

## **MSU Product Center**

*For Agriculture and Natural Resources*

Funding: USDA Rural Development Cooperative Service Market Advisor: The Hale Group

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### **Ornamental trees and shrubs - Overview**

#### **Products included in the product line**

- These are shrubs and trees with woody stems, including broadleaf greens, deciduous trees, deciduous shrubs, fruit and nut plants for home use and other ornamentals.

#### **General market trend and information**

- In general, nursery crops including trees and shrubs, represented 67% of the sales in the nursery and greenhouse sector in 2004. Sales from these products have shown a steady growth in the past ten years. Sales in 2004 were estimated at \$10.226 billion, up 37% from 1995.
- The availability of broad tree and shrub varieties and selections is currently offering the consumer more choices in gardening. There are some leading plants such as oaks Callery pear that have high market share. Oaks have higher sales among deciduous shade trees while the juniper is number one in sales among coniferous evergreens.

#### **New product trends**

- Trees and shrubs have seen a significant growth in new product development. There are many new species, varieties and cultivars that are entering the market every year with different and unique characteristics.
- There are trees, which are fast growing when young, and tolerant of air pollution and reflected pavement heat. There are trees and shrubs that are disease resistant and easy to transplant. Some are trees and shrubs that are selected for their foliage colors. Others are ideal to shade a terrace or patio. There are also new tree and shrub varieties with compact branching, heavy blooming, etc.
- There are hybrid flowering cherries, colorful conifers and nut trees that are coming with different foliage textures, colors, etc.
- There are also unusual tree and shrub species that are being introduced and commercialized. Examples include shrubs such as Fragrant Sumac "Konza", Silky Dogwood "Indigo" and Ninebark "Nugget"; and trees like River Birch "Little King" and Western Larch. These are native trees and shrubs of eastern and northeastern U.S. and they are said to be especially suitable for organic gardening.
- There are also new ornamental grass varieties that are suitable for sun, shade, and container combinations in different geographical locations. They also come in different sizes and shapes with diverse colors, forms and textures.

#### **Manufacturing and distribution issues**

- One challenge in this category is the difficulty to establish plant categories for different market segments.

#### **Overall assessment of opportunities**

- Innovative growers and landscapers who can develop new preferred tree and shrub varieties for new homeowners and other consumers who want to change their garden design frequently can raise sales from these plants.

#### **Sources**

Mintel, gardening products, 2001.

Snyder, R. 1984. The new trees and shrubs, Flower and garden magazine.

<http://www.organicgardening.com/feature/0,7518,s1-5-18-182,00.html>.