RPG Times

Summer 2005

A Publication of the Roots Plus Field-Growers Association of Florida

Storm damage prevention by maintaining sound structure

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Proper pruning and training of young, large-maturing trees has a significant impact on their future growth. Arborists and urban foresters know that young trees properly trained in the nursery with a dominant leader survive storms better and are likely to live longer in the landscape than trees that are not trained, or those that are improperly pruned. In addition, trees with one dominant leader can be limbed up easily to create clearance for vehicles; whereas those with multiple leaders are difficult to prune. The nursery industry recognized this with the publication American Standard for Nursery Stock (ANSI Z60.1 1990) which calls for a dominant leader in large-maturing shade trees. Some states have adopted more detailed standards for nursery trees that also call for a dominant leader (Grades and Standards for Nursery Plants, Florida Dept. of Agric.1998). For a number of years, leaders in the nursery industry have trained their large maturing shade trees to one trunk. There is now consensus among green industry leaders that a dominant leader is the most appropriate method of growing shade trees.

Second to placing a tree in an appropriate location and planting it correctly, pruning has the biggest impact on longevity. Landscape managers should know that planting well structured nursery trees makes it easier for them to complete

Storm Damage, continued page 4

Florida Recieves $13 Million in Grants for Urban Forest Recovery Projects

During the months of August and September, 2004, four hurricanes caused widespread damage to the tree canopies of almost 180 communities throughout Florida. In response, Congress passed legislation on October 13, 2004, to provide the US Forest Service with grant funds for these communities to mitigate the effect of recent hurricanes and other weather-related events, and to reduce potential damage from future storms. The legislation provided Florida with approximately $13 million for impacted communities, to be administered by the Florida Division of Forestry.

Under the program, applicants can receive 75% cost-share funds for urban tree management activities that have been initiated since October 13, 2004, or will be carried out during the next two years. Activities that have been reimbursed from either FEMA or other state or federal sources are not eligible.

Communities from all counties in Florida are eligible to submit applications. Priority will be given to applicants from areas that sustained the highest winds during the storms, or received damage from more than one storm. Where other factors are equal, smaller municipalities will receive first consideration for these funds. The quality of the proposals submitted will also be evaluated.

Grants, continued page 5

FNGLA Locator Soon to be Available to the Industry

FNGLA has announced the upcoming release of the 2005-2006 FNGLA Locator-the industry's most comprehensive guide to all segments of Florida's unique array of plant and product items. Utilized by the wholesale nursery trade, the FNGLA Locator directs buyers from across the nation to Florida-grown plants and supply items. "The FNGLA Locator is a tremendous marketing tool that provides me expanded reach to potential clients that alone, I simply wouldn't be able to reach, " said Nancy McDonald, President of NGM Productions in Mt. Dora, FL. I know I'm reaching potential new customers simply by being included," added McDonald.

The FNGLA Locator includes a supply directory, a plant directory, a member listings section as well as an expanded Florida regional map section. Inclusion is limited to members of the association. An online version is housed on the association website. Access the FNGLA Locator online! Logon to the FNGLA website at www.fngla.org.

The FNGLA Locator is made available at many industry trade shows in the southeastern United States including the FNATS show in Orlando, the TPIE show in Ft. Lauderdale, the SNA show in Atlanta, the Southeast Greenhouse Conference & Trade Show in Greenville and at many educational conferences including the Great Southern Tree Conference in Gainesville. The printed version of the FNGLA Locator can also be mail ordered. To order, indicate "FNGLA Locator" and send $9.50 to FNGLA at 1533 Park Center Dr., Orlando, FL 32835-5705 or call 800.375.3642.

FNGLA is the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association representing Florida's environmental horticulture industry, with an estimated $9.9 billion in industry-wide sales. Visit the FNGLA website at www.fngla.org

FNGLA Locator

RPG Notes for Growth

by Jack Siebenthaler

A common hope from all of us is this: Summer and Fall of 2005, otherwise known as the hurricane season, will be free of any sort of repeat of the disastrous 2004 season which spawned four disastrous storms. If we should experience a "normal" season during which we may see one or two state-wide hurricanes or severe storms, that will be a great improvement over last year.

So what did we learn and what are we doing about this threat of nature? There are so many lessons which were taught last year. All sorts of seminars, local meetings and bull sessions were held to share information about the needs for storm protection. By sharing other's experiences and suggestions, we all learned much that would help us in the future. Do you know where the notes and publications outlining those hard earned lessons are at this time? Have they been reviewed or are they relegated to a deep drawer?

