

Red Oak

Quercus rubra

Red oak is native to Aitkin County, identifiable by the pointed ends on its leaves and from the way the trees keep some of their fall leaves into the winter. Acorns are about 1" long, stay on the tree for two years, and are important food for a variety of wildlife. Red-tailed hawks, owls, and other birds also nest in red oak branches. Red oak wood is durable and strong for building furniture, flooring, finishes, and fuel.

Height: 55' to 80'--exceptional trees may grow >100'

Red oaks spend their first 2-3 years growing deep roots, before shooting up to grow about 1' per year until mature.

Planting environment:

Soil: Adaptable; sandy, sandy loam, clayey

Moisture: Moist to well-drained

Sunlight: Intermediate (mixed sun and shade)

Space red oak seedlings at least 10' apart.

Maintenance:

Because young red oaks grow slowly, control encroaching vegetation. Consider protecting the saplings from rabbits and deer if browsing pressure is heavy in your area. Watch out for signs of oak wilt, an ultimately fatal disease that can spread quickly to nearby oak trees.

Top diseases/pests:

1. Oak wilt
2. Deer and rabbits (seedlings)

