

December 4, 2015

RENOVATING OR STARTING WINDBREAKS

A well designed and maintained windbreak can provide many benefits to a farm, home or acreage or maybe you have a future “man-cave” location in mind. Many of the windbreaks in southeastern Nebraska have outlived their usefulness and are in desperate need of renovation and replacement in some cases. There are new places you may want to develop looking to the future. What kind of trees should you plant today now that ash trees and Scots Pine trees are out of the question? In fact, forestry experts recommend that no single species make up more than 10 percent of the entire community forest resource on a farm or acreage. Eastern Red Cedar is still our mainstay for outer rows but inner row conifer species can be Black Hills Spruce, Norway Spruce, Colorado Blue Spruce, Ponderosa Pine, Jack Pine, Eastern White Pine, Concolor Fir or Rocky Mountain Juniper.

There is opportunity that landowners have today to diversify the types of trees that will be on the farm or acreage in the future that are more functional. The old way using the same exact species in large rows is no longer recommended and it took Scots Pine Wilt to remind us of our past ways. That has been a devastating loss for us.

Many times you are money ahead by going with seedlings from the Natural Resources District (NRD) and in 4 to 5 years these trees can catch up to larger trees. With that in mind, you often can observe that large diameter trees balled and burlapped or large container grown trees, due to root shock, will not be off to a fast start. Young, healthy seedling trees begin to catch up.

Our District Forester that some of you met after the devastating tornado in May of 2004 is Steve Karloff. Steve is available to do tree plans by appointment. He also works with windbreak renovation plans and can share his ideas on windbreak renewal. Farmers do an excellent job of knowing what they do best but many do not know about veneer quality walnut, board feet of oak or value of trees. Steve can work with you directly on timber management plans, mark trees that are of value and discuss marketing trees of value. He will list marketable trees in a statewide newsletter that goes out to timber buyers when working with area.

Trees start to become on our mind when the cold north winds come clipping through. Let’s face it, there aren’t enough trees on our Canadian Border! We experience the true value of trees in summer and winter.

Anytime is an excellent time to get to know Steve. His e-mail is skarloff1@unl.edu or give Steve a call directly at (402) 472-3645. A very useful NebGuide can be found at: <http://nfs.unl.edu/documents/windbreakdesign.pdf>

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