At the risk of sounding like the boy who cried wolf, it seems only reasonable to remind all of us that we need to resurrect recent memories and exert some "re-training" in order to be a lot better prepared than we were a year ago. O sure! It's easy to say that we'll remember everything that's needed when and if the time comes. But it's not always easy to remember so many details of preparation and prevention. A suggestion would be that a short meeting with key employees would be in order to serve as a reminder of the many details required.

The changes in growing and maintenance practices among RPG members is amazing! In the few years since its inception, our organization has been a source of inspiration to all of us. For those who attend the scheduled meeting of our fine group, the opportunities afforded us to trade ideas and to observe what the other fellow members are doing have been worth much more than the price of admission! A quiet look back over those few years affords a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment that is worth a lot to us. May the next few years provide as much in the way of satisfaction!

Roots Plus News

2005 RPG Field Day a Success; 9th Annual event planned for May 2006

The Annual RPG Field Day on May 12th, 2005 was a huge success once again. Over 170 people were in attendance to learn about many aspects of the tree industry at RPG member nursery Stewart's Tree Service. RPG, ISA and University of Florida Extension are already hard at work planning next years field day. The 9th Annual RPG Field Day will be in May of 2006. Look for more information in the Fall 2005 edition of the RPG Times. Registration brochures will be mailed in Spring 2006. Call 352-528-3880 for more information.

RPG Welcomes New Members!

The Roots Plus Growers Association is still growing! We welcome three new Grower Members, **Huntsman Tree Supplier**, **John Deere Landscapes**, and **The Magnolia Company**. RPG is now 19 grower members and 10 associate members strong. If you are interested in membership or in learning more about the Roots Plus Growers Association, please give us a call at 352-528-3880. For member locations and phone numbers please see page 6.

Sleeve ≠ RPG

Regular buyers of field grown trees are most likely familiar with the black sleeve of weed-cloth like material over the root ball of each tree. This sleeve covers the wire basket after harvest and helps to prevent new roots from taking hold in the ground during the hardening-off period. Please note that though many growers ship trees with these sleeves over the root ball, that does not guarantee that the trees have been hardened off. Be sure to look for the RPG tag on the trees you buy as your guarantee of quality hardened off trees. Trees with a black sleeve does not necessarily mean the trees are RPG.

RPG Sponsors FNGLA Certification Reception at TPIE

Close to 50 FNGLA Certified Landscape Professionals came together during a reception held at the Tropical Plant Industry Exhibition (TPIE) to celebrate a landmark 15 years of existence for the Florida Nursery, Growers & Landscape Association's landscape certifications. In the 15 years since the first exam, FNGLA's certifications have grown from two to four programs and encompass not only landscape contractors, but also technicians and designers. Written exams are available online and field exam sites have grown from one to four across the state. "This is a first-time event that will definately be repeated," said Joe Baglia, FCLC, from Terracon Services in Jupiter, who serves as the FNGLA Certification Committee Chair.

What is hardening-off?

Quality field-grown trees should be hardened-off, or cured, after harvesting. This hardening-off process lasts 3 to 4 weeks and it simply involves providing the tree with optimum irrigation during the few weeks after harvesting. After the tree is hardened off it is ready to ship to the landscape site. New roots that have begun to develop are ready to grow immediately into the landscape. This may sound like a simple idea but research has shown that hardened off field grown trees are a superior performer in the landscape. Research conducted from Florida to Italy continues to confirm that quality field grown trees outperform container grown trees in landscape settings. Research has shown that field grown trees use water more efficiently at planting (need to be watered less), establish faster after planting (start growing in your landscape faster), and when planted with container trees in a situation of limited water or irrigation will have dramatically higher survival rates. All of these results are from peer reviewed research that has been published in various trade journals. For more information on these and other tree education topics please visit the Educational Information portion of our website at www.rootsplusgrowers.org.

