



Florida Arbor Day

Florida Arbor Day Emphasizes the Role of Trees in Florida's Commitment to Clean Air and Environmental Preservation

Arbor Day is a nationally-celebrated observance that promotes the benefits of trees in the urban environment and encourages tree planting and care. Arbor Day was the creation of Julius Sterling Morton of Nebraska, and first took place in 1872. Morton served as President Grover Cleveland's Secretary of Agriculture, improving agricultural techniques throughout the United States. Nearly one hundred years later, in 1970, President Richard Nixon proclaimed the last Friday in April as National Arbor Day. However, individual states conduct their own Arbor Day celebrations at various times of the year. Florida is first to celebrate Arbor Day each year (along with Louisiana), on the third Friday of January.

Florida celebrates Arbor Day in January because many trees are dormant (not actively growing) and lose less water through transpiration (evaporation of water from leaves) this time of year, making them easier to transplant without putting them through too much stress. In celebration of Florida's Arbor Day, citizens are encouraged to do their part in helping to reduce air pollution, conserve energy, and beautify the State of Florida by planting trees. Planting native trees protects the environmental balance and beauty of the Sunshine State by preventing the spread of invasive plants and offsetting some of the potential impacts of climate change.



Cabbage Palm
Sabal palmetto

The Cabbage Palm is Florida's State Tree and is featured on the seal of Florida's State flag.

Caring for your Tree:

- Even the healthiest trees planted in the most ideal circumstances need a substantial amount of time, care and particularly, proper irrigation, to become established in the landscape.
- Irrigation is especially important in Florida and establishment will occur more rapidly when irrigation is supplied in correct quantity and frequency. Frequent irrigation benefits the transplanted tree more than large volumes of water infrequently applied.
- The establishment period for your tree is between 4 and 8 months. If supplemental irrigation is halted too soon, or if it's not applied often enough, the tree may die. Please use the following irrigation schedule as a guide for establishing your tree: Daily for 2 weeks, every other day for 2 months, twice weekly for 2-3 months, then weekly until established.
- Because your tree was planted in poorly-drained soil, a set irrigation schedule may be impractical. Instead, monitor the site for changes in moisture levels caused by rainfall. In the first few months after planting, do not skip an irrigation because of rainfall, unless it measures over one inch. Essentially, the root balls of newly planted trees must not be allowed to dry out, nor must they be saturated.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your newly planted tree, please contact:

Alicia Lamborn, Baker County Horticulture Extension Agent at (904) 259-3520