

The Elms Are Not Lost Forever

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Dutch elm disease, as most people realize, killed a large portion of the elms in Minnesota.

Currently people have given up on the elm, yet this tree species will survive and continue to serve us if we are willing to provide the opportunity to a relatively small number of diseased trees each year. More important, many large elms are still shading our streets and yards. As long as we remove dead and dying elms as they appear, we can keep this disease to a low level.

We now realize that it was foolish to rely almost exclusively on the elm as our street tree. Almost 100 percent of the street trees were elms. Now we are planting a variety of trees and, never again, will we have a single tree species throughout the cities.

People must realize that whatever tree species is chosen, there are problems occasionally with that species. The oaks are probably our most valuable shade trees, we have no intention of giving in to oak wilt and are optimistic that this disease, related to DED, can be reduced to a low level.

Obviously it would be unwise to plant large numbers of elms, yet the elm has excellent credentials in many ways. If a community is surrounded by wild elm where DED remains highly active, then elm would not be a wise choice. If not surrounded by dying elms, this species should be considered along with the many other choices available.

Another option to the American or red elm would be considered the recently developed resistant elms. We are not suggesting Siberian or Chinese elms, as these trees, even though resistant to DED, are subject to winter injury and are not attractive trees. It would be best to avoid these two species completely.

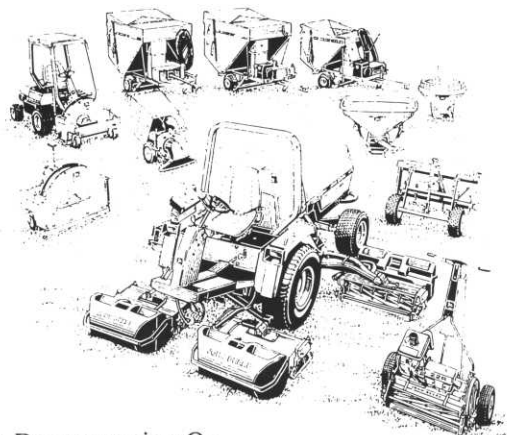
The University of Wisconsin, specifically Drs. E.B. Smalley and R.P. Guires, have developed some elms which have resistance to DED and good to excellent form. Their trees have been evaluated and selected for resistance to other common diseases of the elms. Their recommended selections included *Regal Elm*, which has a columnar form, high degree of resistance to DED and vigorous growth habit. This tree has a dominant center leader. This tree needs pruning at times but should be excellent along streets.

In 1990 *New Horizon* was released. This tree has a dense crown and grows well. It is an attractive tree, is resistant to other diseases in addition to DED and is tolerant to harsh sites. This tree has excellent resistance to DED.

The *American Liberty* represents a group of elms produced by the Wisconsin breeding program and is a diverse multi-cone with similar phenotypes. These elms are vigorous growers and similar in form to the American elm. They have good resistance to DED, the best among American elms. When young, they are more susceptible and may die; however, over longer periods of time they will usually survive.

One nursery where these elms are available is the McKay Nursery Company in Waterloo, Wis. 53594.

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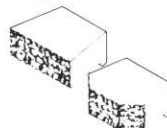
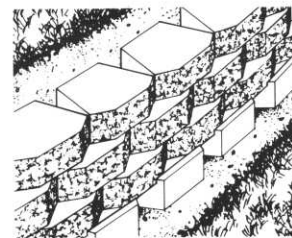
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