

# 25 Million Trees Toolkit for Arbor Day 2025



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

The [25 Million Trees by 2033 Initiative](#) is encouraging New Yorkers to plant trees and expand forests to improve the health of communities and mitigate the impacts of climate change. DEC is encouraging New Yorkers to record every tree planted in the State's [Tree Tracker](#).

## Key Messages

**Every tree counts.** All trees planted since Jan. 1, 2024, count toward New York's goal to plant 25 million trees by 2033. DEC encourages all New Yorkers to record trees they plant via the [Tree Tracker](#), which updates the statewide [dashboard](#) in real-time.

**Trees make communities stronger.** New York's trees and forests provide multiple benefits to the environment, communities, and economy of New York State.

- **Enhancing Our Ecology.** Trees and forests enhance biodiversity, provide wildlife habitat, protect rare and endangered species, and improve soil health. Trees help protect communities during extreme weather events. Trees protect watersheds and greatly enhance stormwater resilience by reducing erosion and taking rainfall up into their roots.
- **Improving Our Economy.** Trees and forests provide jobs for thousands of people through the forest products economy, outdoor recreation, and tourism. Trees are a renewable resource that support NYS's bioeconomy through wood products. New York's forest products industry employs 41,000 people, with a direct economic impact of \$13.1 billion annually. Trees also enhance property values, calm traffic, and increase economic activity in commercial areas. Trees lower air temperatures and reduce building energy use through shading and cooling.
- **Benefitting Our Society.** Trees improve public health and wellbeing. Studies show spending time near trees can reduce stress, improve academic outcomes and physical well-being, improve healing after surgery, and boost brain development in children. Studies show that childhood asthma rates are lower for those living in high-tree canopy neighborhoods. Trees absorb and capture air pollutants, including particulate matter, which can be present in urban areas at higher levels, especially near roadways.

**Trees fight climate change.** Trees are a cost-effective, nature-based solution to help New York State achieve its climate goals. New York State's forests contribute to climate resiliency through capturing and storing carbon as well as through wood products.

- **Promoting Equity.** Tree canopy tends to be lower in disadvantaged communities. Tree planting is an important strategy to work towards the equitable distribution of forest benefits in areas that are disproportionately impacted by environmental challenges, including extreme heat and air pollution.
- **Banking Carbon.** Through photosynthesis, trees sequester and store carbon from the air, removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. Right now, New York State's forests capture and store carbon from the atmosphere—a process called carbon sequestration—helping reduce pollution from this greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.
- **Reducing Extreme Heat.** Trees reduce the amount of heat trapped in urban landscapes, known as the heat island effect, by cooling air through evapotranspiration. Trees can lower ground temperatures by up to 25 degrees Fahrenheit by providing cooling shade.

## Promotional Resources

DEC is encouraging partners planting trees to use the 25 Million Trees initiative's Tree Tracker to record new plantings. [View promotional materials in our Resources Corner](#). For questions regarding promotional materials, [email DEC's Division of Lands and Forests](#).

- [Tree Tracker Card \(PDF\)](#)

- Perfect for plant giveaways and nursery sales, DEC can provide Tree Tracker cards for each seedling to ensure the landowner adds your stock to the Tree Tracker after they plant it.
- Each 3x5” card has a QR code that sends the user directly to DEC’s Tree Tracker to input tree planting information and count toward the statewide total.
- [Request physical cards.](#)
- **25 Million Trees Initiative Promotional Materials**
  - [Request stickers](#) with 25 Million Trees logo.
- **DEC Arbor Day Poster and Print Products**
  - Each year the public is invited to submit photography and/or artwork to be considered for the New York State Arbor Day Poster.
  - Posters, bookmarks, and postcards are distributed by DEC, community organizations, regional DEC Offices, the New York State Fair, and Arbor Day celebrations in Tree City USA communities.
  - For more information [visit the DEC website.](#)

## How to Get Involved

### Organize a Tree Planting Event

Use the resources below to plan a tree planting project in your community. Consider who is going to be involved, where the tree will be planted, what you need on the day of your tree planting, and how to care for the newly planted trees.

It is important to plant the right tree in the right place. Consider site conditions such as soil, sunlight, water availability, and utilities when selecting species to ensure trees have the space and conditions needed to thrive.

[View the webpage calendar](#) to find upcoming tree planting events.

