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Arbor Day in South Dakota

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ARBOR DAY

in **SOUTH DAKOTA**



APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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28	29	30				

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
 SOUTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

ARBOR DAY

in

SOUTH DAKOTA

by LARRY HELWIG, extension forester, and
DEAN MARTIN, extension horticulturist

An ARBOR DAY Message . . .

My Fellow South Dakotans:

Geographically South Dakota lies in the great heartland of America. The southern one-fourth of the state is in the Central Great Plains area while the remainder of the state is in the area known as the Northern Great Plains.

Our state possess many fine climatic, natural, and human resources. It is a pleasant, healthful, and uncrowded place to live. Many recent developments, particularly the Missouri River with its potential for electric power, irrigation, and recreation, forecast a productive, challenging, and wholesome future for our people.

Trees of our natural forests, as well as tree plantings of all other types, will contribute much to the future economic life and the aesthetic values of our state. We need to be as concerned about our tree population as we are about our human population.

As Governor of South Dakota I commend and encourage all groups and individuals concerned about the wise use of our natural resources to plant trees to tame the plains. With this in mind I strongly endorse Arbor Day and urge its proper observance by all citizens.

It is my hope that this publication will prove useful to people in all the communities of South Dakota concerned with Arbor Day activities.



Nils A. Boe, Governor
State of South Dakota

"Hail South Dakota," "The Sunshine State," "Land of Infinite Variety," "The Shrine of Democracy" . . . these are statements that make one feel good to be living in South Dakota.

make one feel good to be living in South Dakota.

Indeed, South Dakota does possess many features of which we can be proud and which make living here enjoyable. Not the least of these is our wonderful trees—shade trees, fruit trees, windbreak trees, evergreen trees, and forest trees.

In order to insure this enjoyment and resource for future generations, it is the duty of the present generation to plant, protect, and preserve the trees of South Dakota. That's what Arbor Day is all about.

In the botanical sense, *arbor* is another word for tree. Likewise *arboriculture* means tree care, and *arboretum* means a place set aside for growing and studying trees. *A day set aside for the general planting of trees has been designated as Arbor Day.*

History

The idea of Arbor Day or tree planting day originated and was first observed in our neighboring state of Nebraska in 1872.

Under the leadership of its founder, Julius Sterling Morton, over a million trees were planted on the plains of Nebraska that first Arbor Day by the tree-loving pioneers. Since that time the observance of Arbor Day has been adopted by every state in the nation, as well as several foreign countries.

Arbor Day was first observed in Dakota Territory in 1884. In 1947 the State Legislature established by law the last Friday in April as the official Arbor Day. Each year the Governor issues an appropriate proclamation concerning the observance of Arbor Day throughout the state. The same day also has been designated as National Arbor Day.

It has been said that Arbor Day is virtually the only national observance that looks to the future rather than the past. Let's keep it so in South Dakota!

Observance

The goal of Arbor Day activities: *To create an awareness of the values and benefits of trees to mankind and the importance of every citizen doing his part to perpetuate and conserve this great natural resource.*

Arbor Day—or perhaps even an Arbor Week—can be observed by everyone. But, to be successful an



Arbor Day observance needs three things: *good leadership, planning* and *organization*. Usually some adult group or committee can plan the event to involve youth and school children.

ASSISTANCE

Most South Dakota communities have trained people who can advise and assist with Arbor Day observances. Public officials who can help:

- County commissioners
- Mayors
- City managers
- Park officials
- City foresters
- Town officers
- Boards of education

Assistance also may be obtained from these business and community groups:

- Garden clubs
- Service clubs
- Chambers of Commerce
- Newspapers
- Radio and television stations
- Farm organizations
- 4-H clubs
- Future Farmers of America (FFA) and Future Homemakers of America (FHA)
- Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
- Parent-Teachers Association (PTA)
- Church organizations

Cooperators in planning/conducting Arbor Day activities might include:

- The Governor
- State Department of Agriculture
- State and district foresters
- Soil Conservation Service
- County Extension Agent
- Extension forester and extension horticulturist
- Keep South Dakota Green Association
- Farm Forestry Council
- State Garden Club Federation

- State Horticultural Society
- S. Dak. Ornithologists Union
- State Nurserymen's Association and local nurserymen
- Seedsmen
- Florists
- Commercial gardeners
- Botany and biology teachers
- Local tree experts
- Local sportsmen's clubs
- Any persons interested in conservation and natural beauty

PLANNING

Advance Arbor Day planning is important. Don't start a tree planting project that your group can't handle to completion. It might be easier to set up the project in stages, taking several years to complete it. If you are considering an extensive project, contact a professional for assistance in planning.

Pleasant weather usually accompanies Arbor Day, but it can be harassed by inconvenient rains. If this is the case it is quite appropriate to use the days before or after the official day to initiate the tree planting project.

ORDERING TREES

A professional plant materials man can be very helpful, but contact him early enough so trees can be ordered to arrive in time for the planting event. And, if you place an order early you have a better chance to obtain the exact species selected for your project.

Trees can be secured through a nurseryman, district forester, or Soil Conservation Service work unit man.

