INTRODUCING THE EMPRESS SPLENDOR TREE

• Free trees to qualified farmers
• Fast-growing trees suitable for inter-cropping
• Valuable lumber within 10 years
• Education, support, and buyers for the lumber
Introduction to the Empress Splendor Tree

World Tree is looking for farmers to plant and grow our fast-growing Empress trees. The model is simple: World Tree provides the trees, training and support; you plant and care for them; World Tree brings a buyer for the lumber; together we share in the profits.

The Empress Tree is the fastest growing tree in the world. In its first season, it can easily grow to a height of 10 feet and will reach 20 feet on the best sites. It grows to hardwood maturity within 10 years and produces valuable, light-weight hardwood lumber.

The World Tree Eco-Tree Program

The World Tree Eco-Tree Program provides a pathway for farmers to start growing Empress trees, with the help and support of an experienced team. We give you the trees for free, we train and support you in the best growing methods and we bring a buyer for the lumber when the trees are ready for harvest.

World Tree already has 2000 acres under management, working with over 100 farmers. We are looking to expand our program with farmers in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee and Washington State.

As a farmer, you will receive 50% of the profits on harvest. Not bad, when you consider that premium quality timber currently sells for between $3 and $14 a board foot. For example, a well-managed plantation yields approximately 30,000 board feet of lumber per acre. If we sold this for $3 a board foot (the current market low) you would receive $45,000 per acre.
Empress: The world’s fastest growing hardwood tree

The Empress Splendor is the fastest growing tree in the world, reaching maturity in approximately 10 years. It will grow 10-20 feet in its first year alone.

A member of the Paulownia family, the Empress is a sacred tree of the orient, long revered for its fast growth and quality wood. It has beautiful scented purple flowers in the spring. The leaves are palatable for grazing animals, and it regrows from the stump after harvest for up to 7 cycles; no re-planting needed for 70 years!

Highlights

- Fastest growing tree in the world (according to the Guinness Book of World Records)
- Valuable lumber within 10 years
- Lumber has the highest strength/weight ratio of any commercial wood
- Hardwood worth $3-14/board foot (in current market conditions)
- Yields 30,000 board feet per acre or more, when properly planted and managed
- Regenerates without replanting
- Sterile, non-invasive, non-GMO
- Suitable for inter-cropping
- Nitrogen fixing leaves naturally fertilize and replenish the soil
- Flowers provide pollination benefits and attract honey bees
“There’s only two things you can grow in Alabama, that’s rocks and trees. I figured I might as well plant some trees. It was something new and different.

The best part is my newest field. Seeing the trees growing, all about the same height. You look out across the field and every hole is full and green. It’s just amazing.”

— Eugene Martins, Alabama, pictured with a 2 year old tree
The Empress Splendor trees supplied by World Tree are nothing short of amazing! A lot of our trees have grown over seven feet in just four months. Not only are the trees aesthetically pleasing, they are extremely hardy. In our first planting we achieved a 98% survivability rate.

With this program, the financial risk is minimal and the potential gain is great. We extensively researched World Tree as a company and Empress Splendor as a tree, and ended up with only one question, Why Not?

Simply put, we’ve never experienced the kindness, pleasantness, knowledge, and professional support with working with any other company as we have with World Tree.”

— Will Johnson, Florida
The Eco-Tree Program: How it works

The Eco-Tree program is a partnership between World Tree and farmers. World Tree has an exclusive range of Empress Splendor varietals that we provide to qualified farmers, along with education and on-site visits.

The farmer’s role is to plant and care for the trees. This includes routine tasks like weed control and watering, as well as coppicing and pruning in the first few years to ensure premium lumber quality.

Empress trees typically reach hardwood maturity within 10 years. When the trees are ready, World Tree organizes the harvest (in consultation with you) and sells the lumber. Profits are shared equally, 50/50, between World Tree and our farmers.

World Tree is a for-profit-for-good company that is funded by investors. These are the people that make the program possible, and World Tree shares profits with them after the harvest. This model ensures everyone works together for our joint success.