To spread awareness about your event, [submit your planting event to the statewide 25 Million Trees Initiative calendar](#). Make sure to include details including where and when your event is, if you need volunteers, and what planting tools and materials you would like volunteers to bring. Include a sign-up or RSVP link.

Check out these resources to learn more about tree planting and care:

- [How to Plant a Tree](#)
- [Arbor Day](#)
- [New York State Urban Forestry Council](#)
- **Cornell Cooperative Extension:** [Northeastern Tree Planting & Reforestation Guide \(PDF\)](#)
- **USDA Forest Service & Green Infrastructure Center:** [Tree Planting and Tree Planting Campaigns Reforestation Guide for Cities and Towns \(PDF\)](#)
- [Celebrate Arbor Day Planning Guide \(PDF\)](#)
- **Trees Forever:** [Successful Tree-Planting Projects and Events \(PDF\)](#)
- **New York Restoration Project:** [Tree Care Guide \(PDF\)](#)
- **Penn State Extension:** [Tree Planting Checklist for Youth](#)
- **California ReLeaf:** [Tree Planting Event Toolkit](#)
- **ReTree Schenectady:** [Successful Volunteer Tree Planting Projects \(PDF\)](#)

### Find Your Trees

- **DEC’s Colonel William F. Fox Memorial Saratoga Tree Nursery:** The Tree Nursery offers an [annual spring seedling sale](#) to buy New York-grown tree and shrub seedlings for a low cost. The spring 2025 seedling sale runs until May 14.
- **National Center for Reforestation, Nurseries and Genetic Resources (RNGR) Tree Nurser Database:** The Forest Service’s RNGR hosts the National Reforestation & Restoration Directory. [Visit the directory](#) to find nurseries in New York State that support the propagation of trees and native plants. To add your nursery to the directory, [email RNGR](#).

- **NYS Department of Agriculture and Market’s Nursery Growers and Greenhouse List:** This [list of certified Nursery Growers and Greenhouses](#) is organized by county.

## Record Your Tree Plantings in the Tree Tracker

[Record tree plantings in the statewide Tree Tracker](#) to make sure your trees count toward the 25 Million Trees by 2033 goal. For volunteer and large-scale events, elect a “Tree Tracker Team Leader” responsible for recording the trees planted during your tree planting project. Make sure you only count your trees once.

- For giveaways and events that individuals will plant a tree on their own, use the QR code below to encourage reporting. The QR code takes the user to the Tree Tracker webpage.



## Tree Tracker FAQ

### Can tree planting data be backdated, and to what year?

Yes! Any tree planted since January 1, 2024 can be entered and counts toward the 25 Million Trees goal.

### Which species count?

Trees of all species and all sizes (from seedlings to larger caliper trees) count toward the 25 Million Trees goal. If you’re unsure if the species you are planting is a tree or shrub, consult the list of species including in the Tree Tracker or [email DEC’s Division of Lands and Forests](#).

### We plant a lot of trees every year. Is there a way for my organization to enter bulk data for the Tree Tracker?

DEC is working on a bulk upload option. For now, organizations with large-scale planting projects (like State agencies, municipalities, and not-for-profits) are encouraged to [email DEC](#) to determine the best strategy for recording large tree plantings.

### Are you tracking tree mortality, harvests, or land conversion?

The 25 Million Trees Initiative is focused on tracking tree planting. New York State’s tree cover and associated forest data is measured by the U.S. Forest Service [Forest Inventory and Analysis](#) (FIA) program every few years. The most recent FIA data indicates that as of 2022, 62% of the state is covered by forest, a 1% decrease from 2018.

