



# **KAHNKE BROTHERS TREE FARM**

10603 Boone Road • Plato, MN 55370 • (320) 238-2572 • [www.kahnkefarm.com](http://www.kahnkefarm.com) • Open SATURDAYS: 5/1–11/1

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Here are some tips to help make your new tree feel at home!

- 1) Prepare your tree for planting. Remove all twine and shrink wrap from the rootball. Bend or cut back the wire loops that fold over the top of the rootball. This will allow you to cut the burlap off the top of the rootball, just as if you were removing the top of a muffin. Doing so prevents the burlap from wicking moisture away from the tree. The rest of the basket and burlap may be left intact.
- 2) Dig a hole that is at least 1-½ times the width of the rootball and a couple of inches more shallow. An inch or two of the rootball should be visible above ground when the tree is planted to account for settling. Planting too deep can be fatal to the tree over time.
- 3) Reserve the soil you remove when you dig your hole. Place it in or on a wheelbarrow or tarp. If you have well-balanced soil, back fill with that alone. If your soil is mostly sand or clay, mix 1 part peat moss with 3 parts of the existing soil and fill in with that. The medium the tree is planted in should be as close as possible to what it encounters beyond the prepared area.
- 4) **MULCH.** Mulch insulates and protects the tree's root system. It helps keep the soil temperature and moisture level consistent. Mulch reduces root competition from weeds and groundcovers. It also protects the tree from mechanical damage caused by mowers and weed whips. After mulch is applied, run your hand around the trunk of the tree to create space between it and the mulch. This will prevent mold growth that often results when mulch comes in direct contact with the trunk.
- 5) Water thoroughly and immediately. Saturate the entire rootball whenever you water. Then allow the soil to dry out a bit before watering again. Roots grow deeper in search of water. Avoid frequent, shallow irrigation; as this can eventually lead to root rot. There is no set amount of water or interval of time that you can go by. Pay attention to the weather and water more often when it is hot, dry or windy. Cut back the frequency of irrigation when temperatures cool and leaves drop. Be sure to saturate the ground right before it freezes.
- 6) Avoid the temptation to fertilize right away. Wait until the tree is dormant in late fall or actively growing in spring to apply a slow-release fertilizer. It is usually best to allow the tree to establish for a year or two before applying any food. After that, let the tree tell you if it is hungry. Abnormally slow growth and off-color foliage are indicative of nutrient deficiencies. Remember, it may take several years for a tree to recover from transplant shock and begin growing at its normal rate.
- 7) Apply a rigid, white, tree wrap in late fall to protect your tree from sunscald and frost cracking. This type of wrap can also effectively prevent rodent damage. Make sure the wrap is loose-fitting or porous so that the tree can breathe and mold doesn't develop. Remove the wrap when leaves unfurl in spring and temperatures begin to stabilize.