

# Jack Pine

*Pinus banksiana*

Jack pine, one of the hardiest pines, is native to Aitkin County. Jack pine has thin needles shorter than many other pines,  $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " in length. These needles do not fall in the winter, but stay on the tree for multiple years. Cones are about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " in length, curved, and open when exposed to high temperatures or wildfire. Shorter-lived than other pines, jack pines tend to live for 70-90 years, but exceptional trees may reach 150 years. Jack pine stands provide moderate support and cover for wildlife. Older stands of jack pine are ideal habitat, as more brush grows beneath these trees. Jack pine wood is soft and best suited to pulpwood production.

**Height:** 25' to 60' depending on site suitability

Under favorable conditions, jack pines grow more than a foot per year on average, with growth rates slowing as the tree reaches maturity. Maximum height is usually attained between 40 to 50 years of age.

## **Planting environment:**

*Soil composition:* Poor, sandy soil, does not tolerate clayey soils

*Soil moisture:* Dry, well-drained soil

*Sunlight:* Full sun (>8 hours sunlight)

Jack pine does best when there is no other vegetation. Jack pines are pioneer tree species that naturally colonize burned lands. Clearing vegetation and tilling soil before planting will help provide a suitable environment for jack pine growth.

Jack pine seedlings require 6' to 8' spacing between plants.

## **Maintenance:**

Branch pruning is not recommended for jack pines. To ensure ideal growth, brush or other tree species that shade jack pine seedlings should be removed.

## **Top diseases/pests:**

1. Bark beetles
2. Deer/hare (seedlings)