## Downloadable Graphics and Logo

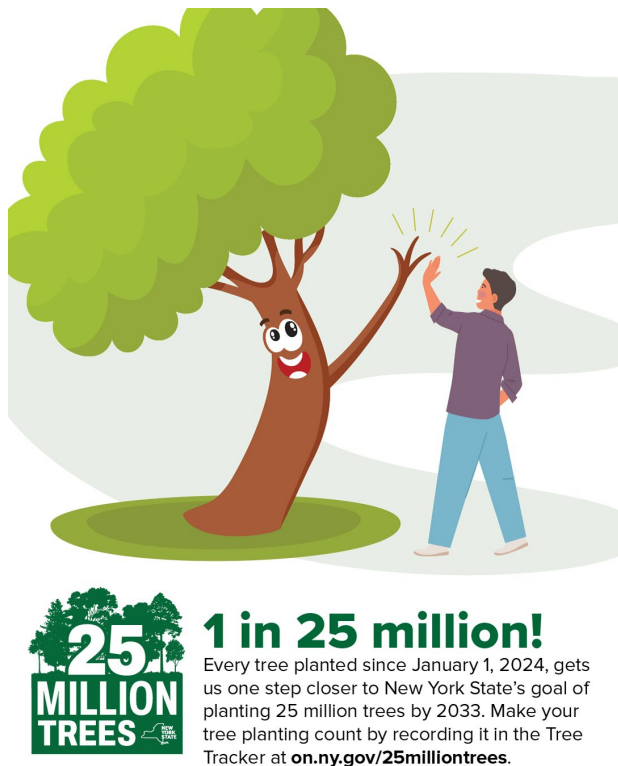
Download shareable graphics from the [Resources Corner](#) on the 25 Million Trees Initiative webpage that can be used in social media posts, newsletters, webpages, and other digital channels.

### [25 Million Trees Initiative Logo:](#)



## Social Media Graphics:

[1 in 25 million tree graphic \(PNG\)](#)



[Tree benefits graphic \(PNG\)](#)



## Sample Social Media Copy

The below media posts are organized into different categories (general public, organizations, schools, municipalities). Please modify the language to best meet the needs of your organization or business.

### General Public:

🌿 *This Arbor Day/season, make every tree count! New York State's planting project is helping reach the goal of planting 25 million trees statewide by 2033. See New York's planting progress in the statewide map and add the trees you planted this year to the Tree Tracker: [on.ny.gov/25milliontrees](https://on.ny.gov/25milliontrees)*

#25MillionTreesNY

### Partners, Volunteers, and Organizations:

🌿 *Our organization is making New York healthier, greener, and stronger this Earth Week. Our tree planting project contributes directly to New York State's goal to plant 25 million trees by 2033. See our tree plantings in the statewide map, add the trees you planted this year, and for more information visit: [on.ny.gov/25milliontrees](https://on.ny.gov/25milliontrees)*


#25MillionTreesNY

### Schools and Youth Organizations:

🌿 *Studies show that being near trees can improve academic outcomes, boost brain development in children, and reduce stress. The trees our school planted this year are helping improve the lives of our students, and count toward New York's goal to plant 25 million trees by 2033. See our planting project in the statewide map and add the trees you planted this year using DEC's Tree Tracker: [on.ny.gov/25milliontrees](https://on.ny.gov/25milliontrees)*

#25MillionTreesNY

## Tree City USA:

 We are proud to be a Tree City USA. This Arbor Day/season, every tree planted will count toward New York State's goal to plant 25 million trees by 2033. If you've planted a tree in the last year, or plant one this Arbor Day/season, add them to the statewide Tree Tracker and see our progress in the interactive map: [on.ny.gov/25milliontrees](https://on.ny.gov/25milliontrees)

#25MillionTreesNY

## Tree Planting and Care Instructions

This simple tree planting and care sheet can be printed or shared at events to help cover the planting basics: [Planting and Caring for Your Trees Fact Sheet \(PDF\)](#)

## Use 25MT to Promote Your Business or Organization

The 25 Million Trees Initiative is a campaign that anyone can get involved in. Promotional materials and digital tools are dynamic ways to engage your customers and members and tie your business or organization to the larger statewide initiative. Some ideas to get you started include:

- Hand out Tree Tracker cards at the checkout counter of your nursery with each purchase of a seedling.
- Host a raffle that uses Tree Tracker confirmation emails as “tickets” for trees and other prizes.
- Have customers post a picture of the seedling purchased from your nursery and tag your social media handle for a chance to win a gift certificate.

[Email DEC](#) if you are interested in collaborating further.

## Find us @NYSDEC on Social Media

## Press Releases

- [Governor Hochul Announces Actions to Plant 25 Million Trees, Safeguard Clean Water and Protect Our Lakes - January 9 ,2024](#)
- [Governor Hochul Announces Launch of New 25 Million Trees Initiative 'Tree Tracker' - February 5, 2025](#)
- [DEC Kicks Off Spring Planting Season and Encourages New Yorkers to Plant Trees in Lead-Up to Arbor Day](#)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Division of Lands and Forests

625 Broadway

Albany, NY 12233

Phone: [518-402-9405](tel:518-402-9405)

[landsforests@dec.ny.gov](mailto:landsforests@dec.ny.gov)