Impacts of Burlap and Wire Baskets Experiment  
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In 2012, a complete randomized block design experiment was set up in two locations in Rochester, Minnesota. Seventy-five trees were planted at North Essex Park and 25 at the Rochester Community and Technical College field nursery. Four tree species were used for the study (elm, honeylocust, freeman maple and crabapple), all trees purchased balled and burlapped.

Treatments: Baskets, burlap and soil removed; untreated burlap; treated burlap; baskets retained with no burlap

Each year, mortality rates are identified, as well as growth (measured as caliper increases) and condition rates are evaluated. In year 5 (2017), all trees will be subjected to a non-destructive root examination for dysfunctional roots/root systems. At year 10 (2022), all trees will receive another root examination for any damages or growth rate aberrations linked to wire baskets or burlap.

RCTC Campus nursery (top); North Essex Park (bottom).