

# FOREST AGRICULTURE



*Nursery*

**Forestag.com**

## SPRING TREE PLANTING INSTRUCTIONS- PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Dear Customer,

Your order of trees has been carefully selected for you and your trees were in good condition when they left our nursery. Once you receive your trees, their growing and cultural conditions are beyond our control and they become the responsibility of the grower. Fruit, nut and wildlife trees are not difficult to grow, but they do require some care in order to become established in their new environment.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS to insure that your trees get the best start possible.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Unpack your trees and loosen the top of the plastic bag around the roots. In order to keep costs low, we ship trees in bundle quantities only. There are no fewer than 25 trees per bundle. Please note that the roots have been covered with a hydrating gel and packed with moist sawdust or shredded paper to keep them moist during shipment. CHECK THE ROOTS to see if they are still moist. If they are not, dip them in water for five minutes to rehydrate them and the hydro-gel. If your package is badly damaged, take a photo of it and discuss this with the delivery driver. E-mail us a photo of the package at [trees@forestag.com](mailto:trees@forestag.com). Do not throw away the packaging in case you need to file a claim with the delivery company.
2. Prior to planting your trees, stand the bundles up (some bundles are packed facing opposite directions) with the roots remaining in the bag and box, and the branch tips pointing up. If stem tips have been bent during shipping, this is the time to gently straighten them. We prefer to bend the tips when packing longer trees instead of cutting them. Most species are very flexible at this age and are not damaged by being bent. Keep the plants in a cool, dark place where they won't freeze and keep their roots slightly moist (not wet) until you plant them. Do not store them in buckets of water as this causes valuable nutrients to diffuse out of the trees and into the water. In the southern U.S. (zones 7-10) plant your trees immediately upon receipt. If you live in the northern U.S. wait until the ground thaws before planting. If you want to add more work to your life you can heel the plants into a trench using peat, or native soil and leave them there until planting time. Otherwise, store your trees in a COOL place such as a basement, root cellar, walk-in cooler or refrigerator. (35-50°F) DO NOT allow the roots to freeze as this could harm the trees. Keep the roots SLIGHTLY MOIST, but not too wet or they will mold. If kept at less than 50°F, the trees will remain dormant until the ground is warm enough to plant. If you want to plant in the fall, heel the plants into a trench for the summer or pot them up in a 3 gallon container.
3. For optimum fruit and nut production choose a site in the full sun with fertile, well-drained soil in a non-low-lying area. (Elderberries, poplars and willows can tolerate low lying areas.) When possible plant into sandy loam soils with a pH between 5.0 and 7.0. Your trees will tolerate heavy clay soils, but will likely grow much slower because their roots will take longer to penetrate than with sandier soils. Avoid frost pockets (valley bottoms) with fruit trees (especially cherries) because late spring frosts can damage their blossoms. This is more common in northern locations. Prepare the area by removing any weeds prior to planting. This step is often ignored which reduces the success of the planting. Weeds and grass use light,

water and nutrients that could go towards growing your trees, and their presence will reduce the growth of your trees. If you choose to mulch your trees for weed control, use organic mulches: sawdust, woodchips or leaves. Try to avoid hay or straw as it serves as nest building material for rodents that can damage the bark of young trees. If mulching chestnuts, do not let the mulch contact the stem of the tree. Young chestnut bark is very tender and susceptible to decay when kept too moist and in contact with decaying organic matter. Avoid using plastic, spun or woven mulches as these can cause the roots of your trees to overheat. Hazelnuts are especially susceptible to overheating in plastic mulches.

4. Dig a hole 2 times wider than the root mass so the roots can grow easily without crowding. Spread the roots out so they aren't crowded and make sure that the root tips are pointing DOWN and don't circle around the planting hole.
5. Plant the tree at the same depth that it grew in the nursery bed. On every tree there is a transition zone where the roots turn into stem. There is a color change between roots and stem at this zone. This is called the "ground line." Plant the tree with the ground line at soil level. Some trees (such as elderberry, currants, hazelnuts, willows and poplars) can tolerate being planted too deep. If you are planting grafted fruit trees, plant the tree with the graft union above ground. Partially fill the planting hole with native soil. Set the tree in the middle of the hole with plenty of room for the roots. Using some soil, secure the tree in a straight position, then fill the remainder of the hole with native soil and firm the soil around the roots to eliminate any air pockets. Keep filling the hole until the soil is just above the ground line. Do not add amendments such as compost, bark, fertilizer or chemicals in the planting hole of your new trees. They need time to "settle in" before being subjected to unfamiliar treatments.
6. Create a water-holding basin around the outside rim of the planting hole and water the trees thoroughly after planting. This will help eliminate any air pockets around the roots. Water the tree slowly at the drip line of the tree and allow all of the water to soak in. Slow, deep watering allows the moisture to penetrate deeply. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT NEWLY PLANTED TREES BE WATERED REGULARLY DURING THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF GROWTH! The amount of water needed is dependent on your soil type, temperatures and rainfall. Keep the soil UNOFORMLY MOIST, CONSTANTLY! For larger plantings, T-tape drip irrigation is typically the most affordable. Contact us at [trees@forestag.com](mailto:trees@forestag.com) if you have questions concerning setting up a T-tape system.
7. Protect your trees from browsing deer and elk! Many of our customers use Tree Pro brand tree shelters. Tree shelters act as mini greenhouses, they force the main stem to grow upwards and they protect the young trees from herbicide drift. An inexpensive deer repellent can be made by whipping 1 dozen eggs into 5 gallons of water and splashing this mixture on the trees. Replenish the egg-wash after every rain or every 3-4 weeks. Spiral vinyl tree guards cut to size can protect the main trunk from rodent damage.
8. You do not have to prune your trees at this time. Please do not trim the roots. We took a great deal of care to grow healthy roots and your trees need them. If you really want to prune trees, please wait for two or three years in order for the tree to get established.
9. DO NOT FERTILIZE BARERoot TREES AT PLANTING! This can burn the young roots. If you feel compelled to fertilize the trees wait until next year when the tree is fully leafed out. Do not expect your trees to grow rapidly from the very start, especially hazelnuts and hickories. Your trees are busy putting roots down and getting established. It may take some trees several years before top growth really begins in earnest. Hazelnuts and hickories are notorious for this.

#### **REPLACEMENT POLICY:**

Once you have accepted receipt of your trees, they are your responsibility. Through our many years of growing and shipping trees all around the nation and into Canada, we have learned that there are many cultural factors that can affect the growth of trees, such as soil conditions, watering (both too little and too much), fertilization, diseases, insect pressure, early and late freezes and care (or lack thereof) by the owner. The Forest Agriculture Nursery cannot be held responsible for cultural conditions that are beyond our control or if the trees were planted on a site where they receive little care. Your planting success will decrease if the plants don't receive adequate care during their establishment. If you have specific questions or concerns, please contact us at [trees@forestag.com](mailto:trees@forestag.com).

See our website for more information: [www.forestag.com](http://www.forestag.com)