

Urban Tree Growth – An International Meeting and Research Symposium

The International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), Urban Tree Growth Working Group¹, and the Morton Arboretum are convening a two-day symposium on September 12-13, 2011, at the Morton Arboretum near Chicago, IL. This meeting will bring together a dozen internationally renowned researchers and a local audience to:

- Learn the current state of knowledge concerning urban tree growth, mortality, and longevity
- Identify important gaps in our knowledge, as well as promising new methodologies
- Prioritize research and education needs
- Outline a course of action for future research and outreach on tree growth and longevity

Schedule

Day 1: On Monday, September 12, invited speakers will present their information to urban foresters, arborists, landscape architects, planners, and educators that register for this one-day meeting. Questions to be addressed are: What key variables influence tree growth, mortality and longevity? How do design and management decisions influence tree performance? Keynote speakers for each of the four topic areas are listed below and will introduce the topic and present a summary of the current state of the knowledge.

Three presentations will follow in each of the four topic areas, total of 12 speakers:

- Descriptive studies of tree growth and mortality (Greg McPherson, USDA-FS)
- Roles of tree production and sales on tree growth and longevity (Ed Gilman, U. Florida)
- Roles of site design and tree selection on tree growth and longevity (Susan Day, Virginia Tech)
- Roles of tree and site management on tree growth and longevity (James Clark, HortScience, Inc.)

A summary of the talks will be presented at the conclusion of Day 1. Interactions between professionals and researchers will identify important research, management and education needs. A variety of exhibits

and posters will be on display. Lunch and refreshments will be provided for Day 1 participants.

Day 2: In the morning session on Tuesday, September 13, invited researchers and professionals will participate in a roundtable discussion at the Morton Arboretum. The primary purpose of the roundtable is to develop a research agenda and action plan for the ISA Urban Tree Growth & Longevity Working Group. This plan will involve items such as: prioritize research and outreach needs, prioritize and identify funding sources for future research and outreach, conduct and write a literature review on this topic, develop a communications and data-sharing platform, identify other related communities of interest, and create a list of educational products to develop for practitioners. Lunch will be provided for participants.

In the afternoon session on Tuesday, September 13, invited researchers and professionals will participate in field demonstrations and discussions. Field presentations will span the four topic areas and demonstrate or describe research with the intent of facilitating discussions among the group. Each field presentation will last 60 minutes with approximately 20 minutes of discussion and interaction time.

Sponsorship Details

Just as the Urban Tree Growth group aims to bring many individuals together to work towards a common goal, funding this symposium will require a collaborative effort between various organizations and industry groups. Sponsors will be recognized on event signage, website, promotional materials, proceedings, and verbally during the symposium. Sponsors contributing \$2,500 or more will receive two complimentary registrations and a display table. Sponsors contributing \$1500 to \$2499 will receive one complimentary registration and a display table. Sponsors contributing less than \$1500 will receive one complimentary registration.

Products and Outcomes

ISA Continuing Education Units will be offered to attendees during Day 1

symposium. Presenters will be encouraged to submit their presentation in a special issue in *Arboriculture & Urban Forestry*. A less tangible, but perhaps more important outcome, will be the exchange of ideas, measuring techniques and instrumentation, and research methodologies that will result from the researchers working together throughout the symposium. The synergy that develops likely will lead to long-term collaboration and international research efforts that have the potential to accelerate the acquisition of answers to our profession's research questions.

Quality Assurance

The ISA Tree Growth Working Group has made considerable investments of time, talent, money, and other resources in order to ensure the symposium is a successful endeavor. Any resources or financial support provided by the Illinois chapter will be utilized in a responsible manner reflecting the mission and goals of the organization. In addition to the anticipated outcomes, peer-reviewed manuscripts, proceedings DVD, and other deliverables listed above, the following assessments will be made to gauge the success of the event:

- Participants will be provided surveys to assess the symposium's activities.
- Question-and-answer sessions will follow all speakers.
- A summary of key research findings, debriefing interviews, and survey results will be included in a final report to be distributed to all sponsoring organizations

¹The mission of the ISA Urban Tree Growth Working Group is to foster communication, enrich scientific exchange, and enhance the quality, productivity, timeliness of research on tree growth, mortality, and longevity through collaboration. A coordinated approach will provide involved professionals with information they need to make decisions that improve tree performance. Understanding how factors interact to influence tree growth, mortality, and longevity is fundamental to actualizing the full value of urban forests through improved 1) tree selection (matching trees with site conditions), 2) modification of site conditions to foster desired tree performance, 3) targeting tree care and monitoring to improve return on investment, 4) predicting tree replacement needs due to mortality, and 5) modeling of tree benefits and costs. Current members of the Working Group are: Julia Bartens (Virginia Tech), Richard Hauer (UW-Stevens Point), Andrew Koeser (ISA), Greg McPherson (USDA-FS), Paula Peper (USDA-FS), Ward Peterson (Davey), Lara Roman (UC-Berkeley), and Bryant Scharenbroch (The Morton Arboretum).