



Thinking about distributing Arbor Day tree seedlings this year? If so, below are a few simple tips for the care and distribution of tree seedlings to your students.

A. Prior to distribution of seedlings

Have each student bring a clear plastic bag about the size of a bread wrapper from home.

B. When your seedling box or bag arrives

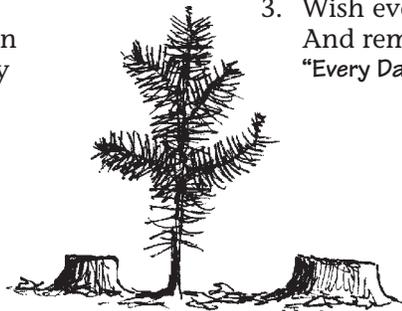
1. Keep your trees cool. Refrigerate your seedlings (34-36 degrees Fahrenheit is ideal). Seedlings are perishable and should be refrigerated until planting time. **DO NOT FREEZE.** Do not store your trees in the sun, in a car trunk, in a heated classroom or other warm place before distributing them to your students.
2. Keep your trees moist. Do not open your sealed bag or box of seedlings. Leaving the bag closed will keep seedlings moist and cool until planting time.

C. At distribution time

1. Package individual seedlings.
 - ✱ Wrap the roots of each seedling in paper towels.
 - ✱ Dip the wrapped area of the seedling in water and place in the plastic bag.
 - ✱ Tie the bag closed above the roots using string, tape or twist ties.
2. Review planting instructions with you students. If children cannot plant their tree the day that they receive it, tell them to place it in the vegetable drawer of their refrigerator until it can be planted. Plant the seedling at approximately the same depth as it grew in the nursery or slightly deeper. Encourage students to plant their seedling as soon as possible. Emphasize that for the seedling to live, its roots must be

kept moist until it is planted. Remind students to select a planting site that will give the seedling room to grow and has correct light conditions.

- ✱ Dig a hole as deep as the root system and about 1 foot wide. (Remind children that the majority of a tree's feeder roots are in the upper six inches of the soil where they compete with grass roots for oxygen, moisture and nutrients. Feeder roots thrive on soil that is loose, moist and fertile – conditions often lacking in soils around homes.)
 - ✱ Remove the seedlings and the paper towel, if used, from the bag and place it in the planting hole. Seedling roots should hang freely in the planting hole and not be crooked, crowded, twisted or bent.
 - ✱ Crumble soil back around the roots and pack the soil gently after planting.
 - ✱ Water your seedling. Water will finish packing the soil around the roots.
 - ✱ Mulch your planting area to a depth of 2 inches and a radius of 9-12 inches. Make sure to pull the mulch away from the seedling's trunk to prevent bark rot.
 - ✱ Remember to water the seedling weekly during dry periods. New trees need the equivalent of 1 to 1.5 inches of rainfall per week during their first year.
3. Wish everyone tree-mendous success! And remind your students that "Every Day is Arbor Day!"



Applications for 4th Grade Arbor Day Free Tree Program are due March 14, 2009

Applications available at

<http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/Nursery/Order/arborday-order.asp>

