

Finding American elm seedlings for planting

On large restoration projects, USDA Forest Service Eastern Region Watershed Forester Ryan Toot and Carolyn Pike, USDA Forest Service Forest Regeneration Specialist recommends planting a northern source of American elm. Some of these will die as a result of Dutch elm disease (DED) but some may be resistant to DED and live.

If you are wanting to plant Dutch elm disease resistant elms seek native elm selections and crosses. Avoid planting the hybrid Asian elms. While Asian elm crosses have resistance to DED, introducing trees that have genes from Asian sources might be viewed as introducing species that have the potential to become invasive.

Native elm selections and crosses include, but are not limited to: Princeton, Prairie Expedition, New Harmony, and St Croix. The latter is a Minnesota selection of American elm made by Mark Stennes, a naturalist from northeastern Minnesota. See the University of Minnesota website on [Dutch elm disease resistant elm trees](#).

Linda Haugen and Susan Bentz, 2016, USDA Forest Service provide more information in a paper [American Elm Clones of Importance in Dutch Elm Disease Tolerance Studies](#). Descriptions of each clone and suggestions as to where the tree is available are listed.

When buying these trees it may be less expensive and make finding them easier if you ask for liners, trees grown for distribution to nurseries to grow into container sized or balled and burlapped stock. Liners are often sold bare root. A minimum number or minimum order size may be required, so it may be helpful to coordinate placing orders with neighbors.

Summary, it is better to plant the American elm you can get than to wait to find disease resistant elm.

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