

Westlock County Tree Makers Shelterbelt Program 2026

Tree Descriptions

Acute Willow

- Very fast growing (6+ ft) under good growing conditions
- Will grow in a multi-stemmed habit to create a thick windbreak
- Low maintenance
- Max height 12m (40ft), spread 11m (35ft)
- Seedling size: 18-50cm



Black Hills White Spruce

- Cold tolerant
- Compared to other spruce species it is more compact, dense and have a conical form, making it more suitable for smaller spaces
- Max height: 25 meters (82ft), spread 4m (12ft)
- Seedling size: 12-35 cm



Colorado Blue Spruce

- Slow growing but once established are one of the best shelterbelt trees available
- Salt intolerant, be wary of planting near roads!
- Make great accent trees
- Max height: 27 meters (90ft), spread 6m (20ft)
- Seedling size: 12-35 cm



Common Lilac

- Blooms early-mid June
- Establishes and grows very quickly
- Moist, well-drained soils
- Profuse suckering
- Max height: 5m (16ft), spread 3.5m (12ft)
- Seedling size: >10 cm



American Elm

- Grows quickly in its early years
- Its unique undress shaped canopy makes it a nice accent tree
- Can tolerate poor soil conditions
- Tall tree at maturity. Often planted in a row alongside country driveways
- Max height: 30m (98ft), spread 15m (50ft)
- Seedling size: >15 cm



Golden Willow

- Fast growing (multiple feet per year) under good growing conditions
- Yellow branches provide color in the winter months
- Cannot tolerate drought
- Max height 15m (50ft), spread 15m (50ft)
- Seedling size: 18-50cm



Green Ash

- Fast growing
- Bright yellow leaves in the fall
- Is tolerant to a variety of soils including compacted or alkaline soils
- Very drought and cold tolerant
- Max height 18m(60ft), spread 12m (40ft)
- Seedling size >15cm



Hazelnut

- Valuable to both humans and wildlife, the edible nut of this shrub appear in the fall
- Will form thickets if allowed to grow naturally
- Fall coloring ranges from orange to burgundy
- Max height: 2.4m (8ft), spread 1.8m (6ft)
- Seedling size: >15cm



Lodgepole Pine

- Well suited for our climate and growing conditions. Very cold tolerant
- Provincial tree of Alberta
- Does well in poor soils, but cannot tolerate standing water
- Fast growing for a conifer
- Max height: 30m (98ft), spread 6m (20ft)
- Seedling size: 8-27cm



Okanese Hybrid Poplar

- One of the very best shelterbelt trees
- Grows very fast, is drought and cold tolerant, disease resistant
- Does not produce “fuzz” in the spring
- Max height: 18m (59ft), spread 8m (26ft)
- Seedling size: 15-50cm



American Plum

- A very hardy tree fruit bearing tree
- Is an excellent pollinator species for hybrid varieties sold at greenhouses
- Covered in beautiful white blossoms in the spring
- Max height: 5m (15ft), spread 4m (12ft)
- Seedling size: >15cm



Saskatoon Berry

- A native species, this shrub is hardy and dependable for berry growth
- White flowers in the spring
- Can tolerate a variety of growing conditions, for best berry production plant in areas with plenty of organic matter and in well drained soils
- Max height: 3m (10ft), spread 2.4m (8ft)
- Seedling size: >12cm



Scots Pine

- A very hardy tree
- Makes a good shelterbelt tree as well as an accent tree
- Has distinctive orange, flaky bark
- Prefers dryer soil, will not tolerate un-drained sites
- Max height: 15m (49ft), spread 5m (15ft)
- Seedling size: 8-27cm



Sea Buckthorn

- Nitrogen fixing shrub, will adapt to and improve a variety of soils
- Looks most attractive if grown in a hedge. Will sucker.
- Pale silvery-green leaves, but has large thorns. Orange berries are edible
- Drought tolerant once established
- Max height: 4m (12ft), spread 3m (9ft)
- Seedling size: >18cm



Ussurian Pear

- Very cold hardy species
- Mostly ornamental, however fruit can be juiced or canned. More edible varieties can be grafted onto this tree and it acts as a pollinator for greenhouse varieties of pears.
- Covered in white flowers in the spring and has fall coloration of reds and golds
- Max height 10m (33ft), spread 8m (26ft)
- Seedling size: >12cm



White Birch

- Fast growing, makes an excellent shelterbelt or accent yard tree
- Tolerates a while variety of soils but really thrives in rich, loamy soil
- Can survive in a variety of soil moisture conditions
- Requires full sun
- Max height: 18m (60ft), spread 11m (35ft)
- Seedling size: 18-50cm



Planting for Pollinators

Did you know: Alberta is home to over 200 native bees! They are heroes of the plant world, studies indicate they do 4x more pollinating compared to the domestic European honey bee!

There has been a lot of discussion around the declining number of pollinators and the factors contributing to that loss. It has brought awareness to the ecological services pollinators provide us with and has shown us how much the agriculture and food industry relies on these insects. We can take action to help pollinators, and we can promote native plant biodiversity at the same time!

By purchasing a “Planting for Pollinators” package, you are providing a food source for native insects and the benefits of planting native species will bring a unique beauty to your yard.

Each package contains: 3 Wolf Willow, 3 Canada Buffaloberry, 3 Pin Cherry, 3 Pussy Willow, 3 Red elderberry and seeds from a variety of native flower species. \$32/package



Hemp Squares

- The main reason we see tree establishment fail is lack of weed control
- Seedlings start out small and if vegetation is not controlled around where they are planted grass and weeds outcompete them for sunlight and moisture, leading to tree death or poor growth
- Hemp squares are biodegradable, from our trials we expect them to provide mulching cover for 2-3 growing seasons
- These squares are produced in Alberta and the hemp is sourced from western Canadian agricultural producers
- Sold in bundles of 5- \$3.75/bundle



Plastic Mulch Applicator To Rent

Putting in a large shelterbelt?

Consider using plastic mulch!

Plastic mulch is available for sale (\$175.00 for 1500ft roll,) and the plastic mulch applicator to rent (\$100/use).

Reasons to consider utilizing plastic mulch:

- Suppresses weeds and grass for easier maintenance
- Hold moisture in the soil, requiring less watering
- Warms the soil faster in the spring so the trees start growing sooner →



This equipment and mulch is in high demand! **YOU MUST RESERVE IT IN FAR IN ADVANCE.**

To reserve, or to learn more please contact Chelsea at 780-284-9975



Have a tree planting project you'd like to undertake? The ALUS program is here to help agricultural producers by providing expertise, resources, and direct financial support to farmers and ranchers to help build nature-based solutions on their land to deliver ecosystem services to sustain agriculture, help build community resilience, and combat biodiversity loss for the benefit of future generations.

- Shelterbelt establishment along field edges
- Planting riparian vegetation along creeks/ wetlands/ rivers
- Wildlife planting for forage and habitat corridors
- Creating pollinator foraging and hibernation

If you'd like to learn more, please call Lisa at 780-674-8069 or email lcarrd@countybarrhead.ab.ca

