

September 2007

From the Big Dog

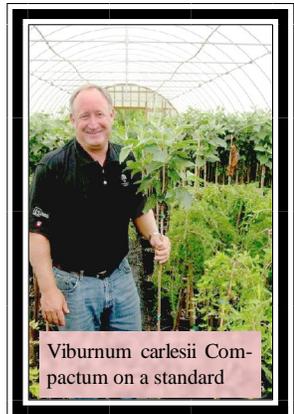


A while back we read a quote that hit home:

“Produce more of the plants people want to buy and less of the plants that are no longer of interest.”

Simple, but right on. At Robinson Nursery we continue to explore new varieties and re-evaluate old ones. We want to grow the plants that will help your business thrive.

Thank you for your business and have a great fall! Rick



Container Trees

Let's face it. Some plants transplant better bare root than others. And some plants transplant very poorly. The bare root industry has struggled for years with this problem, but some trees are just stubborn.

Robinson Nursery was hearing from customers that they preferred to plant some of these stubborn plants from containers in the fall. Fall planted materials loose no roots in the transplant process and begin to become established before winter. In spring they take right off. Customers reported that a 4' whip in a container, fall planted, would catch up with a spring planted branched tree in three years. They also said they had no transplant losses.

We decided to try a #3 container program. Three years ago we installed an acre container yard and started potting up trees. Last year we added another acre. This year we built a potting/ machinery building and added another

acre. Container growing was new to all of us and early on we found out that, as with any new process, you learn by making mistakes. We've made our share and learned from them, and had enough successes to drive us on.

One decision we made last year was to use air pruning pots for production. One of the perennial complaints about container grown trees is encircling roots. Trees, being vigorous growers, tend to send these roots around and around the pot. Even when these roots are cut off at planting time, the result is often a poor root system and eventually a failed tree. And besides, cutting off the roots defeats what you were trying to do in the first place.

Air pruning pots stop the root from circling and forces secondary roots to grow. The secondary roots stop when they hit the air and tertiary roots are forced. The result is an extremely fibrous root system

that will grow like gangbusters when planted in soil a larger container.

Not all of our container trees are in air pots, but we are quickly working toward that goal.

The tree industry is in a state of change. Fraxinus are quickly going away; Crabs have been down for a long time; Red Maples have been over-produced. Tilia, Quercus and Ulmus seem to be filling the void. Unfortunately, Quercus and Ulmus are two of the 'stubborn' transplants. For this reason, Robinson has decided to do half our Oak production and all of our Elm production in air pruning containers. We are also doing Koelreuteria, Liquidambar cvs, Liriodendron and L. Arnold, Magnolia virginiana and 'Moonglow'®, Nyssa, Oxydendron, Stewartia, Styra and Taxodium cvs.

We hope by offering you this alternative, your transplanting problems will disappear and you will be more profitable.

Immigration Migraine or Mexican Stand Off

The Far West Show is over, summer planting continues and the days grow shorter. One of the main subjects of conversation at the show this year was immigration. Everyone had concerns and no one had solutions. Our owner, a hardy Republican, was heard to ques-

tion whether the Republicans were still on our side.

Congress is of course on vacation and will obfuscate and polymander when they return. The President says he wants to sign a bill, but that's easy to say when you can be sure that no bill is forthcoming.

Now, surprisingly, the AFL-CIO has stepped up, but it's likely to be only a temporary respite. Powerful men want these people gone. We can't fathom why.

We suspect it's best to get ready for some interesting times.