PROGRAM

An Arbor Day program may open with the reading of the Governor's proclamation* followed by a

*Copies are available from the office of the State Forester, Pierre, South Dakota 57501.

patriotic recitation or song. The poem, "Trees," by Joyce Kilmer, could be included, followed by an explanation of Arbor Day. Initiate the actual planting with an explanation or dedication of the project.

PUBLICITY

Residents of the community will be glad to know about your tree planting project. Contact local news media people—newspapers, radio, and television stations—to explain Arbor Day plans.

Remember . . .

The success of your Arbor Day planting project and future plantings is determined by the *care given the trees after they arrive, planting techniques, and follow-up maintenance.*

If trees arrive too early, store in a cool, damp place. **Do not allow tree roots to freeze.** Always

keep root systems in a moist medium—no tree will do well if the roots are exposed to the sun and drying air for long periods. Evergreen tree root systems are injured by just a few seconds exposure.

Proper planting gets trees off to a good early start. The tree's root system is considered to be the mouth of the plant; spread roots well so they can reach all available moisture and soil nutrients. Tamp soil tightly against the roots to exclude all air pockets. Follow with a thorough watering.

Follow-up maintenance — watering, fertilizing, pruning, and pest control—is another factor to consider when planning the Arbor Day project. Don't plant trees and forget them! It's better to plant 50 trees and give them good care rather than 100 trees and give them poor care. Make arrangements during the planning stage for someone to look after the tree planting for the first several years.

Suggested ARBOR DAY Projects

COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

All over America communities are undertaking tree planting to beautify their locales. South Dakota residents can receive additional benefits from large-scale tree planting in the form of modified temperatures and wind protection.

Planting boulevards, parks, and malls are community beautification projects that might be initiated on Arbor Day. It may take several years to complete a project of this size, so plan accordingly. The ornamental crabs (*Malus* hybrids) and the patented types of thornless and seedless Honey Locust are some of the species suitable for these plantings.

COMMUNITY FOREST

Few places give greater satisfaction in terms of recreation, cooperative effort and pride in common ownership than a community forest. It can serve as a community meeting ground, an outdoor laboratory for students, a site for family outings, a source of sylvan beauty, a haven for peaceful relaxation, and a retreat where a child can spend memorable hours.

Like any worthwhile undertaking a community forest project requires hours of planning, hard work to establish, and early years of maintenance and patience to yield results. A project of this magnitude builds pride within a community, and this

Basic intent of planting, care, and maintenance . . .

Figure 1. Select an area that will provide enough growing space for the selected species.



Figure 2. Avoid shaded areas for the new plantings, if at all possible. Most plants do better with plenty of light.



Figure 3. Dig hole large enough to spread out the root system. Pile good soil on one side, poor soil on the other. Replace good soil.



Figure 4. Place some soil in a coned heap in the bottom of the hole and spread the root system over it to get the proper planting depth.



Figure 5. Replace soil, tamp firmly, and water thoroughly to exclude all air pockets. Don't forget follow-up maintenance! Watering . . . pruning . . . fertilizing . . . pest control . . .



pride grows as the planting becomes more functional.

Since special plans are desirable for this kind of planting, it is best to secure professional or technical assistance.

The community forest may range from a block planting of a few acres to a 200-acre complex. Any or all trees described in Extension Circular 566, "Trees for South Dakota," are suitable.

PUBLIC CHRISTMAS TREES

The Holiday Season in many South Dakota communities is inaugurated by setting up a large evergreen tree for public display. This practice represents quite an annual expense in purchase and transport. Solution: a living Christmas tree.

Select a prominent 25x25 foot area where the state tree, the Black Hills spruce, might be planted. The Colorado blue spruce also is an ideal species for a community Christmas tree.

An evergreen tree between five and ten feet tall is recommended. If balled and burlaped, planted with care, and given close attention the first two years, the tree will have a good chance to survive.

MEMORIAL PLANTINGS

Planting trees to honor a special person or event is a fine idea. Because of their long lives trees record themselves in the traditions of a community and the memories of its people.

People who have made South Dakota or the nation a better place to live or who have dedicated themselves to a service or profession in a community are certainly worthy of a living memorial.

For a memorial planting choose a tree that is hardy and long lived. The bur oak, hackberry, su-

gar maple, pine, spruce, and black walnut qualify as appropriate choices for living memorials.

RECREATION AREAS

An integral part of most South Dakota recreation areas is trees. Without a good tree population a picnic or camping area offers little appeal.

A planting of this type will require professional or technical help if it is to achieve the desired results. Size of the project will depend on resources available. It may involve opening a completely new area, adding to the perimeter of one already established or making a present area more attractive with additional trees.

Species of trees will depend on the recreational use of the area. For example, columnar poplars are suitable for screening, hackberry or ash for shade.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Planting trees to conserve natural resources has contributed extensively to South Dakota's present-day tree population. Field windbreaks conserve soil and moisture. Farmstead and feedlot windbreaks make winter conditions more bearable. Game cover areas planted with trees and shrubs are favorite habitats of deer, pheasants, and grouse.

Conservation tree plantings require definite plans and careful selection of species. Part of the cost of such plantings is shared by state and federal governments. Contact the Soil Conservation Service; Department of Game, Fish, and Parks; or the County Extension Service for information and assistance.

Local sportsmen's groups are especially interested in promoting conservation-type tree planting projects.

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