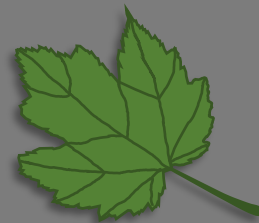


Red Maple

Acer rubrum



Red maple, noted for its beautiful crimson hues of fall foliage and red flowers, is native to Aitkin County. 2" – 4" long leaves have three distinct lobes, differentiating this maple from the other two maple species in Aitkin County. ½"– 1" seeds, called samaras, drift down from the tree in late spring or early summer. Seeds are eaten by songbirds, squirrels, wild turkeys, and other game birds. Seedlings and young branches are browsed by rabbits and deer. The wood of red maples is fairly hard but brittle, with little commercial value besides firewood, woodenware, and cheap furniture. A brown to black dye can be derived from the bark of red maples, and the tree can be tapped for syrup.

Height: 40' to 65'--exceptional trees may grow >75'

Under favorable conditions, red maple is fast-growing, and may grow more than 1 foot per year until reaching maturity.

Planting environment:

Soil composition: Most; not floodplains with sedimentation

Soil moisture: Most; prefers well-drained to moist

Sunlight: Intermediate (~4 hours of sun/day)

Red maple seedlings should be spaced at least 10' – 15' apart, depending on any planned thinning. Seedlings are very tolerant of shade, but will need sufficient light to grow measurably.

Maintenance:

Young red maples may be killed if planted under overtopping vegetation that shades the planting site. Clear any thick brush or vegetation that grows taller than the saplings. Red maple is vulnerable to cracking in the winter due to ice formation. Monitor trees for any cracks or splits, and consider pruning forked branches.

Lifespan: up to 150 years

Top diseases/pests:

1. Verticillium wilt
2. Ice/wind damage

