

## MULCHING

Mulching helps eliminate competition from grass and weeds while conserving soil moisture. Apply a 2–3-inch layer of loosely packed organic material such as wood chips, pine straw, peat moss, shredded leaves, or grass clippings around the base of each tree.

### Benefits of Mulching:

- Retains soil moisture and reduces weeds
- Increases natural soil fertility
- Improves soil structure & aeration temperature
- Protects the trunk from damage caused by mowers and trimmers

*Note: Avoid piling mulch directly against the tree trunk. A mulch depth greater than 3-inch can negatively affect root and bark function.*

## FABRIC MULCH

CPNRD recommends using a durable polypropylene woven fabric as a weed barrier. This fabric acts as a mulch, eliminating vegetative competition with newly planted trees and shrubs.

### Benefits of Fabric Mulch:

- **Conserves Soil Moisture:** Reduces evaporation while allowing water to penetrate the fabric.
- **Prevents Weed Growth:** Blocks sunlight, stopping vegetation from growing near seedlings.
- **Increases Survival Rates:** Provides effective control of weeds & grasses, helping trees/shrubs establish more successfully.



*Note: Weed barrier fabric can be purchased and installed through CPNRD.*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Your CPNRD Contact:

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### Your local USDA-NRCS (Ext. 3)

Central City	(308) 946-3035
Grand Island	(308) 395-8586
Kearney	(308) 237-3118
Lexington	(308) 324-6314
Osceola	(402) 747-2111

**CPNRD has sold over 3.9 million trees for conservation and 633 miles of weed barrier from Gothenburg to Columbus since 1972.**

CPNRD

CENTRAL PLATTE  
NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

(308) 385-6282

[www.cpnrd.org](http://www.cpnrd.org)



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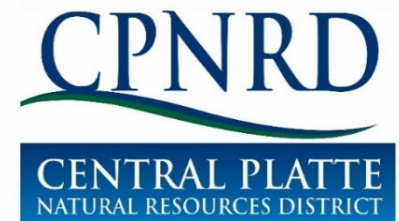
## TREE PLANTING



## Guide

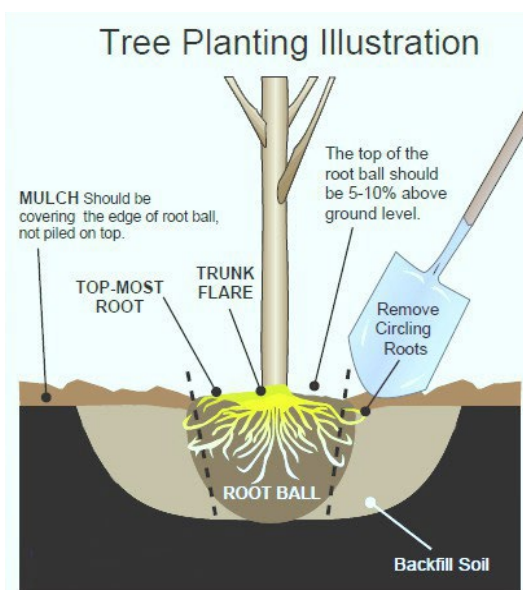
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## Information



**Nebraska's NRDs:**  
*Protecting Lives  
Protecting Property  
Protecting the Future*

## PLANTING GUIDELINES



**Keep Roots Moist:** Always keep seeding roots moist, DO NOT submerge in water. Avoid exposing roots to wind or direct sunlight.

**Row Spacing:** Space Rows 12' to 24' apart, depending on the tree species and the width of equipment used for mowing or maintenance.

### Steps to Properly Plant your Trees:

1. Dig the Hole 3x the diameter of the root ball, but only as deep as the root ball itself.
2. Identify Trunk Flare, where roots begin to spread, to ensure it is visible after planting. Most roots grow in the top 12" of soil, so it's better to plant slightly above ground level than too deep.
3. Straighten Tree before backfilling to make sure tree stands straight and upright to promote proper growth.
4. Fill the Hole 1/3 full, gently firming soil around the base of the root ball. Continue filling until the roots are completely covered and the soil is well packed.

## STORAGE

Trees should be planted immediately. If you are unable to plant right away, be sure to store the seedlings in cold storage. A refrigerator is the best way to hold trees (36° - 38° F).

**Storing for a few days:** If cold storage isn't available, keep trees in a cool place such as a basement. Leave trees in packing material and keep moist – do not submerge roots in water.

**Storing for a few weeks:** If trees are to be held for a longer period, place them in a shaded sloping trench. A 2-ft trench will hold about 250 seedlings. Be sure the roots aren't crowded and cut strings on the bundles. Cover the roots with soil and pack firmly. Avoid air pockets and keep soil moist.

## WHERE TO PLANT

Some trees can suffer from too much shade. Many conifers and deciduous trees need full sunlight most of the day to survive; also know as shade intolerant.

**Shade tolerant species:** spruce, birch, elm, and dogwood.

**Intolerant species:** pine, many oaks, poplar, black cherry, and cottonwood.

*Note: Newly planted trees should be fertilized only if they exhibit signs of nutrient deficiency.*

## SITE PREPARATION

Prepare the area where trees are to be planted the same as a garden. Plowing, disking, or tilling the ground will establish an excellent seed bed. Tree survival greatly depends on how well you prepare the ground. Autumn is the best time to begin preparing the soil for tree planting because winter weather allows soil to mellow.

## WATERING

Proper watering during hot, dry summer months is the most important factor in helping trees minimize stress and establish strong roots.

### How much should you water?

Newly planted trees should receive about 1 inch of water per week (approx. 1 gallon per tree).

### What is the best watering method?

Avoid small, frequent watering from sprinklers – it only wets the surface and doesn't reach the roots. Instead give your trees a deep soaking each time you water, then allow the soil to dry out before watering again.

### Why does the watering method matter?

Frequent, shallow watering causes roots to grow near the surface, making trees more vulnerable to drought and wind damage. Deep watering every 7-10 days encourages roots to grow deeper and stronger.



## HEALTH PROBLEMS

When trees are transplanted, they experience a period of transplant shock as they work to develop a new root system. Don't panic – this is normal. Even if the tops of trees turn brown, the roots are often still alive and will typically recover and show new growth by fall.

The first few years are especially critical for establishing a healthy, long-lived tree. Watch for these signs of stress or poor health:

- Yellowing leaves
- Wilting foliage
- Holes in bark, branches or leaves
- Oozing sap

If you notice any of these symptoms, take steps to identify and address the cause. For assistance with diagnosing problems, contact your local Extension office.