What you Get

- 110 timber quality Empress trees per acre, specially selected for your growing zone
- Up to 30 replacement trees per acre
- 50% of the gross proceeds from the sale of the lumber
- Support to ensure successful growth, including in person site visits
- Access to our ‘Growers Guides’ and online support materials
- A buyer for the lumber from the first harvest
- 100% ownership of the trees after the first harvest

Your responsibilities

- Land preparation (including weeding if required)
- Planting the Empress Trees, following the World Tree guides and advice
- Care of the trees, including weeding, fertilizing, irrigation (if required)
- Coppicing of the trees at 12 months
- Pruning of the trees years from 12-48 months

Risk management

- World Tree replaces any trees lost in the first two years from causes beyond the farmers control
- Annual farm visits from one of our experts for the first 3 years to support you in growing the trees
**Economic benefits**

The purpose of the program is to grow beautiful trees, with a straight long trunk with a diameter of at least 18”. World Tree provides exclusive Empress Splendor trees that have a proven track record for timber production. The trees will readily reach this kind of size (and even more) if you follow our growing instructions.

World Tree provides you with the trees at no cost - and most importantly we also provide a buyer for the lumber. We share the profits 50/50 so it is in our interest to get the best price possible. In the current market, the lumber sells for between $3 and $14 per board foot.

As an example: if the lumber sells for $3 per board foot, this would provide you with a return of $45,000 an acre. **Note that we can't predict the future or what will happen to the price of lumber in years to come.**

**Summary:**

- Hardwood lumber within 10 years
- Beautiful sustainable timber, with multiple uses
- Hardwood worth $3-14/board foot (in current market conditions)
- Yields 30,000 board feet per acre or more
- Regenerates without replanting, providing ongoing revenue for 70 years+
- World Tree provides a buyer for the lumber and you share the profits

<table>
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<th>Price per board ft. ($USD)</th>
<th>$3</th>
<th>$5</th>
<th>$8</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total profit PER ACRE</td>
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<td>$150,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmer return</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Tree return</td>
<td>$45,000</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Potential return **per acre** based on lumber prices between $3 and $8 a board foot and assuming an average 30,000 board feet per acre.
Good for your land and your soil

As a farmer you know that the health of your land and your soil is paramount. The Empress is a tree that gives back more than she receives. Her nitrogen fixing leaves replenish the soil, providing a natural fertilizer that supports the future health of your land.

From year three onwards, the tree will blossom in the spring attracting honey bees. The flowers are highly attractive to pollinators, and 10 acres of land will produce 1000 jars of honey a year.

The fast growth rate of the tree is fueled by a very powerful form of photosynthesis called C4. The trees absorb extremely high amounts of carbon dioxide, cleaning the air and creating a natural “oxygen bath” as you walk through the groves.

World Tree uses only specially selected varieties of Paulownia, propagated using conventional methods used by farmers for thousands of years. They are sterile, non-invasive and safe to plant with native species. They respond well to organic farming methods and the use of natural fertilizers such as chicken manure.

Environmental Benefits:

- Large leaves absorb significant amounts of carbon
- Regenerates after harvest without replanting
- Non-invasive
- Suitable for inter-cropping
- Nitrogen fixing leaves naturally fertilize and replenish the soil
- Flowers provide pollination benefits and attract honey bees
- A ‘wet’ wood while it is growing, naturally fire resistant

“Possibly the world’s most amazing tree,” ~ Farmers Almanac
Empress: A beautiful, useful hardwood

Empress Splendor is a light, strong hardwood that is known as the “aluminum of lumbers”. Its high growth rate, carbon sequestration and soil enhancing properties make it an ideal eco-timber, appealing to green consumers looking for environmentally friendly alternatives.

Empress Trees produce a blond timber with a long straight grain, which air dries quickly with low shrinkage and does not easily warp, crack or deform. Empress Splendor wood density is very low, making it one of the lightest timbers available on the market. Its commercial importance is due to high strength to weight ratio, excellent insulating properties, and resistance to rot and warping.

This combination of attributes makes it ideal for the boating, surfboard, and paddle board industries. Empress wood is becoming popular with surfers looking for an environmentally friendly alternative to fiber-glass boards.

Empress wood is also used in the production of musical instruments, furniture, windows, doors, venetian blinds, and crown molding. It can be peeled as veneer to a 1/32 of an inch thickness.

