

Tree Shelters - Are They Worth The Cost?

The Muskingum SWCD has been selling tree shelters for many years. To provide a good comparison of sheltered versus non-sheltered trees, we asked several past tree shelter customers why they continue to use shelters year after year.

One farmer that we visited has been planting trees since he purchased the property in 2015. As time has gone on he has increased the percentage of sheltered trees. He sees multiple benefits from using the shelters, including what is likely the most important- protection from the deer. Small twigs are high in nutrients throughout the year, which makes these desirable snacks for the deer, especially in late winter. The shelters also discourage the bucks from rubbing the trees. In addition to deer protection, the shelters also increase growth significantly.

In the spring of 2018, American Plum were planted in several areas of the farm, and in just one growing season those that were sheltered have outperformed the unsheltered ones by at least a four to one ratio. The faster the trees grow the quicker they will produce mast for wildlife feed. There has also been a significant reduction in damage caused by moles, voles, mice and rabbits. While these small animals typically won't eat the tree, they will strip the bark to eat, which in turn essentially strangles the trees.

This landowner in particular has seen, and continues to see, the value in tree shelters. In addition to increased growth rates, deer protection, and other animal protection, shelters have also greatly reduced the labor needed to control weeds around his trees. He is able to spray the weeds and reduce competition with much less concern of any herbicide getting on the trees due to the shelter. To decrease the time period to maturity you can either spend \$50 plus on a 3/4" caliper tree and then have to plant a large ball or you can buy a \$2 seedling and protect it with a \$15 shelter and have the same result in the next five years. If you have any questions regarding the benefits of tree shelters please contact the office at 740-454-2027.

Tree shelters can be picked up during tree seedling pickup. Orders of 50 or more shelters, please call the office for bulk pricing. Deadline for orders is February 23rd, 2024.



Sheltered Tree

Bur Oaks planted within 50' of each other on a farm in northern Muskingum County. The tree on the left was placed in a shelter at that time, while the one on the right was not. The one on the left has grown out of the top of the 5' tall shelter and is well on its way to the 6' mark while the one on the right just barely reaches the 1' mark.



Unsheltered

Tree Shelter Order Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Total Amount Due \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: **MSWCD**

To order by credit card, please stop by the office or order on-line. An additional 3% service fee will be charged to credit card orders placed online or at the office. Credit card orders will not be accepted through the mail. An additional 4% service fee will be charged to credit card orders.

Tree Shelter	Price Each	Plus Tax	Price w/Tax	# of Shelters	Total Price
Three Foot	\$10.26	\$0.74	\$11.00		
Four Foot	\$13.99	\$1.01	\$15.00		
Five Foot	\$15.85	\$1.15	\$17.00		