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Tree Planting Instructions

The majority of the trees that are shipped from the nursery have their root system wrapped with burlap and protected by a wire cage (wire basket) to aid in the transportation and planting of the tree. The burlap keeps the soil in place around the delicate root hairs and keeps the root structure moist.

We recommend that the wire and burlap stay on the tree! The wire won't harm the tree and the burlap will rot quickly and won't restrict root growth.

The following steps should be taken to properly plant a wire basket tree:

- Dig the hole the same depth as the root ball. For example, if the distance of the root ball is 20" from the bottom of the basket to the top of the basket, then the hole should be approximately that deep. It is better to have the root ball slightly above the existing grade than below.
- The width of the hole should be wider than the width of the wire basket. For example, if the wire basket is 32" wide, dig the hole at least 40" wide. This allows for easy straightening of the tree when planting and allowance of good topsoil to be backfilled around the root ball.
- The hole with the tree in it and partially backfilled should be watered thoroughly. This will eliminate any air pockets.
- The tree should be staked to offer support while the new roots are growing. We like using 6' T- Rail steel stakes. These should be pounded on the outside of the root ball area. Use wire and garden hose to wrap around trunk of tree snugly.
- Once the tree is staked then the white string on top of the root ball must be cut and removed from the trunk of the tree. The wire loops that the string is tied to can be bent into the hole or cut off.
- Finish backfilling the hole with good topsoil. A slight saucer can be created with the topsoil around the edge of the hole to allow water to retain around the root area.
- Water again.
- Mulch may be added a few inches deep to aid in moisture retention as well as help with weed growth and appearance.

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A few things to remember:

- * When moving the tree with a machine or cart, make extra care to be gentle with the tree. For example, don't drop the tree off of the truck! Also make sure the trunk does not get scraped with a chain or loader.
- * If the tree is hoisted with a tractor or machine, make sure there is no one underneath the tree. If the wire breaks and the tree falls it could easily hurt or kill someone!
- * The tree should not be planted in a wet area or an area with a high water table. The roots need oxygen to breath.
- * It is critical to water the new tree regularly for the first year, approximately 2x / week. At the same time it is important to not over water~eg. watering every day all day.
- * The stakes must be removed after the first year.
- * It is a good idea to fertilize the tree after the first year with a general-purpose granular fertilizer such as 19-19-19. We usually fertilize in April and in June. Amounts depend on size of tree but at least a couple of handfuls per tree sprinkled around the root area.
- * Keep weed whackers, trimmers and mowers away from the trunk of the trees!
- * If fertilizing with animal manure, make sure it is well rotted. If it is fresh, the nitrogen will burn the roots.

Remember that once the tree is initially dug at the nursery and placed in the wire basket, that tree can be planted at any time throughout the year. Trees are not restricted to Spring or Fall only plantings.