Transplanting Tips - Irrigation Requirements

Size of nursery stock	Irrigation schedule for vigor see notes 1,3	Irrigation schedule for survival see notes 2,3,4
< 2 inch caliper	Daily for 2 weeks; every other day for 2 months; weekly until established.	Twice weekly for 2-3 months
2-4 inch caliper	Daily for 1 month; every other day for 3 months; weekly until established.	Twice weekly for 3-4 months
> 4 inch caliper	Daily for 6 weeks; every other day for 5 months; weekly until established.	Twice weekly for 4-5 months

1. Delete daily irrigation when planting in winter. Irrigation frequency can be reduced slightly (e.g. 2-3 times each week instead of every other day) when planting hardened-off, field-grown trees that were root-pruned during production. Establishment takes 3 (hardiness zones 10-11) to 4 (hardiness zones 8-9) months per inch trunk caliper.

2. Irrigation frequency can be reduced slightly (e.g. to once or twice each week) when planting hardened-off, field-grown trees that were root-pruned during production.

3. At each irrigation, apply 2-3 gallons per inch trunk caliper to the root ball. Apply it in a manner so all water soaks into the root ball. Do not water if root ball is wet/saturated on the irrigation day.

4. Trees take much longer to establish than 3-4 months per inch trunk caliper. Irrigate in drought the following summer.

Storm Damage, continued from page 1

the job begun in the nursery of developing structurally sound trees.

The main objective of pruning in the nursery and landscape is to create strong structure by guiding the tree's architecture. You minimize the growth retarding effects of pruning by removing the smallest amount of living tissue at any one pruning, while producing a strong structured, healthy tree with a functional and pleasing form. For most trees, this is accomplished by developing and maintaining a leader early in the life of the tree (one year old is not too soon), and pruning at regular intervals when the tree is young. A regular pruning program prevents branches from growing too big too fast and outpacing the leader.

Branches that grow too big too fast often develop into codominant stems, sometimes with included bark. These weakly attached stems can split from the tree as it grows older. In addition, low codominant stems often have to be removed in the landscape as they droop too close to the ground. This leaves a huge pruning wound that can initiate trunk decay. Nursery and landscape managers can discourage lower branches from developing into codominant stems by pruning on these branches to slow their growth rate. Strive to keep branches less than about half the trunk diameter.

There are three types of pruning cuts designed to develop a strong structure in trees. A reduction cut removes an upright stem back to a live lateral branch no smaller than about half the diameter of the cut stem. A removal cut removes a side branch back to the collar on the trunk. Cutting into the collar could slow growth and slows closure over the wound. Correctly executed removal cuts close in a circle, not an oval. The third type, a heading cut, is made back to a bud or between branches and, along with the reduction cut, is used to slow growth on the cut branch. Heading cuts also initiate sprout growth from behind the cut. Heading cuts are not appropriate for trees in the landscape unless there are few other options such as during restoration pruning following storms.

It is never too early to begin pruning to subordinate or suppress growth on codominant stems. Each time you subordinate a stem or aggressive branch, growth rate is slowed on the cut stem or branch. This allows the stem that was not cut to grow faster and dominate. More light reaches branches that were previously shaded above the cut, and these will grow to fill in the void created by the removed branches. It is important to remember that removal of small branch parts at a young age rarely leaves unsightly voids or gaps in the tree canopy. If you are leaving large gaps you waited too long to prune or you are removing too much of the stem or branch.

In many cases, the reduction cut is the best choice for creating sound structure in young trees, although heading cuts are sometimes appropriate on young trees in the nursery. It is important to learn this technique and to spend enough time with the pruning crews to ensure it is carried through. I find that it is easy for workers to revert back to old habits in a matter of hours following an initial instruction session. Once you have learned the technique, have your employees watch you, then have them prune trees while you are present before sending them on their own.

Grants, continued from page 1

City and county governments, non-profit groups, and educational institutions are eligible to apply for these grants. Funds may be used to carry out practices on county and municipally-owned lands, including parks or natural areas. They may also be implemented on non-federal road and highway rights-of-way.

Eligible management practices include the following:

Inventory and Assessment to determine the degree of canopy loss from the storms, identify individual trees needing either removal or corrective treatments, identify areas needing reforestation or new tree plantings, and provide background information to develop a comprehensive urban forestry recovery and management plan. Reforestation of areas where tree canopy was destroyed.

New Tree Plantings in areas (particularly coastal areas) where tree canopy establishment would buffer the impact of future hurricanes.

Providing Replacement Trees to private homeowners who lost trees during the hurricanes, either through tree give-away or voucher programs. residents can plant these trees along privately maintained rights-of-way, and in common areas in their neighborhood.

Replacing exotic, overmature, and weak-rooted trees with more wind-resistant species.

