Computer-Assisted Plant Selection For Professionals and Amateurs

by David J. Williams

Are you looking for a pyramidal plant with fine texture that is hardy in northern Illinois, that will tolerate a wet site and grow in alkaline soils? The Univesity of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service may have just what you need to develop a list of plants that meet these specifications. Three plant selection software programs that run on IBM microcomputers have been developed by cooperative extension staff. These programs are of particular interest to landscape architects and other landscape designers because they enable them to quickly screen a large number of hardy landscape plant materials for both their design attributes and site tolerances. Garden centers may also find these programs useful as sources of information to assist customers in making decisions about their plant purchases.

The first of these is Tree Selection For Landscape Use. It contains 206 different trees including 64 different genera, 202 different species and 32 different crabapples. Eighteen different characteristics can be used for sorting trees. They are as follows: hardiness, growth rate, height, habit, pH, moisture tolerance, light requirements, ornamental bark, texture, summer color, fall color, ornamental flowers, flower color, time of flowering, significant fruit, ornamental fruit, fruit color and fruit duration. Trees can be sorted by the above characteristics or information about each tree can be accessed by either the common or scientific names of the trees. Printouts can be obtained of lists of trees that meet a set of specifications or of all of the data about a specific tree.

Software programs entitled Evergreen Selection For Landscape Use and Shrub Selection For Landscape Use are also available using the same eighteen characteriestics as the tree selection program. These programs work in much the same way as the tree selection program except that the sub menus have been changed to reflect the appropriate choices dependent upon plant type. The evergreen program contains 89 different plants and the shrub selection program contains 248 different plants. An extensive list of cultivars is available in both of these programs. The completion of a fourth program, Groundcover Selection For Landscape Plantings, is expected early this summer.

All of the software programs are compatible with IBM PC, XT or AT computers using either a floppy or hard disk. The tree and evergreen selection programs require 128K Memory and the shrub selection program 192K Memory. Each of the programs is available from Illinet Software, University of Illinois, 123 Mumford Hall, 1301 W. Gregory, Urbana, IL 61801, (217) 244-5956. The programs cost $40 each. They can be previewed at your local county extension office. If further information is desired, call Dr. Dave Williams at (217) 333-2126.

1988 Individual tax rates

Taxable income

Tax rate	Single filer with with one exemption	Married filing jointly with two exemptions	Head of household with one exemption
15%	$0-$17,850	$0-29,750	$0-$23,900
28%	$17,851-$43,150	$29,751-$71,900	$23,901-$61,650
33%	$43,151-$100,480	$71,901-$171,090	$61,651-$134,710
28%	Over $100,480	Over $171,090	Over $134,710

Note: The 33% bracket increases by $10,920 for each additional personal exemption claimed. So for joint filers with four personal exemptions, the 33% bracket would end at $192,930.