Lumber properties

- Very light, yet strong hardwood
- 2/3 the weight of the lightest commercial wood grown in the USA. It weighs an average of 14 to 19 lbs. per cubic foot. It is 1/3 the weight of oak (44 lbs. p/cubic ft.) and 1/2 the weight of pine (30 lbs. p/cubic ft.)
- One of the highest strength to weight ratios of any wood
- Extremely buoyant and does not absorb water
- It can be peeled for veneer in 1/16 - 1/32-inch thicknesses
- Intricate patterns can easily be cut with a jig saw or band saw without splitting easily
- Furniture, doors and windows can be made with close tolerances
- All normal finishing materials can be applied and it bonds well with glue
- Air-drying takes as little as 30 days
- Boards can be kiln dried at high temperatures in as little as a few hours to 10% moisture content with no warping
- Shrinkage from green to kiln-dry is only 2.2% radial and 4.0% tangential. Remains stable during changes in humidity and experiences little shrinkage or expansion compared to most other woods
- It is highly durable and resists decay under non-ground contact conditions
- Wood is insect resistant; termite resistance increases its appeal as plywood
- Good insulator: Empress log homes have twice the R factor as pine or oak
The Lumber Market

According to the United Nations, demand for wood will increase by 40% by 2030 and double by 2050. The lumber industry predicts a surge in lumber prices in North America as supply struggles to keep up with demand.

In addition, rapid growth in Asian economies such as China is driving global demand. Empress lumber has long been prized in Asia and the tree is associated with wealth and prestige. In fact, the emblem of the tree has been the Prime Minister’s seal in Japan since the thirteenth century.

Empress lumber is used for window, doors, crown moldings, cabinets, furniture, spindles, surf boards, coffins and veneers. The global furniture market size in 2017 was USD $540 billion and is predicted to rise to $750 billion by 2024. Wood furniture accounts for an impressive 60% of this market share.

According to analysts, concerns about global warming are driving a boom in eco-furniture with customers prepared to pay premium prices for earth-friendly wood furniture.

“The increasing adoption of eco-friendly furniture is one of the major trends being witnessed in the global wooden furniture market. Increasing concerns regarding global warming have led to the adoption of eco-friendly furniture... Though eco-friendly furniture is associated with premium prices, the demand for such furniture is increasing.”

- Technavio market report

World Tree has previously brokered Empress lumber grown in Georgia, South Carolina and Maryland. The Lumber was sold by World Tree for profit to retailers of surfboards, furniture, crown molding, doors, siding for the exterior of buildings, coffins and aircraft wing struts.

World Tree is actively growing the market, promoting the properties of Empress lumber and working with timber merchants who are looking for sustainable hardwood alternatives. Presently the biggest hindrance to contract is supply of lumber and that is why World Tree is working with farmers to build that supply.

Market highlights:

- Demand for timber is anticipated to double over the next 30 years
- Used for furniture, crown molding, veneers, window blinds and finishing wood
- Used for boats, surfboards and musical instruments
- Highly prized in Asia / North American market is undeveloped
- Sustainably grown timber which appeals to green consumers
- All markets which are rapidly expanding with a trend towards eco-products
- Superior to balsa and could replace it for aerospace and wind turbine applications
- Can replace cedar for the fencing industry
- Better for the environment than plastics, yet can be combined with resins
Harvest time ...

When it comes time to harvest, World Tree will take the lead in making sure we have the right people, equipment, insurance and protocols in place. We will perform a timber cruise well in advance of harvest time, so that we know exactly what to expect and will create a customized plan for your property.

Our team of experts take care of every detail, from managing road access to transportation, milling and drying. We will work in full partnership with you, to make sure your land and time is respected. We will also clean up afterwards.

- World Tree manages the harvest and sales process
- Full consultation with you regarding timing, access and harvest approach
- Lumber is sorted into low, medium and high grade
- Yields anticipated to be 30,000 board feet or more on well managed site
- Selling price ranges from $3 to $14 per board foot

.. and beyond!

One of the remarkable features of the Empress tree is its ability to regenerate. After harvest, the stumps will sprout new growth and soon you will have a new generation of Empress trees, without replanting.

This second (and third and fourth ....) harvest belongs 100% to you. World Tree would be honored to be your partner in brokering your lumber from these trees if you wish to continue our partnership.
I asked myself, would these trees really grow that well? Well I found out they do if you take good care of them in the first year; mine grew from ground level to 15 ft. tall in one season after coppice.

I want to say to new farmers that World Tree has a great team to work with, and I look forward to a long relationship with them.”

— Johnathan Walker, Alabama

(pictured left sitting on a recently felled Empress Tree)
At first I did have some concerns about whether the tree would grow in poor soil, in my climate. But I discovered they have outstanding growth for this area, and will do amazingly well if properly cared for.

I want to say to new farmers that World Tree has been super, very helpful and informative and nice friendly people to work with... give it a try. You'll love the results!"

— Dave Smith, Mississippi, pictured is a 3 year old tree
Frequently asked questions

How and when do I get my trees?
The best time to plant Empress Splendor trees is in late April or May. We will call you to let you know your trees are ready to be shipped, answer your questions and make sure you are ready to plant them. It is important that you plant the trees as soon as they arrive.

