

Do's and Don'ts in the Nursery Field

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Do think out of the burlap occasionally. Do not do everything the way Granddad had to. There has been some progress in many areas.

Do plant quality liners. Do not plant them too deep.

Do use the correct size transplanter for the liner. Do not cut too many of the fibrous roots from liners to fit the planter.

Do expect some losses each year. Do not ignore crop insurance or FSA.

Do not guess, soil test. Too much can be worst than too little. Do not sidedress all nutrients.

Do stake plants that require it. Do not stake every plant. Do not forget staking the top the 2nd or 3rd year when necessary.

Do gain caliper by leaving lower foliage and branches first few years. Do not ignore the research.

Do use sharp pruners when removing branches. Do not cut branches off too close to the stem, removing the cells that regenerate callus tissue. Leave the branch collar. Research supports this.

Do read pesticide labels. Do not trust your memory. Labels do change.

Do consider buying a cab tractor, a wider rotary cutter, an air blast sprayer, an Enviromist, a device to pick up and load balls. These are labor saving tools. Do not expect to take your money with you.

Do demand quality. Do not accept less. Do not give less. This can apply to liners and everything in your business, as well as life.

Do spray to prevent dogwood borers; flatheaded apple tree borer in maple, oak and cherry liners; lilac borer & banded ash borer in ash liners; seedling damping-off; southern blight on *Malus*; maple shoot boring caterpillar. Refer to the current task calendar, specific handouts or publications to learn the details. Do not gamble.

Do transplant some potted liners in the fall to reduce moisture stress the first summer. Do shake off excess media. Do not gamble, plan to irrigate.

Do spray dormant oil in Feb-March on crops likely to have mites (hemlock, arborvitae, and juniper), adelgid (white pine), aphids (river birch), phylloxera (oak) and scale (euonymus, ash, lilac, mulberry).

Do leave lower leaves and branches to generate more caliper. Do not ignore the research.

Do spray thiophanate methyl (Cleary's 3336) immediately after major pruning to protect the wounds from canker causing diseases, especially when removing lower tree branches.

Do spray preemergence herbicides in the fall or early winter (Nov 1) to keep rows clean thru April. Do not spend more than \$200 per acre to clean up after it has grown knee high.

Do secure pesticides. Do not allow pesticides to get wet or freeze.

Do keep a daily log of activities in a spiral or bound notebook. Do not trust your memory. Useful to look back over in future years.

Do learn soil types before buying land and where to plant dogwood, *Prunus*, white pine, hemlock, arborvitae, etc. Some soil types drain better internally than others. A saturated soil kills roots. Do not gamble. Check for nematodes also.

Do replace filters in respirators and tractor cabs each spring with charcoal filters. It is your life.

Do plant a sorghum-sudangrass hybrid on vacant blocks each summer to increase organic matter. We quit spreading manure.

Do be honest and strive to present a professional image; personally, in the office, at trade shows.

Do protect bareroot plants from drying out. Do not drive them around at 60mph without a tarp.

Do maintain machinery. Change air filters, oil filters and lubricate. It is the life of an engine.

Do remove weeds with a cultivator or disk rather than a roto-tiller. A power tiller damages soil structure and tractors.

Do inoculate clover seed to gain nitrogen. Do not waste the opportunity of gaining 30 to 40 lbs of free nitrogen.

Do place hand-dug B&B plants back in their hole until hauled for protection from dehydration and cold injury.

Do replace the disk blade that throws soil to the row with a smaller diameter blade. Do not bury the roots even more.

Do not plant and immediately cut the plant back. Foliage is required to grow roots. Wait 1 year

Do not allow thistles or any weed to mature and produce a seed crop. Marestail may now be resistant to glyphosate (Roundup)

Do not work wet soil.

Do sweat the little things.

Do avoid plant stress, be prepared to irrigate.

Do protect dogwood seedlings from frost and damping off. Do not gamble.

Do rinse the Enviromist each time it is shut off for 15 minutes, to prevent floating debris from affecting the flow rate later. Clean it monthly & at end of season according to the manual.

Do dig correct size rootballs of sheared conifers. Check the standards.

Do keep an inventory of spare parts, organized so they can be found.

Do keep roadways that run across slopes seeded in fescue (Endophyte-infected) to slow the speed of water run-off and catch soil particles (the roadways become filter strips).

Do build soil any way possible; adding free wood chips for example.

Do space plants to increase their quality: sunlight needs to reach lower branches, lower foliage must be full

Do soil test a few vacant blocks each summer.

Do learn to calibrate the sprayers you operate; do so annually & after replacing the pump

Do consider applying a controlled release fertilizer Feb-March, 1 time/year. Reduce labor, better growth during droughts.

Do visit the Middle Tenn Nursery web site to learn fertilizer rates per plant. While there see what other handouts are available

Do attend educational programs, take the foreman or send him next year

Do plan what labor will do the next hour, tomorrow, next week, etc. Ensure labor will have the tools and products to perform the tasks (E.g. – pruners, sprayers, fertilizer, measuring cups & spoons, stakes, tape gun, staples)

Do consider a web page

Do find a back-up source of all your inputs in case of business failure: (E.g. – baskets, burlap, but especially liners) Begin to buy from multiple sources, scatter your eggs.

Do advertise in the Tenn Nursery & Landscape Assoc's Buyer's Guide

Do use the Tennessee Nursery Buyer's Guide when revising your catalog for the most accurate plant nomenclature, spelling, etc

Do scout for pests and determine the economic threshold before spraying

Do practice IPM (integrated pest management)

Do begin with a quality, disease free liner; with a good root system

Do maintain records of pesticide applications

Do keep pesticides secure and protected from getting wet or freezing

Do calibrate all pesticide application equipment frequently.

Do dispose of pesticide containers according to label instructions

Do prevent erosion

Do install a backflow prevention valve on the irrigation system if using utility or well water.

Comm/Field/Do's & Don'ts in Field Nsy