

All of us at J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co.

GROWING together

Winter 2020

Caution - pay attention to those yellow stripes!

Many of you working in the fields will see trees with three yellow stripes on them and wonder what they mean! Those trees are part of the company's New Plant Development Program that Jim Donohoe and I are responsible for.

It takes a long time and a lot of patience to develop and select new and better trees. For example, our most popular tree at the moment is Redpointe® Maple. That tree took our company 17 years of selection and trial work! To find one good tree, thousands of not so good trees have to be grown, evaluated, and thrown away.

Many of you on the farms help Jim and me with our work at different times of the year. High Forest helps us with seed sowing and softwood cuttings. Dept 62 helps us with grafting and potting. Hood Acres, Barlow-Sunset and Milton farms all help with the production and harvest of all our trial trees being grown in production rows, and sometimes Cottrell has some of our larger trial trees in containers.

So why do we put those three yellow stripes on all our trees? Because it's very important that our trial trees do not get mixed up with regular production trees that are sold. This way everyone in the company knows that if

a tree has three yellow stripes, it's not a production tree. If they don't know what to do with it, they can always call Jim or me for an answer.

In the next few months, many of you will be helping to harvest these trees. Many of our trees will be left in the field as we have finished with their evaluation. Others will have different colored labels and instructions on them - indicating they will be collected for further evaluation, stock block planting or some other use.

We would like to thank everyone in the company for all the help and support we get with our New Plant Development work. -Guy



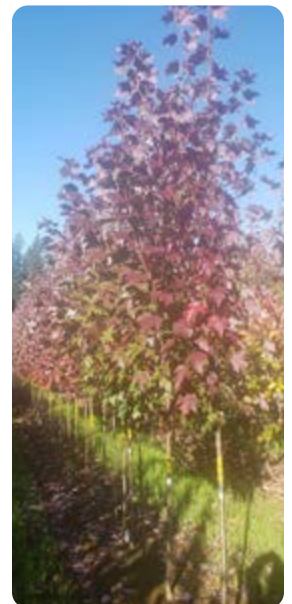
Experimental trees are marked with three yellow stripes.



Thousands of ripe crabapples collected this fall will yield seeds for spring sowing.



Jim Donohoe tags the best of experimental dogwoods for digging, transplant and further evaluation.



Red maple trial row tests field performance of experimental trees

People make the difference at Barlow Farm

The Canby farm is prepared and ready for the next chapter in our lives here on the farm: The tree harvest! It's the time in the life cycle of our trees when we all get to see the fruits of our labor. We proudly dig, grade, bundle and store our trees until they are ready for shipping to our customers and their final destinations.

It takes many dedicated, talented and hardworking employees to produce the outstanding JFS trees that supply the industry for its needs. A

few of those employees are pictured here - too many to name individually but too important not to show you who they are.

Many retail customers cannot realize all that goes into growing and producing our "best of the best" trees. Fortunately, they do know quality when they see it, which helps make trees a top choice throughout the United States, Canada and other countries such as Australia, Europe, China, and Japan.

We are all very proud to be part of the J. Frank Schmidt & Son Co. family organization that gives us the opportunity to be employed so we can provide for our families - especially during these difficult and uncertain times of COVID-19 outbreaks. We look forward to putting this disease behind us and continuing to enjoy the work that we all do here on the farm. God bless all of us and remain safe!



Barlow Farm Digging Crew



Sunset Farm Digging Crew



Sunset Farm Tying/Grading Crew



Barlow Farm Tying/Grading Crew



Barlow-Sunset Staff & Sunset Shop

Cottrell team overcomes 2020 setbacks

Cottrell Farm is finishing up our busiest fall shipping season on record. A total of 40,400 trees have shipped since July 1, as compared to a typical year in which about 30,000 trees are loaded and shipped from our busy dock. Despite the increased volume, the pulling and loading crews have worked hard to maintain our usual high-quality and consistent truck loading standards - while fighting all the other setbacks that have occurred throughout this season.