How many trees do I get?
You will receive a minimum of 10 acres/1,100 trees. Larger numbers will be provided based on the amount of qualified land you have and availability.

Is this tree invasive?
The short answer is “No”.

There are many varieties of Paulownia. Of these, only one, the Paulownia tomentosa, is invasive. The reason the tomentosa tree is classified as invasive is because it drops up to a thousand viable seeds per tree every year. This tree is also not ideal for ornamental use or lumber production because it is spindly and inconsistent in growth. The tree that we have chosen for this program was specially developed in Australia by a brilliant agronomist over 20 years ago. It is a cross between the fortunei and the elongata. Not only is this tree sterile, it also exhibits fast, straight growth ideal for producing high quality, grade A lumber.

How many years has World Tree been growing Paulownia?
World Tree has been buying lumber and selling Empress Starlings for the last seventeen years.

However, it was not until 2015 that we recognized that we were not fully taking advantage of the massive demand for Paulownia wood in the USA market. We wanted to expand to take advantage of this market trend, but many of our farmers could not afford to purchase our premium trees. That’s why we have partnered with investors from around the world to purchase these trees so we can deliver them to you at no cost.

I am not sure if I want to do this, can I wait until later this year to decide?
Be sure to take your time to make the right choice for your situation. We have a limited number of contracts that we award each year, so it is worth getting in touch and qualifying your land. If you would like to learn more about the program and see if you and your land would be a fit, contact us for a short phone consultation. On the call we require your GPS land coordinates for the field you would like to plant. After the call we will use that information to determine if your land qualifies.
Frequently asked questions (continued)

What kind of land are you looking for?

Paulownia is a very rapid growing tree and there are only a few limiting factors to the overall growth of this tree. The first is water. If there is not enough rainfall or irrigation then this tree will not put on the diameter that it needs to be able to be ready for harvest in 10 years. The second limiting factor is the overall hardness of the soil. If the tree cannot establish its roots easily, you may risk losing that tree. This is why we prefer to grow in sandy loam soils.

What is involved with growing this tree?

Paulownia is a very fast-growing and persistent tree. But like any little plant, they require tender, loving care for at least the first few years while they become established. When we ship these saplings, they are usually only 4-6” high. Thus it is important to keep the weeds and grasses short so they do not compete with the tree. It is also important to water these trees. Initially every step you take to establish the trees, will promote a fast, straight growing tree for the following years.

What’s the catch?

Empress trees require care and attention to reach their full potential. They require pruning and maintenance to produce the best quality lumber, so you need to be prepared to take care of them properly especially in the first four years. World Tree will support with guides, site visits and phone support along the way.
About World Tree

It was out of my love for the Empress Splendor tree that I started World Tree in 2002. I travelled the world meeting specialists, learning how to plant and manage the trees for optimal lumber and bringing together a group of global experts who today are the World Tree team.

While the Empress tree is known and greatly prized in Asia, it is relatively unknown in North America. World Tree has been an innovator, leading the way in researching the best way to plant and grow the tree, educating the public in the properties of the tree, and training farmers how to successfully cultivate it.

Over the years, I have had the pleasure of meeting hundreds of farmers. I was shocked to learn that many farmers are living on the edge, hardly scraping out a living and are worried about the future. In fact, it was the farmers who gave me the idea for this program: “You give us the trees and we’ll grow them!”

The Eco-Tree program launched in 2015. We now have over 2000 acres of trees under management with over 100 farmers. We have been featured on Oprah, The American Environmental Review, Bloomberg, the Farmers Alamanac and continue to attract the attention of the media to our amazing tree and committed farmers.

Thank you for considering working with us and the Empress Tree as a potential crop for your farm.

Wendy Burton, Founder & CEO, World Tree
How to Apply

Empress trees grow well in zones 7-11 and prefer a sandy-loam soil. We are particularly looking for farmers in the growing areas highlighted on the map below. If you are interested in the program, please contact us with your land location to find out if you qualify.

Qualification criteria:

- 10 acres of land, in zone 7-11, below 2200 feet
- Warm, wet growing season
- Well drained soil, preferrably sandy loam
- Water table below 6-8 feet

Next steps to qualify:

Fill out the application form at [www.worldtree.info/farmers](http://www.worldtree.info/farmers)

or

Email farmers@worldtree.info

Call toll free 1-888-693-TREE (8733)
Apply Now to be a World Tree Farmer
www.worldtree.info/farmers