Exotic Vegetation Control in public parks and natural areas, where these species were spread by the hurricanes.

Corrective Pruning and other cultural practices to remove safety hazards, as well as improve tree health and wind-resistance.

Re-Staking Trees of all sizes that were blown over during one of the storms.

Information and Educational Efforts, including development of written materials, exhibits, CD's, videos, public service announcements, and other materials to educate the public on how to minimize tree damage from storms, and how to react when a storm occurs. Workshops and seminars are also eligible.

The minimum grant application will be $10,000 ($5,000 for non-profit groups) and the maximum will range from $75,000 to $175,000. Larger communities, and those that received the most impact, will receive the higher amounts. Applicants may allocate up to 15% of their grant funds to hire either temporary professional staff or an independent consultant to manage their projects.

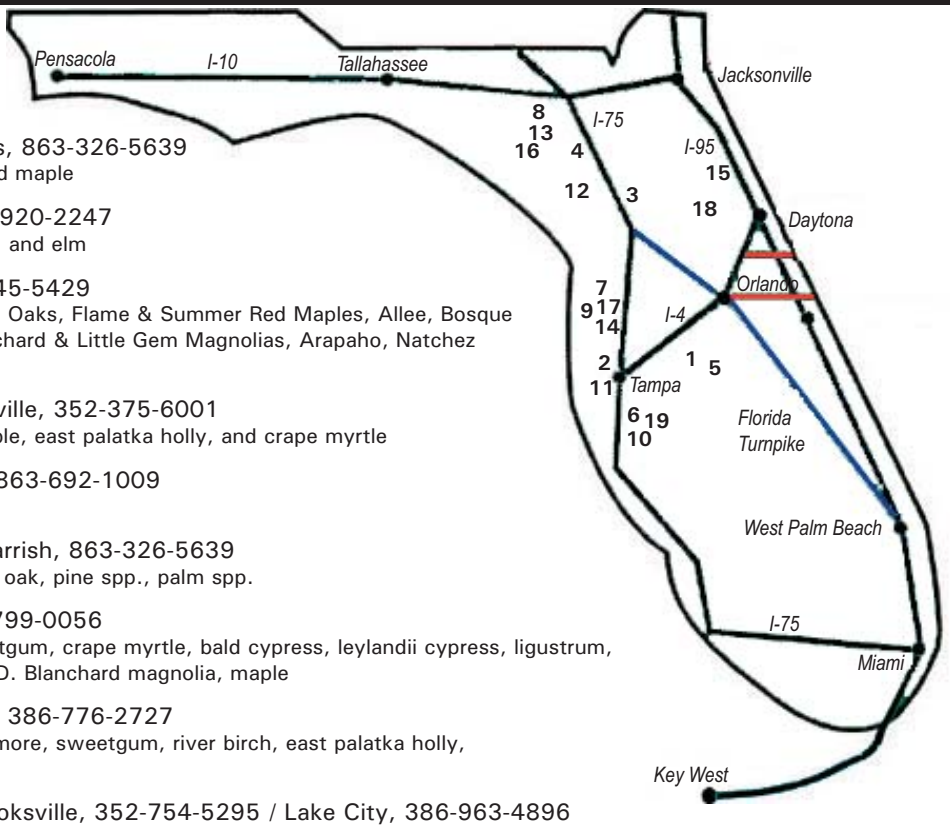
The Request for Proposal must be submitted by 2:00 p.m. on June 30, 2005. extended to July 15, 2005.

A list of counties which received hurricane and tropical storm force winds during each of the four hurricanes is also provided for your reference. This list will be used to help prioritize applications for funding. Applicants are also encouraged to submit their own impact data from local sources to support their applications. Approved projects must be complete no later than September 30, 2007.

For more information contact:

Charlie Marcus
Urban Forestry Coordinator
Florida Division of Forestry
(850) 921-0300
Email: marcusc@doacs.state.fl.us

