



Grower's Guide

Receiving Startlings –Keep the startlings in a partially shaded protected area for 3 to 5 days before planting. This lets them get over any shock from shipping and allows the bark to harden. Do not place the cell trays/containers on the dirt or grass. Elevate the cell trays/containers and make sure that the water freely flows from the container to prevent root rot. You may need to water the containers morning and evening if temperatures are above 80°.

If the startling was broken off during shipment, cut the stem to about ½ inch above the soil level. Leave the root ball in the startling tray. It will take approximately 10-14 days to regenerate new growth. What you will see when the tree regenerates are several sprouts growing alongside the original trunk. Let the growth get about 2 inches tall and keep the healthiest looking sprout and pinch the rest off. This will be your new trunk. Be sure to pinch the others off, otherwise you will be growing a multi-trunk tree. We recommend giving it 20-20-20 liquid fertilizer once a week while the trees are in containers. The tree can be planted once it reaches 10” in height.

It is always best for you to plant your tree(s) directly into the ground; however, if growing conditions are not yet suitable outdoors, it may be necessary to plant in a container until your conditions have improved.

Planting In Containers - Plant the trees in sterile containers that are the “next size up” from the original container. Do not use Miracle Grow Potting Soil. It holds too much moisture. Use a potting soil that drains well. The container must have adequate drainage holes. Do not use a container with a saucer. The trees do best when elevated and water is allowed to drain freely. Allow the soil to dry out between watering and fertilize weekly. Overwatering the tree can cause root rot. Do not leave the tree in the container for an extended period of time. They can become root bound quickly.

Planting In Ground – Dig a hole at least 2-3 feet deep and at least 18-36 inches in diameter. (Empress Trees are naturally deep rooting, but we still recommend planting at least 12 feet from a foundation). Select a site that drains well. Avoid low lying or wetland and heavy clay areas. You want to make sure the water table is approximately 8 feet or more below the surface. Empress Trees do not like wet feet. Left in standing water, the roots will rot. If planting in poor soil – mix in some compost, sand or mulch. Plant the tree approximately 1 ½ inches below ground level for the trees received in cell trays and 2 ½ inches below ground level for the trees in the 4 inch containers. Once you have planted the tree, pack the soil firmly around the startling making sure there are no air pockets around the root system. You can use an auger or post hold digger when preparing the holes. If you have heavy clay areas or are doing a large plantation, rip the soil instead. The ideal PH level for the tree is 6.8 to 7.0. If the PH is above 7.0, then add sulfur to lower the level. If it is too low, then add lime to raise it. Follow the manufacturers recommend amount to use based on your soil condition.

Watering – After the tree has been planted in the ground, water with a deep soaking rather than frequent light watering. This trains the tree to look for water deep down rather than towards the surface. Trees respond by growing roots down instead of out. If you are planting the tree in a hot state, **only water the tree at night.** It is very important for the soil around the roots to stay moist but not wet. Let the rest of the soil around the tree dry out before watering.

It is not uncommon for the leaves to droop during the heat of the day, but once the sun goes down they should perk up again. If the leaves do not perk up by morning, it could be because you're **over or under watering.**

Under Watering: If the leaves are drooping day and night and you have not been watering, then the tree is in need of a deep soaking.

Over Watering: If you are watering too much, then the leaves can turn black, fall off and the stem turns brown. Cut the tree back to approximately 1 ½ inches above the soil level to regenerate new growth and stop overwatering.

Fertilizer – Empress Trees love fertilizer. Organic fertilizer, **high in nitrogen, works best**. Empress Trees love chicken manure if you have access to it. Purchase fertilizer from your local nursery for “Flowering Trees and Shrubs” and follow the directions from the manufacturer.

You can also use liquid Miracle Grow 20-20-20 or a 10-10-10 granular slow release fertilizer. Based on your soil condition, fertilize as required. Please note: If the leaves are dark green, then they are getting an adequate amount of fertilizer. Pale green leaves means that they are not getting enough nutrition. If the leaves are yellowing towards the top, the tree needs more fertilizer. Bottom yellow leaves are normal. Stop fertilizing before the tree goes into dormancy in the fall.

Weed Control – Roundup can be used up to 8-10 weeks prior to planting. Grasses and weeds should be eliminated before planting. They compete against the tree and take nutrients and moisture away, slowing initial growth. Once planted, care should be taken not to allow herbicide spray to drift on to the young trees before they have had a chance to develop a hardened bark. Keep weeds and grass two feet away from the tree in the first year. Pull the weeds initially, and then you can use a growing mat or mulch.

Pests and Disease – The most common pests you *may* see are caterpillars. They may eat the leaves of your tree which are very important in the early stages of your Empress Tree’s growth. The product, “Sevin Dust” will take care of them.

Deer – Deer have been known to eat the Empress leaves if there is nothing more appetizing around. You have two options: Sprinkle some “Deer Away” on the tops of the trees until the tree grows out of reach of the deer. Or, get a one gallon sprayer, fill it with water and add two to three raw eggs. Mix it up and spray it on some of the leaves and stems. The deer shy away from the scent. Reapply mixture after it rains.

Branch Pruning – Refer to separate pruning instructions.

Flowering – You should start seeing flowers blooming in the second or third spring. They will bloom for approximately 4-6 weeks. The flowers put off a fragrant jasmine, vanilla scent.

Temperature Range – The Empress Splendor™ Tree can withstand a low temperature of 0° (-10° F for a short period of time) and high temperatures up to 120° F. The recommended growing zones are 6-11. To see substantial growth, we recommend that you have summer temperatures of 70°F and above for at least 5-6 months. An altitude of less than 2,200 feet is recommended for commercial planting. Higher elevations tend to have greater temperature fluctuations, unless you are located in a protective micro-climate.

Pets – The tree is not poisonous. In fact, its leaves are fed to some livestock as fodder because of its high nutrition content.

Please note: We strive to ship startlings to you in perfect condition. If you have a damaged box when your tree arrives, you need to contact UPS immediately. You will need to file a claim inside of 48 hours or your complaint will not be valid. We cannot file your claim for you. They normally send out a UPS representative to check the complaint. Be sure to keep all packaging. Make sure that you take the startlings out of the box and care for them as instructed.

Replacement Policy: We guarantee that the tree will be in good condition when the tree(s) has been shipped. If there is a problem with the tree upon arrival, the customer must **immediately** contact World Tree and take a digital picture of the tree and send it to WTT. If World Tree does not hear from the customer **within 7 days of receiving their tree(s)**, then the replacement policy is considered void. World Tree cannot accept responsibility for trees that die due to over-watering, under-watering, or any other after weather or care related conditions. We only guarantee trees within the recommended growing zones. We will replace the tree(s) one time only. Replacement trees will be shipped out as soon as possible or within the next growing season, based on availability. **World Tree Technologies does not refund cash, checks or credit cards.**

Upon purchase, it is agreed upon that the Empress Splendor™ startling(s) will be used for planting only and WILL NOT be used for propagation or genetic manipulation of any kind.

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