



NEWS RELEASE

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THROWING SHADE VA PROGRAM IS GROWING

Nurseries encouraged to apply by Dec. 14

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA –The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) is pleased to announce that the Throwing Shade VA program, which offers discounts on native trees and shrubs, is growing. In 2024, DOF will expand participation to 10 retail nurseries. Next spring, from March 1 through May 1, customers can visit a participating nursery, choose an eligible native tree or shrub, and scan the QR code to receive a discount of \$25 on purchases of \$50 or more.

Earlier this year, a pilot run of Throwing Shade VA was launched with three retail nurseries: Burke Nursery & Garden Center (Burke), Woodstock Gardens (Woodstock) and Coastal Landscapes (Virginia Beach). During the two-month pilot, 1,555 natives were purchased and planted across Virginia.

For Nurseries – How to Apply

Nurseries interested in participating in Throwing Shade VA should visit the DOF website at <https://dof.virginia.gov/urban-community-forestry/urban-forestry-community-assistance/throwing-shade-va-program/> for information on how to apply, frequently asked questions and deadlines.

The deadline to apply is Dec. 14.

Additional program details include:

- **The deadline to respond to the request for applications (RFA) is close of business on Dec. 14.**
- Ensure your business is registered in the state procurement system (also known as EVA).
- Following application review from our state ranking team, nurseries will be notified with an application status update by mid-January.

Funded through state water quality improvement dollars, DOF reimburses participating nurseries for the customer discounts. The program incentivizes customers to buy and plant native species in the Commonwealth that in turn provide numerous benefits to our ecosystem and watersheds.

“We are very pleased to expand the successful Throwing Shade VA program that helps the Virginia Department of Forestry spread the word about the benefits of choosing natives while allowing us to measure progress towards Virginia's water and Chesapeake Bay watershed goals,” said DOF Urban and Community Forestry Partnership Coordinator Molly O’Liddy. “Last year’s successful pilot resulted in getting more than 1,500 trees in the ground that will provide shade, reduce temperatures and offer more ecosystem benefits, especially for essential pollinators.”

"Throwing Shade VA provides an inroad for customers to learn more about natives," said John Fogle with Woodstock Gardens. "Also, the program provided a way for younger gardeners to afford purchasing native trees and shrubs. We couldn't have been more pleased with the program and we can't wait to see it take off again. We already have customers asking when it's coming back."

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About the Virginia Department of Forestry

The Virginia Department of Forestry (DOF) protects and develops healthy, sustainable forest resources for Virginians. With nearly 16 million acres of forestland and more than 108,000 Virginians employed in forestry, forest products and related industries, Virginia forests provide an overall economic output of more than \$23 billion annually. Headquartered in Charlottesville, the agency has forestry staff members assigned to every county to provide citizen service and public safety protection across the Commonwealth, which it's been doing now for more than 100 years. DOF is an equal opportunity provider.