



## Recommended Nurseries for Silvopasture Trees

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The goal of this document is to share with you where we have found reliably good nursery stock, and to steer you clear of buying the wrong stock in the wrong places, which can be an expensive and terribly frustrating mistake. Keep in mind that all we have to go off is our own experience, and tree materials do change a bit from year to year, so we may be giving a lower or higher impression of some stock than they deserve. But at least we can share our experience and get you further along the way than we were when we first started.

# Wholesale Nurseries

## Native Forest Nursery [Bare root and Potted]

706-483-3397

We have not bought directly from Native Forest Nursery yet, although we will be purchasing from them for Spring 2024, given our good experience with their stock. We have used their stock on a large project we planted as a subcontractor, and were very impressed by their oaks. They were very uniform, very healthy, and very well packaged to stay in good condition. They are a wholesale nursery that deals in large volumes, has really good prices, and large stock (some 4'+).

## Forrest Keeling Nursery [Bare root and Potted]

800-356-2401

Forrest Keeling has a strong reputation for growing quality stock, and we've been pleased by the stock quality on the small number of trees we've bought from them to-date. They sell both bare root seedlings and potted trees, including some grafted species. Great selection of oak seedlings, as well as grafted oaks, persimmons, pecans, chestnuts, pawpaws, walnuts and apples. They are well situated to develop into a more agroforestry-focused nursery for the midwest.

## JLPN [Bare root and Potted]

877-490-7844

As of writing I have only bought once from JLPN, but I had a great experience. They are a very professional nursery, selling only at wholesale rates, which keeps costs low when buying at large quantities. What's best is the consistency and quality of their stock. I found all their stock to be very uniform, very well graded, and well packed. They carry some good trees for silvopasture, including thornless honey locust, *Morus alba*, several oaks, elms, kousa dogwood (for poultry) and more. Keep in mind that they seem to be most focused on growing understock for grafting, so the genetics of the trees like honey locust, mulberry, etc. are not necessarily selected for high yields.

## Central Washington Nursery [Bare root]

509-787-2765

I have only had one purchase from them, but that experience was very good, with really uniform, well-graded stock that was ready to grow well. Also, the thornless honey locust were also the most consistently thornless trees I've bought to-date, with only a small percentage (maybe 5-10%) ending up thorny by the time they'd reached 6'. This is another nursery that caters to the needs of grafting companies, and only sells large quantities. I for one love a nursery that lists their prices per-thousand. We've only used them for thornless honey locust understock, but they also carry apple and pear understock, among others. For Spring 2024 we'll also be ordering 1,000 Antonovka seedling apples.

## Octoraro Native Plants Nursery [Potted]

717-529-3160

Octoraro is the most prominent native plants nursery in our area, and they provide potted trees for a whole bunch of conservation and landscaping professions. They are wholesale only, with minimum orders being \$500 at time of writing. They grow some stock that's used for silvopasture, like honey locust, persimmons and black locust. If you are in the Mid-Atlantic area and need potted trees, especially for a fall planting, they are a great resource.

# Retail Nurseries

## Cold Stream Farm [Bare root]

231-464-5809

I have bought a lot of stock from Cold Stream over the years. They have one of the best websites of any nursery around. It is very user-friendly, and the buying process is a breeze. The downside is that they have zero phone presence. I have never ever reached anybody on the phone. It's email or nothing, and in the busy season email is slow.

Overall their stock is pretty good, though not great, and they have a really great selection of species that are well suited to silvopasture. They sell in large and small quantities, which is great for small projects, or when you only need a few of a species. I wouldn't recommend buying mulberries from them, as I found their form to be really poor. Their prices are on the high end, which is the tradeoff for having the ability to purchase in very small quantities.

## Pikes Peak Nurseries [Bare root]

724-463-7747

Pikes Peak was the first nursery that agreed to custom-grow Hershey honey locust seedlings for us, and for that we are very appreciative. They are quite willing to work with folks, and even offer custom shipping for folks who want to market trees to the public but not deal with shipping. They have a good range of trees, and specialize in conifers and large bare root oaks (some over 5' tall). They also carry a few unusual or otherwise hard to find stock, like kousa and heartnuts. Overall their prices are very good, though I've been a little less impressed by their quality. Their website is not easy to navigate. They could be an interesting option if you're looking for a nursery to custom grow for you, especially if you're starting out and cannot place larger quantity orders. It's also a go-to for large oaks for us.

## Musser Forests, Inc. [Bare root]

800-643-8319

So far I have not had great experiences with Musser Forests. I haven't been impressed by their stock quality or their grading. For example, we bought about 50 osage orange trees in Spring '23, and each bundle had some 2-3' tall trees, as well as some much smaller 12" trees. It was very inconsistent compared to most nurseries. And unfortunately, all the osage trees died on us, the only trees that we had that kind of problem with. They do have a good selection of trees suited for silvopasture, like thornless honey locusts, persimmons, black locusts and hybrid poplars, and they sell in both large and small lots. I would buy in relatively small quantities first before buying at scale.