RPG Grower Members
locator map and available species



1. **Alturas Native Nursery** - Alturas, 863-326-5639
   bald cypress, live oak, laurel oak, red maple
2. **BE-MAC Farms** - Odessa, 813-920-2247
   live oak, pine, sycamore, sweetgum, and elm
3. **Bent Oak Farm** - Ocala, 352-245-5429
   'Cathedral', 'Highrise' & 'Hightower' Oaks, Flame & Summer Red Maples, Allee, Bosque and Drake Elms, Brakens, D.D. Blanchard & Little Gem Magnolias, Arapaho, Natchez and Muskogee crape myrtle
4. **Champion Tree Farm** - Gainesville, 352-375-6001
   live oak, southern magnolia, red maple, east palatka holly, and crape myrtle
5. **D.H. Keen, Inc.** - Lake Wales, 863-692-1009
   live oak, laurel oak
6. **Ellenton Nursery Growers** - Parrish, 863-326-5639
   sycamore, ligsutrum, red maple, live oak, pine spp., palm spp.
7. **FMT Farms** - Brooksville, 352-799-0056
   live oak, laurel oak, sycamore, sweetgum, crape myrtle, bald cypress, leylandii cypress, ligustrum, Bracken Brown Beauty magnolia, D.D. Blanchard magnolia, maple
8. **Fort Drum Growers** - McAlpin, 386-776-2727
   live oak, laurel oak, drake elm, sycamore, sweetgum, river birch, east palatka holly, bradford pear, slash pine
9. **Huntsman Tree Supplier** - Brooksville, 352-754-5295 / Lake City, 386-963-4896
   live and laurel oak; D.D. Blanchard and Claudia Wannamaker magnolia cultivars; bald cypress, red maple, sweetgum, southern red cedar, winged elm and slash pine
10. **John Deere Landscapes** - Parrish, 941-737-2305
    live and laurel oak; east palatka holly; Bracken Brown Beauty, D.D. Blanchard, MigTig, and Claudia Wannamaker magnolia cultivars
11. **Keystone Farms** - Odessa, 813-920-0894
    live oak, ligustrum, variegated ligustrum
12. **Marshall Tree Farm** - Morriston, 800-786-1422
    Cathedral, Highrise and seedling live oak; D.D. Blanchard, Little Gem, Coco and Claudia Wannamaker southern magnolia cultivars; East Palatka, Eagleston and Nellie R. Stevens holly cultivars; Allee, Bosque and Winged Elm; crape myrtle, slash pine, bald cypress, sweetgum
13. **Nature Coast Tree Corp.** - Bell, 386-935-9349
    live oak, ligustrum, holly, 'Highrise' live oak, 'Cathedral' live oak, 'Alta' and 'D.D. Blanchard' magnolia cultivars
14. **OakCo, LLC** - Brooksville, 352-796-3426
    live oak, ligustrum
15. **Skinner Nurseries** - Bunnell, 800-741-2020
    live oak, ligustrum, holly, crape myrtle
16. **Southern Pride Tree Farm** - Bell, 386-935-3636
    live oak, ligustrum, holly
17. **Stewart's Tree Service** - Brooksville, 352-796-3426
    red cedar, live oak
18. **The Magnolia Company** - Barberville, 800-880-4662
    D.D. Blanchard and Little Gem southern magnolia cultivars
19. **Walsh Brokerage** - Parrish, 863-326-5639
    palm spp., live oak, laurel oak, sycamore, pine spp. large specimen material in holly, magnolia

Associate Members

Braun Horticulture

Caretree Systems

Cherokee Manufacturing

General Cordage

Graco Fertilizer Company

Grass Roots Nurseries

Seaworld

Jack Siebenthaler

Sunrise Landscape

Treemart

RPG TIMESline

July 22-23rd, 2005 - Florida Chapter ASLA Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL
For more information contact FC/ASLA at www.flasla.org

August 11-13th, 2005 - Southern Nursery Association (SNA) Trade Show & Conference, Atlanta, GA
For more information contact SNA at www.sna.org

August 19-21st, 2005 - Nursery Landscape EXPO, Dallas, TX
For more information contact TNLA at www.txnla.org or call 800.880.0343

September 29th - October 1st, 2005 - Florida Nursery and Allied Trades Show (FNATS), Orlando, FL
For more information visit www.fngla.org or call 800.375.3642

October 7-10th, 2005 - ASLA Annual Meeting & EXPO, Fort Lauderdale, FL
For more information contact ASLA at www.asla.org

October 23-26th, 2005 - IPPS Southern Region Annual Meeting, Gainesville, FL
For more information visit www.ipps.org/SouthernNA

December 1-2nd, 2005 - Fifth Annual Great Southern Tree Conference, Gainesville, FL
For more information visit www.fngla.org or call 800.375.3642

