



AUSTRIAN PINE

Pinus nigra

Native Range

Austrian pine is native to western Europe. Introduced to this country in mid-1800's, it has been planted extensively as a ornamental and conservation plant.

Mature Size

In Kansas, Austrian pine grows to a height of 30 to 50 feet with a spread of 20 to 25 feet.

Growth Rate

On most soils, growth rate is 12 to 20 inches per year.

Leaves, Stems and Fruit

Young trees are pyramidal in shape, but become oval with age and, on some sites, flat topped. Noted for its dark, rich green foliage, Austrian pine provides a pleasant contrast with other plants.

Austrian pine needles are stiff, usually straight, 2 to 4 inches long and are in groups of 2. Needles persist 2 to 3 years. Fruit is a 2 ½ to 3 inch long cone. The cone scales do not have prickles. The attractive bark has dark furrows with gray or gray-brown mottled ridges. Winter buds have a distinct silver color.

Use

Windbreaks

Austrian pine's symmetrical, stout, spreading branches serve well in windbreaks and living snow fences. It may be used in single or multi-row windbreaks and living snow fences. Due to its shade-intolerance, it should not be planted in the shade of other plants.

Wildlife Habitat

Several woodland species of birds utilize the seed, but it is not an important part of their diet. Its greatest asset is winter protection. Many kinds of wildlife find cover in Austrian pine branches.

Christmas Trees

Austrian pine may be used to produce Christmas trees. It provides some variety to the more popular Scotch pine and is more drought tolerant, but it tends to develop slower than Scotch pine. Typically Austrian pine is 8 to 10 feet tall before filling in to form a satisfactory Christmas tree.

Adaptation

Statewide.

Soil

Austrian pine grows best in deep, moist and well-drained soils, but it will grow on a wide variety of soils. Of the pines, it is second only to ponderosa in drought tolerance and will grow successfully in fairly heavy clay.

Spacing

Austrian pines are spaced 8 to 12 feet within a row and 12 to 18 feet between rows. Large, fast growing deciduous trees should be spaced far enough (20 to 24 feet) between rows to prevent shading pines.

Culture

Select Austrian pine grown from seed collected in Serbia because of its resistance to *Dothistroma* needle blight. Two-year-old, bare-root and container grown seedlings are used in plantings. Bare-root are 8 to 12 inches tall; container-grown seedlings are 6 to 8 inches in height. The container grown seedlings have intact root systems and usually have better survival and initial growth than the bare-root seedlings. Typically the bare-root seedlings grow very little in height until the third year while the container grown seedlings often put on significant growth the first year. During this establishment period, supplemental watering and control of competing weeds and grass will aid survival.

Pests

Common insect pests include spider mites and pine needle scale. Common diseases include *Dothistroma* needle blight and *Sphaeropsis* (*Diplodia*) tip blight. Pine wilt may occasionally kill Austrian pine. Pine seedlings may be injured or killed by rabbits and deer.