Our first big setback was the Labor Day windstorm. Strong, hot East winds began blowing on the holiday and kept battering the farm for three days. The wind made it impossible to keep trees standing which halted operations and pulled the entire farm to tree standup. Hood Acres sent help, and the two farms worked together to pick trees up and keep them standing long enough to get them watered.

Next came the smoke from the disastrous forest fires in the Cascades. This made the air quality so poor that the majority of Cottrell workers had to stay home. A skeleton crew came in every morning - and worked just long enough to get the trucks loaded for the day. And of course, COVID caused problems as well. Due to

infections among crew members, a whole pulling crew had to quarantine for two weeks. Other crews at Cottrell quickly stepped in to help and get trucks loaded. Fortunately, the crew members who were infected have recovered.

To succeed in spite of these setbacks, the entire team had to cooperate and adapt. Many people stepped into new roles or worked through tough situations. It was a difficult season, but thanks to the determination and creativity of our crews, everything came together with impressive results.



CL Juan Bolanos looks on while Sergio Zamora tests a new tool for loading trees solo in order to maintain safe distance between each worker.



Pictured on the cover of Digger Magazine: Uber Aguilar, Jose Morales and CL Carlos Sanchez load a truck, with Luis Gonzalez filling in as temporary Dock Foreman.



Manuel Gongora prepares trees for loading on a day when heavy smoke cover caused hazardous air quality

Angela Gardenas tends JFS trees for 33+ years

Angela's 1987 search for work to support her family was a success when she found a job at our Canby farm. During her 33 years of service, she has mastered all of the field work jobs that we do at Barlow-Sunset Farm to grow world class trees for our customers. Angela's favorite part of working for JFS is how well the company treats her and the other employees - more like family than just employees. When asked how she likes working here compared to other companies, she couldn't answer because she has never worked anywhere else, nor does she want to! She likes it here. When asked what she likes the most about working on the farm she said her favorite times are when we have group meals for birthdays and special events; she loves helping out during the events. Beyond work, Angela enjoys being with her husband and grown children, several grandchildren, and her parents who live nearby. Angela has not given much thought to retirement plans, but when she does, she will most likely stay in the USA.



Angela Gardenas

Teamwork smooths Dept. 62 workload

Grafting of Japanese maples and budding of Gingko Nyssa, Magnolia and Liquidambar (Sweetgum) has been at the top of our list since the last issue of the newsletter. Grafting Crewleader Adelina Martinez heads up a crew of six expert grafters: Irene Ramirez, Adelia Asencio, Susanna Joaquin, Veronica Lopez, Marina Vernancio and Adelina. Gloria Inclan and Angelica Lopez help in preparing the wood and other jobs that support the grafting process. Currently, the grafting crew is helping with consolidation and starting to prepare rootstock for the upcoming grafting season.

The liner crew is headed by Crewleader Rocio Dominguez and includes Maria May, Epifania Gonzalez, Luz Carillo, Alma Elias and Hector Hernandez. They do the potting of seed, seedlings and cuttings, and recently spent about a week planting the Japanese maple seed that will be the rootstock for grafting Japanese maples for the future. Additional grafting support tasks performed by the liner crew include the cleaning of ginkgo rootstock in preparation for budding, cleaning and grading of liner material in preparation for the coming potting season and getting material ready for spring planting at the bareroot farms. They are currently emptying used and returned pots from fall planting and getting them ready for steam cleaning. Crew member Hector Hernandez has learned to operate the steamer and has done an excellent job of steaming the pots,



Hector Hernandez operates the steamer that sanitizes containers for reuse.



From left, Grafting Crewleader Adelina Martinez and Angelica Lopez



L to R, Adolfo Gutierrez, Salomon Cruz, Crewleader Rodrigo Gonzalez and Maurilio Lopez consolidate, grade and count the VigorLiner® crop.

which will continue until the end of November. It will then be moved to High Forest where they will use it to sterilize their pots in preparation for the coming potting season.

Our third crew is the VigorLiner® team whose job is to grow the container liners for our VigorLiner® product line. This involves setting bamboo stakes, max taping as the trees grow, taping tops and pruning. This might seem to be a short list of jobs to do, but these jobs all need to be done precisely and in a timely manner to ensure that a quality product is produced.

