



North Dakota Forest Service

Towner State Nursery

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Greetings,

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

We are **not** currently scheduling pick-up or deliveries for North Dakota customers at this time. This is primarily due to:

- 1) The spring lifting and field activities at Towner are still several weeks out. Generally, we begin lifting trees in the middle of April however spring start up is periodically delayed a week or more due to 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 our normal start-up period but social distancing requirements will warrant operational changes that may affect the daily volume of trees that can be lifted and 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 be visiting continuously over the next week to assess contingency plans as they relate to the COVID-19 situation. We anticipate making final decisions about our spring operations by April 14th and communicating those plans to our customers.

Until that time, we remind all of our customers to schedule spring pick-ups and deliveries 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