

TIPS ON TREE PLANTING

By Parker Anderson

DOES your farm home need a farmstead shelterbelt? Do your farm crops need the protection of a field windbreak? Have you idle, unused acres that could be put to work growing a productive timber crop?

If so, then the varieties of trees and shrubs to plant, their requirements for successful growth, and their adaptability to soil, moisture, and exposure are of utmost importance. Select the trees that will meet your problems and your future needs.

After selecting hardy varieties, then follow recommended planting methods.

Mixed plantings combining several species are better than solid plantings of only one variety. Mixed plantings establish more natural forest conditions, stimulate better growth and offer more resistance to insects and diseases.

A few of the more common hardy desirable species have been tested and are recommended for your study and selection.

It Is Important to Select Hardy, Suitable Stock

Care of Trees Upon Arrival

OPEN the package containing the trees upon arrival and make sure that the roots are damp. If necessary pour water into package. If you are not going to plant your trees the day of arrival, store in a cool place such as a basement or root cellar.

If conditions are such that you cannot plant the trees for several days, take them out of the package and "heel them in." To do this:

1. Dig a trench deep enough to take the entire root system without crowding.

2. Spread the trees in the trench individually or in small bunches, side by side, allowing the tops or leaf areas to come well above the ground.

3. Pack loose soil firmly against the roots, excluding air holes which cause "drying out."

Trees properly heeled in should stay in good condition for a week or ten days. When you are ready to plant, large numbers of small trees can be carried at one time by placing them in a bucket half full of water. For larger trees wrap the roots in wet sacks or cover roots with wet moss, carry to planting area, and plant immediately. Do not under any circumstances allow the roots to dry out. *Dry roots mean dead trees.*



"Heel in" trees on arrival if planting cannot be done within a few days.

Early Planting Best

Early spring or just as soon as the frost is out of the ground is the best time for planting. The ground is then moist, the rays of the spring sun are mild, and the trees have all spring and summer to become established before summer drouths, weeds, and cold weather become a handicap.

Planting the Trees

Success in tree planting depends mainly upon *good soil preparation*, proper handling and planting, plus protection and cultivation of the trees throughout the growing season.

Never plant trees on "soddy" ground or in heavy vegetation without first preparing the ground a year ahead of time. If trees must be planted in sod, plow a furrow about 3 inches deep or "scalp" off the sod or vegetation with a spade. If scalping is done, cut away the sod in an 18-inch square and plant in the open space.

Dig the planting hole deep enough and wide enough to take the entire root system without crowding. Hold the tree upright until the soil is well "tamped" around the roots. Plant trees the same depth as they were formerly in the ground.

Proper summer cultivation is essential to prevent grasses and weeds from robbing small trees of soil moisture and food.

Fence out livestock.



Plant trees to proper depth, spread roots well, and tamp soil as it is filled in.

Small Conifers

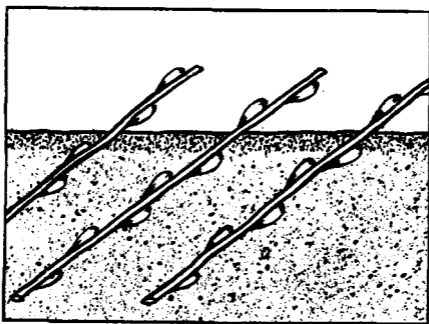
Select those species which are adapted to your soil and climatic conditions. Keep uppermost in mind the purpose the planting is expected to serve.

Only trees with good sturdy root development should be planted. A well-formed, strong root system is more important than a big top. Trees with large tops and "spindly" root systems are not apt to grow because the top demands more food and moisture than the poorly developed roots can supply. Evergreen transplants 3 to 4 years old with about 10- to 14-inch tops are favored. Four-year-old conifer transplant stock is known as 2-2 stock which means two-year seedling and two-year transplant.

Planting Cuttings

Cuttings are easily made from willow and cottonwood. They are most successful when cut early in the spring before tree growth starts. If cut in late fall, cover them with moist sand and store in a cool place until ready to plant in spring.

Cuttings should be taken from the younger and healthier portion of the tree—12 to 14 inches long and one-fourth to one-half inch thick are best. It is a good practice to soak them 24 hours before planting out in the field.



Plant cuttings at a 45-degree angle with two buds above the ground.

Do not push the cuttings into the ground. Make a good opening with a spade and insert the cutting carefully so as not to peel the bark. Then press the soil firmly against the lower end. Plant most of the cutting below the ground, leaving only two buds above. This insures greater root development and, as a result, better top growth.

Another method of planting cuttings is to plow a furrow, lay the cuttings in, and then turn the earth back over the cuttings, tamping dirt firmly around portion in the ground.

Planting Native Stock

One- to three-year-old seedling hardwood trees that have naturally reseeded themselves on or near your farm may be successfully transplanted. Select, however, open-grown trees with well-formed crowns and with well-developed, healthy root systems.

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