Rodrigo Velasco is the crew leader and with his crew of Adolfo Gutierrez, Maurilio Lopez, Elias Gonzalez and Salomon Cruz, they have done a great job of producing a good crop of vigor liners this year. Currently they are busy grading and consolidating the VL crop for the winter and providing the numbers that are important for inventory and future sales.



From left, Irene Ramirez and Marina Vernancio are two of the expert grafters on the D62 team.



From left, Maria May and Luz Carillo are members of the liner crew.

Although all three crews have specific areas of responsibility, and we have worked at keeping them separate due to Covid19 concerns, there is still much coordination of the workload and scheduling future work. Gerdo Amezcua, D62 foreman, does a good job helping the different crews stay on track with their work, helping them anticipate upcoming work so all the jobs are done with efficiency and with an emphasis on quality.

As with any work, we all need the right tools and material to do the job. Farm Assistant Stacy Maya plays a key role in ordering the gloves and safety equipment needed for the crews to work safely. She manages the supplies needed to keep the farm clean, and a safe and pleasant place to work and to take breaks. Despite the challenges of Covid-19 and the new processes we need to follow to stay safe, D62 looks forward to the upcoming grafting and potting season and the start of the new production cycle.

Hood Acres harvest = Dig! Grade! Store! Repeat!

Fall is upon Hood Acres! The sky turns darker, the weather wetter, and although HA just wrapped up planting 250,000 seedlings, our attention turns to harvest....

Before any trees can be dug, the tedious work of harvest prep begins. Coolers must be cleaned and sanitized, warehouses mucked out, and sawdust bins blown. Gregorio Salazar and his crew lead the charge, pulling stubborn steel stakes from the ground a week before anything happens. From there Solomon Mejia's crew pops out never ending rows of trees using the trio of HA diggers and a crew of strong workers to shake the excess soil from the roots. This year HA is trying a new method of picking up trees, utilizing an excavator to do all the heavy lifting. The hope is that this will not only reduce injury, but also reduce our labor needs making the company more profitable.



Isauro Francisco and Pablo Rodriguez working the dirtiest job at HA! Unloading the Milton trucks.



Cooler #7 filling up

As trees come to the warehouses, they are quickly graded by experienced hands and professionally packaged for storage. After the grades are entered into the computer by Alberto Campas, storage gurus Teobaldo Orosco and Daniel Waldo take the wheel. At JFS all roads lead to HA! (at least bareroot anyhow). So, in addition to storing HA trees, we also store all of Milton's and the bulk of Barlow/Sunset trees, too. Decades of trial and error at JFS result in the trees being stored in their preferred environment of sawdust storage bed or cooler, ensuring that they are in good health and disease free before being sent to customers.



Rolopho Perez carefully inspects each tree.



Mudding and storage of oaks. (L-R) Marco Francisco, Gregorio Salazar, Antonio Zavala, Zeferino Arellano on the tractor.



Jorge Magana keeps the pallets moving!



Victor Martinez crew storing in cooler 1. Cooler 1 was built in the 1970's



Marco Francisco operating the excavator and loading bulking trailers with the grapple.

Rolling trucks keep Milton dig going

Along with digging and grading, regularly scheduled trucking is an integral part of the Milton Farm harvest. For lack of warehouse space and pallets, harvest would come to a screeching halt without those trucks being loaded daily, and sometimes twice a day - six days a week. Milton Farm Manager Ron Monnier and Hood Acres Farm Manager Aaron Caldwell communicate regularly on load volume. Aaron works the trucking schedules to make sure the loads are being scheduled appropriately.

