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Abstract

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Due to the high value of plants at the time of sale and to the importance of the customers, post-sale failures are important to nurserymen, landscapers and garden center operators. No one expects plant materials that have been recently sold to fail. Customers expect the trees or shrubs they purchase to remain healthy and vigorous after they have been transplanted. Usually, they receive a written or oral guarantee to that effect. Replacing trees and shrubs that fail is a costly practice and does not provide a practical solution to the problem. Three general causes account for most post-sale failures: 1) poor-quality plant material, 2) poor placement in the soil or container, and 3) lack of follow-up care. Nurserymen who believe that the work is done after the plant is set in the ground are overlooking a major cause of transplant failure--a lack of post-planting follow-up care. Post-planting problems fall into two categories: continual care, which is needed during the plant's transition to independent growth; and protection from biotic and abiotic stresses.