



ONTARIO'S  
**GREEN  
LEAF**  
CHALLENGE

Ontario's Green Leaf Challenge is a call to action inviting all people of Ontario to celebrate Canada's 150th anniversary by planting trees on their own properties, through organized tree planting events or programs that may be available in your local areas.



Partners



Ontario



FORESTS  
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# 5

## questions to ask yourself before you plant a tree



### Why do I want to plant a tree?

#### Trees are awesome because:



- Planting in the right location around your house can reduce your energy costs by providing shade in the summer and blocking cold winds in the winter.

- They can add significant value to your property.

- They help to clean water and the air, prevent soil erosion, cool the air.



- They generate jobs – whether it is in municipalities, local woodlots, or the forest industry.



- Provide shelter for wildlife including birds, bugs, and small mammals.
- Provide a wealth of health benefits including reducing depression, improving well-being.

- They help fight climate change by absorbing carbon dioxide out of the air.



- They provide us with wood products like furniture, skateboards, paper, lumber for houses and musical instruments.



### Where will I plant the tree(s)?

The location of where a tree or trees will be planted is one of the most important first steps. When selecting a location for planting you must determine:

- Is there enough root and canopy space for a tree – think ahead to when that tree is big and beautiful. How far will it stretch out?



- Are there any obstructions (e.g. overhead wires, other trees, underground utilities) that might prevent the tree from growing?

- Will your tree(s) provide the benefits you want in this location (e.g. shade, aesthetics, habitat)?

- Will the future trees be competing with anything in terms of what the space will be used for in the future?



### What kind of tree should I plant?

Choosing the right species for the right spot is important! First things first, make sure to choose a native tree, which means choosing species that naturally occur in the area and are adapted to the local climate. When you choose native, you are supporting local biodiversity and choosing a species that will grow well because it is in its home environment.

You should also make sure to choose the right species for your location and take into account things like the mature size of the tree, soil type, growing space, pollution tolerance and how it supports local wildlife.

To find out which trees you should plant where you live, visit [www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/tree-atlas](http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/tree-atlas).



## How do I plant the tree?

Make sure to clear anything on the ground surface that may be in the way of planting your tree, including grass or cover plants. Focus on making a hole that is twice as wide as the root ball of the tree and just deep enough to fit the roots. The roots need lots of room to grow once the tree is established.



## What do I do after I plant the tree?

Once that tree is in the ground, we want to make sure that it grows strong and healthy. Your tree needs to be adequately watered throughout the growing season (spring to fall). Applying mulch around the base of the tree can also help add moisture and nutrients to the tree.

# how to get involved



### Plant your own tree

Whether you are a homeowner, a business, or an institution, planting trees on your property counts towards the Green Leaf Challenge! Once you have planted your tree, make sure to map it online at [www.greenleafchallenge.ca](http://www.greenleafchallenge.ca).



### 50 Million Tree Program

If you have over 2.5 acres of open land, you may be eligible for the 50 Million Tree Program. Incentives are provided to landowners to help bring back forest cover on land that has not had forest cover for more than 15 years. Learn more at [www.forestsontario.ca](http://www.forestsontario.ca).



### Join a community event

Look for events taking place in your community either through community calendars, by contacting your local Conservation Authority, getting in touch with local community groups holding tree planting events online at [www.greenleafchallenge.ca](http://www.greenleafchallenge.ca).

For more great tips on planting trees, check out:



### How to plant a potted tree or shrub

[www.creditvalleyca.ca](http://www.creditvalleyca.ca)



### How to plant a tree

[www.reforestlondon.ca](http://www.reforestlondon.ca)



Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests

### Guide to planting trees and shrubs

[www.yourleaf.org](http://www.yourleaf.org)



## Organize your own event

Consider hosting your own tree planting event!  
Things to consider when organizing your own event:



### Where will you plant trees?

Work with your local municipality, schools, conservation authorities, or community members to determine the appropriate place to hold a tree planting event.



### When to plant?

Trees can be planted from spring through fall, but planting in the summer can be tough for a tree because of the heat and lack of moisture.



### How will you fund your event?

Lots of opportunities exist to help fund your tree planting event. Look for support from community foundations, non-profit organizations, grants available online, conservation areas, municipalities or local businesses. You could also look for in-kind possibilities through the donation of plant materials, mulch, soil or tools.



### Who will you invite?

Local MPP, community members, local businesses, school groups, religious groups, or anyone interested in helping to plant the trees.



### Share your success!

Make sure you share your community planting stories by tagging **#GreenLeafChallenge** and help to add to Ontario's forests!



## Donate to plant a tree

Don't have anywhere to plant? Consider making a donation to Forests Ontario to support tree planting efforts across the province. For every \$4, we will plant one tree!

## For Educators



Schools are encouraged to use the following resources to

engage students on the value of trees, how to plant a tree, and how to identify your tree.

### Focus on Forests Resources

- Focus on Forests is our collection of free educational resources. It's a way for teachers to bring forestry to the classroom and take learning outdoors with the help of lesson plans, tree and forestry facts, activities, and more. Learn more at [www.focusonforests.ca](http://www.focusonforests.ca)

### Tree Bee

- Website dedicated to help you identify and map trees in your community. Learn more about the trees in your own backyard by visiting [www.treebee.ca](http://www.treebee.ca)



Tree Bee

Thank you for your interest in the Green Leaf Challenge!



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