Jeremy Imes and Luis Delucio are the truckers who make the round-trip treks from Hood Acres to Milton Farm and back. The haul through the Columbia River Gorge and across Oregon's high desert takes about 4 to 4 ½ hours in each direction. On a good day the trip is tough because of the distance and monotony of the drive. Making the drive on a blustery winter day can make the trip downright daunting. These guys travel through driving rainstorms and in windy conditions that can make an empty trailer tippy. Luis can attest to it being a little frightening to see air under the trailer tires after being hit by a really strong gust of wind. When it gets cold these brave drivers may have to deal with ice and snow. Throughout the hauling season, weather conditions are checked closely on both the east and west sides of the route to make sure conditions are relatively safe for travel.

As the season progresses it's not uncommon for the temperatures to plummet. We use refrigerated vans to protect the trees from freezing after the truck is loaded and while they are on their way to Boring. It seems kind of funny that we use refrigerator vans to keep the trees warm. We set the units at 40 degrees and if it gets too cold, the trailers will keep the inside heated to 40 degrees.

The loading crew includes Oscar Ponce, Daniel Campos, Martin Saldana, and Roque Lara. Oscar, Daniel and Martin are full time, year-round

employees. Roque is a seasonal worker who is a crew leader at a local vineyard through the spring and summer. He has returned for his fourth harvest season as a JFS employee and truck loader. Roque is a real likeable guy. Everybody he works with wants him to give up the grapes and come to work with us full time.

Miguel Reyes is the Milton Farm forklift driver. He is responsible for all warehouse Hyster driving. He unloads pallets of fresh dug trees coming from the field. He delivers pallets of trees to each of the three grading crews. He also keeps a steady supply of pallets delivered to the dock area for truck loading. There are times he

is really scrambling to keep everybody busy.

The loading guys have walked all the trees into the trailer for loading in the past. Production Manager Eric transferred a couple of 20' foot conveyors to Milton Farm this year. It's a major upgrade for Milton Farm. The conveyors have sped the loading process and cut off miles of walking. There's usually not a lot of room around the dock. There wouldn't be room for a 40' conveyor to get in and out of the truck, but the two 20's work great.

The guys work as a team in the truck loading. They switch duties of stacking or feeding the conveyor after ev-



Conveyor running: L to R - Roque, Martin, Daniel and Oscar 'running' the conveyor into the back of the truck.



Above left: Daniel javelins a bundle of Mountain Sentinel® Aspens for Roque to nest into place

Above right: Crew, L to R - Roque, Daniel, Oscar, and Martin pose at the back of another loaded truck



Left: Miguel moves another pallet to the dock for loading

Dock teams load miles of trees

ery truck. Many within the JFS family of farms are adept at the skill of truck loading. It never ceases to amaze at how the guys are able to nest the trees, throw them like javelins, use every bit of usable space, and cause very little if any damage to the trees in the process.

Truck loading is just one of the many jobs that happen around the Milton Farm and the JFS organization at harvest time. Like all other harvest jobs that are done, if trucking and loading comes to a halt, so does digging and grading at Milton Farm and all supporting jobs at Hood Acres that depend of the steady flow of trees to be unloaded, stored and ultimately shipped to customers.



Luis arrives with an empty trailer



Oscar (left) and Martin (right) loading the conveyor with 2-year Gleditsia

For JFS trees, all roads lead to Boring, where Hood Acres Farm serves as our shipping hub. Customer orders, plus the huge volume of trees shipped from outlying farms, make the Hood Acres and Cottrell loading docks extremely busy places at various times of the year.

We're very proud of our loading teams, who took the challenges of 2020 in stride and got the job done. Safety measures taken at our loading docks related to COVID-19 are detailed in the October issue of *The Digger*, with one of Cottrell Farm's hardworking loading crews featured on the cover. Shipping Manager Al Herzog shared our experiences in adapting to distancing and safety protocols. You can read the article at the following link.

<http://www.diggermagazine.com/freight-with-uncertainty/>

Al is confident that the upcoming shipping season will go smoothly. He credits the teamwork of the many experienced, dedicated people from several departments.

"I'm amazed at the work our loading crews do. They are outstanding," he said. "The counts are very accurate, and they make very few mistakes. There are occasional trunk scrapes and a few broken branches, but overall damage is minimal.

