

## Summer Tree and Shrub Watering Care

Trees and shrubs require just as much care as vegetable and flower gardens! Water is essential for the plant to manufacture food. It also acts as a coolant, keeping the plant from overheating on summer days. Finally, water serves as a system for transporting food throughout the plant. The lack of available water reduces the plant's ability to make food and maintain normal functions. Symptoms of water stress include wilting and loss of leaves. Branches may bend also.

Contrary to popular belief, most roots are not located beneath the tree or shrub and few roots are found deep in the soil. Most of the tree or shrub roots that absorb water, called feeder roots, are within the top 15 inches of soil. These roots are generally congregated at the dripline or outer branches of the plant. Mature plants may have feeder roots extending six to fifty feet past the dripline. Few water absorbing roots are under the plant's canopy or near the trunk.

Watering should occur when less than an inch of rain has fallen in a two week period and temperatures have passed 85 degrees. For practical purposes, plan on providing an inch or two of water every two weeks. In order to saturate the soil, apply the amount in a single application. A single, heavy application keeps roots deep. The end result is less root death due to temperature extremes. Water in the early morning or late evening to avoid quick evaporation.

