminary efforts were made to establish a suitable control program for the city.

The Division of Plant Industry is of the opinion that it is possible to maintain elm tree

losses at normal levels even after the advent of the disease if proper control measures are applied. Sanitation measures, aimed at cleaning up the dead and dying elms, may be initiated before the disease is present. Other means of keeping trees in good vigor may be put into practice at any time. This is good "house-keeping" and will aid in limiting the spread of the disease.

The Division, in cooperation with various departments of the University, has held numerous meetings in the state to initiate preliminary control measures. If any municipality is interested, the Division will try to arrange such a meeting.

## MULCHING FALL-PLANTED NURSERY STOCK

### Why Mulch?

Most types of nursery stock planted in the fall don't have sufficient time to become rooted before winter and as a result are more subject to winter injury. This is especially true of dormant stock which is planted during October.

Since most winter injury results from rapid temperature changes rather than extreme temperatures, it seems advisable to modify this condition in order to avoid possible injury. Mulching in the fall will maintain a more uniform soil temperature throughout the winter. The mulch will keep the soil warm longer and allow further root development before the ground freezes in fall.

Large shade trees planted just before the ground freezes survive better when mulched. In exposed locations on south or west slopes, it has been reported that mulching of fall-planted silver maples and sugar maples 8 to 10 feet and larger have wintered 50 percent better than the unmulched trees planted at the same time and in similar locations.

Mulching is not an additional expense which adds to the overhead. If the landscape contract contains a replacement clause, mulching is an insurance. Fall planting is considered generally less costly than spring planting because most nurseries are more rushed during the spring selling and planting season. Replacement of the winter-killed stock the following

spring could be more expensive than the mulching operation.

How Deep To Apply Mulch

For best results the mulch should be at least 2 to 3 inches deep. For shade trees, it is advisable to mulch 4 to 6 feet in diameter around each tree or well beyond the root zone.

The USDA suggests that 1/2 to 1 pound of ammonium nitrate be added to each bushel of mulch to reduce chance of nitrogen deficiency due to the breakdown of organic matter. Fertilizer may be applied at the same time as the mulch.

Mulch Materials

1. Crushed corncobs are a good, inexpensive mulch. It does not detract from the appearance of the planting.
2. Whole corncobs can be used where the appearance is not a consideration.
3. Hay is a good mulch and easy to transport if handled in baled form. Some farmers may have some partially decomposed hay which is no longer good for livestock feed.
4. Hops (spent) can be obtained from local breweries.
5. Leaves are an inexpensive mulch.
6. Sawdust or wood shavings can be obtained from saw mills or planing mills. When used as a mulch, shavings should be free of treated materials such as creosote or other preservatives.
7. Pine needles make a good mulch for landscape plantings because of their color and natural appearance. Pine needles do not decompose readily and are weed free. They are especially good where an acid soil reaction is to be maintained.
8. Wood chips can often be obtained from a tree-trimming service which uses a brush pulverizer for removal of brush.

ARBORETUM NOTES

Atlantic Leatherwood (Dirca palustris)

The Atlantic Leatherwood is native in open woodlands and at the edges of swamps throughout the wooded areas of the state, but more common in the northeastern part of the state. Although shade tolerant, this plant does best where it receives ample light. In the woods it is rather open and sparsely branched. In the open, it forms a compact, symmetrical plant that requires little restrictive pruning. It is especially good for foundation plantings or for an informal hedge.

The plant grows to a height of about 5 feet. The stems appear jointed and are very limber because of the tough inner bark and the soft inner wood. The Indians used the bark for

binding pieces of leather together--hence the name, leatherwood. The flowers are small yellow trumpets produced very early in the spring, often by mid-April. The fruits, which resemble tiny plums, are at first green, turning red as they mature. The only known means of propagating this shrub is from seeds. Since the fruits drop to the ground as soon as ripe, seed collection is somewhat difficult. This fact may account for the scarcity of this desirable ornamental in the nursery trade.

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L. C. Snyder

CUTTING GRAFTS OF JUNIPERS

Propagation of juniper clones on unrooted cuttings such as understocks is affected by season of the year, by clones used for the understock and management practices. Results improve from October to January. Field survival and growth are influenced by kind of understock and date of planting. Hetz and Andorra junipers, as understocks, are more dwarfing than Eastern Redcedar. Cutting grafts save time and greenhouse space, but are not as well established as potted understocks. (Ray A. Keen and Darrell Westervelt, Kansas State University)

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

The fall planting season offers the nurserymen an opportunity to expand the sales volume for the year. During the fall season, gardeners are interested in the autumn colors and are curious as to their identity.

Often it has been said that nurserymen just sell shrubs and trees. This fall season is an excellent time to sell their beauty as well. Staghorn Sumac is an excellent background shrub and has vibrant red leaves in autumn. This statement sells the use and beauty of the shrub rather than just the size and shape.

Bring some samples of autumn color into your sales area. Let the customer see the beauty you are selling. Don't forget to label the specimens.

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Conference time will soon be here. Mark December 4 and 5 for the meeting this year.

--C. G. Hard

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