"Our crews can get more trees into a truck than any of our competitors," Al continued. "The amount of material we get on a truck is substantially better than average. Customers tell us that we're the bar everybody tries to measure up to, but the others always fall short."

Foreman Vicente Lopez-Caamal supervises the Cottrell loading dock. He's supported by Pancho Galindo, who managed the dock for 28 years before his recent promotion to Grower. Two crews can typically load and ship about five truckloads (250 linear feet) per day, with backup crews called in as needed.



Foreman Vicente Lopez-Caamal (left) and Grower Pancho Galindo



Shipping Supervisor Alberto Campas-Pelayo and Dock Runner Rafael Lopez-Gonzales (left)

During bare root season (Feb-May), an average of seven loads per day are shipped from the 10-bay HA loading docks.

Shipping and Inventory Supervisor Alberto Campas-Pelayo does a fine job supervising dock activity since his promotion to the position last year. During shipping season, Crew Leader Rafael Lopez-Gonzalez assists as Dock Runner, pulling shorted items, replacing any damaged trees, and keeping things running smoothly.

Al crunched some eye-popping numbers of total footage shipped during the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Last year, our loading dock heroes carefully and skillfully loaded 4,415 orders distributed among 1,518 shipments. Total linear footage (with trees often stacked to the truck's ceiling) was 44,176. Al notes that if all those trees were loaded into standard 53-foot semi-trailers, they would fill 833 trailers. Placed end to end, the lineup would be more than eight miles long and stretch all the way to the Troutdale truck stops near I-84. Hitched to their tractors, the lineup would be nearly 12 miles long!

What an amazing job our shipping team does to deliver great trees to our customers. Thanks to all!

High Forest is “the little engine that could”

High Forest was hard at work in September, digging and processing trees so they'd be ready for early fall planting in October at Hood Acres, Barlow and Sunset Farms. This year we set a record pace by getting 381,644 plants processed and sent to the bare root farms for planting. The more we are able to get dug, graded and trimmed for planting in this short amount of time, the better they will root out and survive. This also means that we have to process fewer plants for the normal digging season.

Now that our normal digging season is in full swing, we are grinding away to dig more than 43 miles of seed beds, a task that takes 5-6 months.

After the plants are dug, they need to be graded. This process is led by Xochitl Galindo Rodriguez and the rest of the best grading crew of a seedling farm. This year, we are estimating to collect 2,835,000 trees from these two grading belts that meet our desired sizes. Just like the bare root tree grading at Hood Acres, Milton and Barlow-Sunset farms, we strive to only keep the best quality.

After grading the trees, they all need to be trimmed by our trimming crews. The process is being led this year by Maribel Trigueros-Gonzalez. On an average day, there will be 15-20 people trimming up to 40,000 seedlings a day. Last year we trimmed 2,656,662 rootstocks. This year we expect to trim around the same amount.

Fall pot planting at HF usually takes about a month of trimming and planting during September. This year we planted 306,718 fall pots. Most were red maples that started as tissue culture or cuttings taken from the tissue culture plants in our propagation house. All of these that we get into the ground in the fall will root out and be the best bare root liners that the farms can plant out. Frank Schmidt Jr. (Grandpa) who founded our company said that you can't produce the best finished tree unless you start with the best rootstock. That stays true to this day and is what we aim to produce.



Sunny days and dry soils make for easier digging conditions during our early fall harvest.



Grading team will collect nearly 3 million trees from these two grading belts. Foreground: Crew leader Xochitl Galindo Rodriguez and Luz Garcia-Guijon.



Maribel Trigueros-Gonzalez leads the trimming crew in processing up to 40,000 seedlings per day.



More than 306,000 greenhouse-grown potted trees, mostly red maples, were transplanted to raised beds in our fields this fall.



Kurt Moller leads our seed planting crew with Juan Santos, Maribel Trigueros-Gonzalez, Ana Morales, Bertha Del-Torro, Maria Gomez and Merced Chontecho. Each year we order in around 28,000 pounds of seed that is planted at High Forest. We plant seeds every month of the year.



Our view of smoky, fiery sky caused by September's wildfires.