## Future Forest Plants [Bare root and Potted]

The owner, Zach Elfers, is a friend of TFG and a wide-ranging tree explorer, offering a wide range of trees that fit well into silvopasture and beyond, including honey locust, persimmon, mulberry, hickory and chestnuts. Especially valuable for breeding and genetic preservation efforts, look to Future Forest Plants for very hard to find cultivars that may not be available anywhere else in nursery trades.

## Planting Justice [Potted]

510-756-6965

Planting Justice is one of the nurseries I turn to when I want a small quantity of otherwise hard to find trees, like grafted mulberries or persimmon cultivars. I have been very happy with their

stock, and like to support their mission of providing great nursery jobs to vulnerable urban communities. They are one of very few nurseries to carry grafted honey locust for production, like Millwood.

### Burnt Ridge [Bare root and Potted]

360-985-2873

Burnt Ridge is another favorite for hard-to-find stock, like mulberries, medlars and mayhaws. I have had almost all good experiences buying from them.

### Blue Hill Wildlife [Bare root]

570-259-2171

Blue Hill is a very interesting nursery for silvopasture, since it focused on growing trees for hunters wanting perennial food plots, which crosses over very well to feeding livestock. They even have drop charts on their website, noting when certain varieties drop their fruit. They carry apples, crab apples, apple crabs (a hybrid of apples and crabapples that has some of the best yield and low-maintenance characteristics of both), as well as pears, plums, persimmons and chestnuts.

## Other

### McMinnville, TN

This is not a single nursery, but rather a town that has a ton of nurseries that are incredibly difficult to find. We only learned about these nurseries when attending a trade show, and we noticed that there were a dozen or so nurseries represented from the same small area in Tennessee, none of which we had ever heard of! It seems they are all well-established, multi-generational businesses, with existing wholesale customers. According to the website of the town of McMinnville, *'Known as the "Nursery Capital of the World," McMinnville and Warren County are home to over 400 thriving nurseries. Climate and soil conditions combine to offer a near-perfect growing environment.'*

They all seem to have terrible websites and are almost invisible online. We have not yet ordered from any, but are intrigued by the low prices many of them offer on stock. Mostly bare root production, but there are plenty that offer potted trees as well. Some nurseries only do seedlings, while others offer grafted stock as well. We will be buying some from these nurseries in the years to come to test their quality and will give more details when we can. Until then, at least you know that they exist much earlier than we ever did.

A few of the nurseries we learned about at the trade show, with stock applicable to silvopasture, are Dykes and Son, Rusty Mangrum Nursery, and Turner and Son's.

## Small Tree Crops Nurseries

Below are a number of nurseries that we have not yet purchased from, mostly because of the larger scale of our projects. Hence, we cannot speak to their quality from first-hand experience like we can with the nurseries above. However, they are very much worth noting, as all are doing very neat small-scale agroforestry/permaculture nursery work and collecting valuable genetics that are otherwise very hard to come by.

- [Barred Owl Brook Farms](#) (very silvopasture focused)
- [Twisted Tree Farm](#) (owner Akiva Silver authored the wonderful book *Trees of Power*)
- [Yellowbud Farm](#)
- [Edible Acres](#) 607.342.4953
- [Silver Run Forest Farm](#)

### Bass Pecan [Potted]

601-488-7675

I have not bought any stock from Bass Pecan, given the cost of shipping large potted stock from Mississippi to Pennsylvania, but they have a great selection of trees for silvopasture, like grafted high-yielding honey locust, great persimmon selections, and of course pecan. The owner is very knowledgeable and very willing to share about his experience, which is much appreciated.

### State nurseries [Bare root]

Most, if not all states have their own state-run nurseries they use for forestry and wildlife plantings. Generally they are very affordable, though they don't tend to produce the larger stock we generally look to use in our silvopasture plantings. One thing you could do, and this applies generally but especially to the small, inexpensive stock you can get from a state nursery, is to buy cheap bare roots, then plant them out at your place and grow them out another year or two. Given that you can protect trees in a nursery bed much easier than you can in an actively grazed pasture, it can be well worth it to get them to size in a nursery bed.

### Fruitwood Nursery [Scion]

Fruitwood Nursery has been our go-to source for scion wood, particularly for honey locust scion that is otherwise basically impossible to get. Have a very wide range of scion to choose from, and are easy to order from online.

### Trees For Graziers

484-796-1513

We at TFG are focused on growing silvopasture-specific trees that are otherwise tough or impossible to come by. At the moment, we are focusing on improved honey locust genetics (grafted and grown from root cuttings), mulberry (clonal), persimmons (likely root cuttings from females), tall-growing black locust, and willows and poplars (mostly poles that are 10'+ tall). Our #1 focus is growing stock for our own projects, and will slowly make trees available for sale as they become available. We will focus on wholesale sales.