American Linden or Basswood
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*(Tilia americana)*

**General Description**
A medium to large tree native east of the Missouri River in North Dakota. Desirable as a landscape tree for its large stature, shade and aromatic flowers. Fruit with attached pale-green bract, gives tree a two-tone appearance in late summer. The largest tree in North Dakota is 75 feet tall with a canopy spread of 64 feet.

**Leaves and Buds**
Bud Arrangement - No terminal buds. Lateral buds are alternate.
Bud Color - Reddish-brown in color.
Bud Size - Lateral buds are 1/8 to 2/5 inch long, somewhat flattened, lopsided, and smooth or slightly downy at tip.
Leaf Type and Shape - Simple, broad-cordate or heart-shaped, oblique base.
Leaf Margins - Coarsely-serrate with long-pointed teeth.
Leaf Surface - Leathery with tufts of hair along midrib and veins.
Leaf Length - 3 to 6 inches.
Leaf Width - 3 to 6 inches.
Leaf Color - Green above, paler below; yellow fall color.

**Flowers and Fruits**
Flower Type - Borne in 3 to 7 flowered pendulous cyme, attached to a large, pale greenish-yellow, leaflike bract.
Flower Color - Creamy-white to pale-yellow perfect flowers.
Fruit Type - Fruit is a pea-sized nutlet about 1/4 inch in size, thick-shelled, and without ribs.
Seed Color - Brown to tan when mature.

**Form**
Growth Habit - Pyramidal when young, becoming rounded when mature.
Texture - Medium-coarse, summer; medium-coarse, winter.
Crown Height - 50 to 70 feet.
Crown Width - 30 to 50 feet.
Bark Color - Gray to brown, broken into many long narrow, flat-topped scaly ridges.
Root System - Wide spreading.

**Environmental Requirements**

**Soils**
Soil Texture - Grows well on deep, fertile, well-drained loam and clay soils. Flood plain tree.
Soil pH - 5.5 to 7.5.
Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 3.

**Cold Hardiness**
USDA Zone 2.

**Water**
Intermediate tolerance to flooding. Not drought resistant. May develop leaf scorch under drought conditions.

**Light**
Full sun, but will tolerate shade.

**Uses**

**Conservation/Windbreaks**
Medium to tall tree for farmstead windbreaks, and riparian plantings in eastern third of North Dakota.

**Wildlife**
Old hollow trees make good den trees for wildlife.

**Agroforestry Products**
Wood - Light, soft, and tough. Sold mainly for lumber, dimension stock and veneer; used in making drawing boards, furniture, tongue depressors, and for carving.
Food - Honey derived from linden flowers is regarded as the best in the world.
Medicinal - Used for indigestion, hysteria, nervous stomach or palpitations.

**Urban/Recreational**
Used as shade, boulevard, and park tree in open landscape areas due to its large size and spreading root system.

**Cultivated Varieties**
Dakota Linden (*T. americana* ‘Dakota’) - Hardy, pyramidal selection by the late Ben Gilbertson, Kindred, North Dakota.
Pyramidal Linden (*T. americana* ‘Fastigiata’) - Narrow, upright growing cultivar. ‘Boulevard’ is new cultivar name.
Redmond Linden (*T. americana* ‘Redmond’) - Striking pyramidal form. Believed by some authorities to be a Bigleaf Linden (*T. platyphyllos*) x Littleleaf Linden (*T. cordata*) hybrid.

**Related Species**
Bigleaf Linden (*T. platyphyllos*)
Mongolian Linden (*T. mongolica*)
Hybrid Lindens, eg, ‘Dropmore’, ‘Wascana’ and ‘Glenleven’ are derived from American Linden x Littleleaf Linden (*T. cordata*) parentage. Hardy in Northern Plains.

**Pests**
No serious pest problems in North Dakota.