How to Plant a Container Tree

1. Dig a planting hole 3 to 4 times as wide as the container.

2. Gently remove the tree from its container. Use a sharp knife to cut circling roots, slicing an "x" across the bottom of the root ball, and four slices along the sides.

3. Place the bottom of the root ball firmly in the middle of the hole, making sure the tree is straight and upright.

4. Ensure the top of the root ball is level with the ground.

5. Backfill the planting hole with the original soil. Tamp the soil down gently with your feet to help it settle in place, adding more soil if needed to just cover the top of the root ball.

6. Give your tree a good, slow watering! Make sure the soil is moist, but not soggy.

7. After the water has soaked in, spread your mulch in a donut shape around the base of the tree, about 3-4 inches total in depth. Do not let mulch touch the trunk of the tree, as this can invite pests and disease.

Other Tips

• Remove any tags or labels from the tree, so as not to affect its growth. Do not use fertilizer, potting soil, or chemicals, as these materials can kill young trees.

• During the first year, water your tree one to two times a week, or as needed to keep the soil from getting dry.

• Once your tree is a year old, you will need to prune it properly to avoid weak branches or expensive maintenance as the tree grows. Good pruning is one of the most important things you can do for your young tree! Visit www.kdb.org or www.arborday.org for information and diagrams on proper pruning.