



North Dakota Forest Service

Towner State Nursery

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April 13, 2020

Greetings,

With the spring season fast approaching, we want to provide an update to all of our customers.

We are delaying pick-up or shipments for North Dakota customers at this time. This is primarily due to:

- 1) The spring start-up of lifting and field activities at Towner is projected for the week of April 20th. Generally, we begin lifting trees in the middle of April however a recent cold spell has extended soil frost conditions.
- 2) There is still uncertainty regarding the operational logistics of state facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Pursuant to North Dakota Governor Burgum's Executive Order issued March 19, 2020, public access to state facilities is restricted. Our goal is to bring our seasonal work force back to the nursery at spring start-up but social distancing requirements will warrant operational changes that may affect the daily volume of trees that can be graded and how they will be packaged.

The health and safety of our customers, employees, and fellow citizens is the top priority of Towner State Nursery. The nursery staff will continue to assess contingency plans as they relate to the COVID-19 situation. We anticipate making decisions about our spring orders by the week of April 20th and communicating plans to our customers.

Please note that we will be unable to provide bales of trees due to social distancing requirements for our packaging procedures. All trees will be packaged in boxes which take up more space than bales. We ask you to please coordinate with us if you have questions regarding the total space necessary to transport and store your trees.

Until that time, we remind all of our customers to schedule spring pick-ups and shipments of tree orders so that they coincide as closely as possible to the anticipated spring planting season. Planting trees too early reduces seedling survival as trees will not begin to grow in cold soil temperatures. In addition, getting trees too early and storing them for extended periods until planting conditions improve will further reduce survival as some

species will begin to break bud (deciduous) or will begin to transpire and desiccate (conifers) while in storage.

Stay Safe and Healthy,

Your Nursery Team,

Mike, Jeff, Rhonda, Jerome, Edwin, and Sheldon