

# Free Trees for Fall Planting

*Providing up to 10 free trees  
for fall tree-planting events & celebrations across Nebraska*

**Deadline: July 31, First-Come First-Served. Western NE (Panhandle) recipients are encouraged to have trees planted by October 15. Trees in other locations should be planted by November 15.**

The purpose of Free Trees for Fall Planting, a collaborative effort of the Nebraska Forest Service and Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, is to help celebrate and enable the planting of trees in fall, the best time of the year to plant trees. For this program, trees can be planted any time between September 1<sup>st</sup> and November 15, 2021 (October 15 for Panhandle).

The Free Trees for Fall Planting program has several goals:

- Celebrate trees and promote the value of healthy trees for a healthy community.
- Prioritize tree planting in high impact areas, such as along streets and neighborhoods of highest need.**
- Plant at least 500 high-quality trees in Nebraska communities in conjunction with tree-related educational events and community celebrations to promote trees and fall planting.
- Award tree advocates by giving priority to Tree City USA tree boards, Tree Campus USA schools, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum curators, individuals volunteering/supporting community forestry programs and Project Learning Tree facilitators.
- Assist volunteers and non-profit partners such as business improvement districts, neighborhood associations, government agencies, and other public or private entities with tree planting in public spaces and areas of civic importance.
- Promote the healthy establishment and ongoing care of newly planted trees.
- Increase resiliency of the community forest by promoting a broader diversity of native and well-adapted non-native tree species. A special emphasis will be placed on the planting of reliable, yet underutilized trees species.
- Provide educational opportunities for people to learn more about trees and their proper selection, siting, planting and care.

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Free Trees for Fall Planting is supported by:  
the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum's Trees for Nebraska Towns Initiative,  
funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust,  
and the Nebraska Forest Service's Landscape Scale Restoration grant,  
funded by the US Forest Service.



## Free Trees for Fall Planting – Information and Criteria

- A. **The Free Trees for Fall Planting Program Provides Trees:** Support from the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the US Forest Service is used to provide trees and education about trees. The program does not provide direct funding for trees to recipients but provides pre-selected trees to recipients.
- B. **Plant Quality & Size:** Only the highest-quality trees will be utilized in the initiative. A special emphasis will be placed on high-quality root systems—smaller trees with better roots. As such the expected size for most trees will be 1 -1.25” caliper or smaller and 4-10’ tall. Trees are intended to be easier for volunteers to handle.
- C. **Who Can Apply:** Priority will be given to high-impact projects, such as street trees and neighborhoods of higher need, and to applicants who are NCFC Members, Tree City USA tree boards, Nebraska Statewide Arboretum curators, individuals volunteering/supporting community forestry programs and Project Learning Tree facilitators? Schools, non-profit groups and civic organizations are encouraged to apply. Individuals must represent a group or organization. **NOTE:** All applicants must receive written permission from property owners/managers before planting.
- D. **Project Location(s):** Projects must be located in Nebraska and on property of civic importance that provides clear public benefit. Eligible planting sites include, but are not limited to street ROW, parks, school grounds, college campuses, the grounds of civic buildings, recreation areas, common areas and cemeteries. Trees can be planted in front yards of private property if they will shade public streets and sidewalks.
- E. **Maximum/Minimum Tree Request:** A maximum of 10 trees will be allowed for any single request. The minimum awarded will be one. Recipients, especially those requesting less than 5 trees, MAY be required to pick up from a regional drop site. High impact projects (street trees, high need neighborhoods, etc.) and projects with an extensive outreach component will be given priority to receive the maximum number of trees.
- F. **Tree Selection:** We will work with applicants to select trees for each project from a limited number of trees made available to this program. Emphasis will be on a diversity of large-maturing trees (over 40 feet).
- G. **Matching Requirement:** **All projects are required to contribute an in-kind match** by including outreach, educational and/or media components in the tree planting to increase public awareness of the benefits of trees and the need for diversity and proper tree care. **Assistance is available to promote your event, including a press release template and educational materials.** Tree recipients will be required to keep us apprised of event plans so that the event is included in a statewide promotion. Nebraska Forest Service District Foresters and Community Forestry staff or other tree advocates may be available to attend events upon request.
- H. **Post-project reporting:** All grant recipients must report evidence of outreach component(s) and total number of volunteer hours.
- I. **Site Plan:** A map/image (such as Google map) showing the proposed planting should be submitted with the application. Submit to [kweyers2@unl.edu](mailto:kweyers2@unl.edu). Include the email subject: ‘2021 Mini Grant – (INSERT COMMUNITY)’
- J. **Post-Planting Maintenance:** All trees will be expected to be properly maintained after planting.
- K. **Project Completion Deadline:** Projects should be implemented between September 1 and November 15, 2021 (October 15 for Panhandle) unless an extension has been requested and granted. If possible, projects should be implemented and/or promoted around selected outreach events.
- L. **Application Deadline:** **July 31**; qualifying projects/applicants will be assisted on a first-come, first-served basis.

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