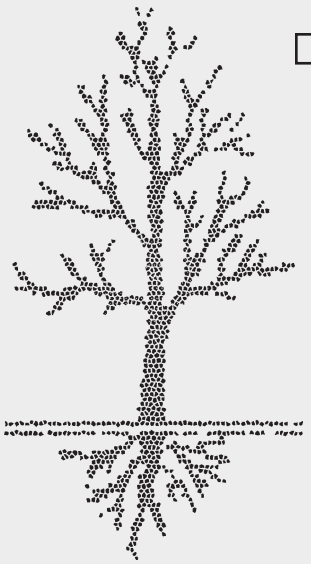
February 3-4th, 2006 - Gulf States Horticultural EXPO, Mobile, AL
For more information visit www.gshe.org or call 334.502.0047

February 24-25th, 2006 - Tampa Spring EXPO, Tampa, FL
For more information visit www.tbwg.org or call 813.655.1914

RPG Information

If you would like more information about the Roots Plus Field-Growers Association of Florida please complete the following and return it to:

Roots Plus Growers
17350 SE 65th Street
Morriston, FL 32668



☐ Please add me to your mailing list

Please send me the following:

☐ Information on RPG Membership ☐ Tree Planting Cue Cards ____ (quantity)

☐ Other_____ ☐ Tree Grading Cue Cards ____ (quantity)

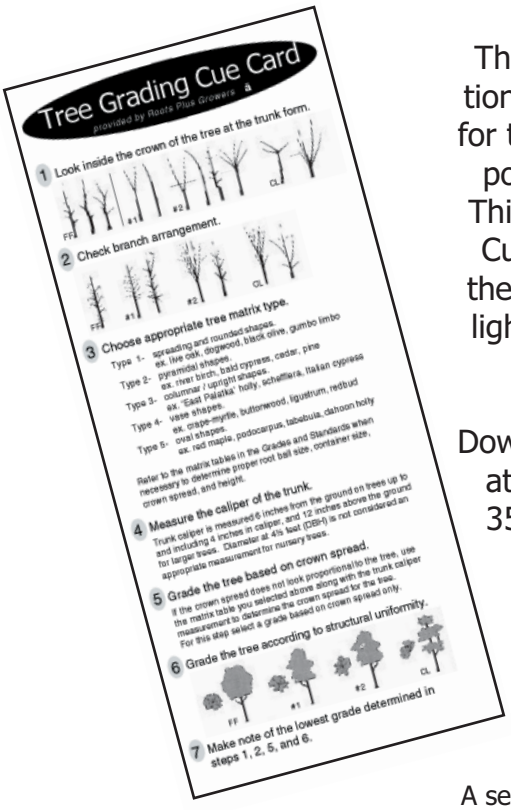
Name _____

Firm _____

Address _____

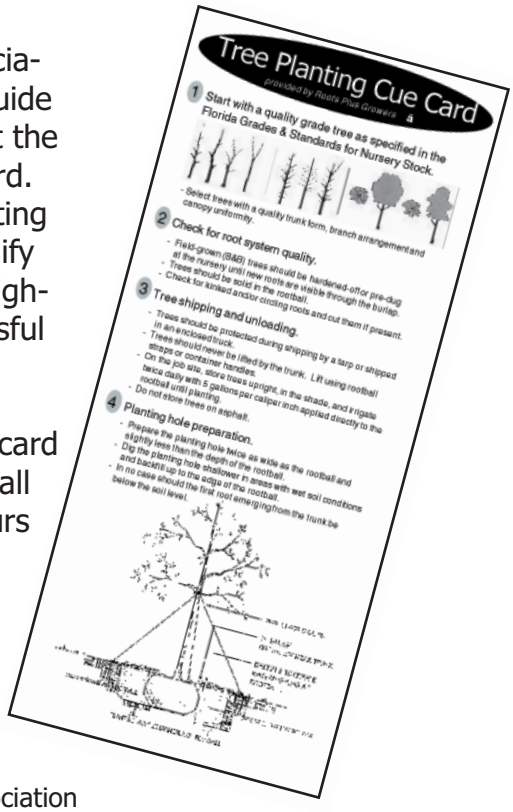
City / State / Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____



The Roots Plus Growers Association has developed a pocket guide for tree planting to supplement the popular Tree Grading Cue Card. This 3x7" laminated Tree Planting Cue Card is intended to simplify the tree planting process by highlighting eight steps for successful transplanting.

Download a copy of each cue card at rootsplusgrowers.org, or call 352-528-3880 to request yours today!



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