



FAQs

How do I get American chestnut seeds or seedlings?

- Membership: Join TACF as a seed level member to receive our improved blight-tolerant seeds.
- Pure American Seedlings: These seeds can be ordered every year in February from our website. Members of TACF have the privilege of ordering before seedlings go on sale to the public.
- Ceremonial Plantings: Limited plantings on public sites for educational purposes. Please contact your chapter to learn more.
- Growing Trees for Nut Production: Google nurseries in your area. We recommend planting native Americans. TACF does not endorse or promote nurseries at this time.

When will blight-tolerant American chestnuts be available to the public?

- TACF is committed to supporting all approaches toward the restoration of the American chestnut tree. Our work includes three major research tracks: Breeding, Biotechnology, and Bio-control. We are hopeful that combining advancements in all three of these areas will allow us to produce a blight-tolerant tree. Because of the many factors involved, we cannot specify when a 100% blight-tolerant tree will be available.

Why plant pure American chestnuts if they will eventually get the blight?

- To preserve native germplasm, which preserves genetic diversity for future breeding.
- To learn about site viability and best practices for future restoration plantings.
- Some will live long enough to produce seeds that can feed wildlife and people alike.
- Growing the trees adds biodiversity to forests where other tree species are dying.

What's the difference between the Dunstan chestnut and TACF's backcross chestnut?

Dunstan is a commercial hybrid that is mostly Chinese in origin, meaning that it looks like a Chinese chestnut but has a high tolerance to the blight. There is very little resemblance to an American chestnut in the Dunstan hybrid.



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What is chestnut blight?

The chestnut blight is caused by a fungus, *Cryphonectria parasitica*. It was accidentally imported into the U.S. from Asia on plants and was first detected in New York in 1904. American chestnut trees had no resistance to the fungus. The disease spread quickly creating a massive trail of dead trees along its native range, nearly 200 million acres, from Maine to Alabama. By 1950, the fungus had eliminated the American chestnut as a mature forest tree.

Why should I care about this one tree?

- Carbon Sequestration: Fast growing, the tree can help mitigate global warming through the uptake and storage of carbon.
- Healthy Forests: The tree's restoration will improve our forests and increase biodiversity.
- Food Source: The seed is smaller and sweeter than other chestnuts and is highly nutritious.
- Outstanding Timber: The lumber is straight, strong, and rot-resistant.
- Road Map for the Future: American chestnut research creates a template for restoration of other species across the world.

Is the American chestnut extinct?

There are more than 400 million American chestnut trees still living in the native range, so too many to be classified as extinct or endangered. However, the species is considered "functionally extinct" by the USDA since the tree no longer grows tall and straight but has instead been reduced to an early-succession-stage shrub. Stump sprouts will emerge from the tree, and may grow for a period of time, but will eventually succumb to the blight and the cycle will begin again.

What should I do if I think I found an American chestnut?

1. Collect a leaf and twig sample.
2. Visit our website and click on this link to learn what to do and to download a Tree Locator Form:
<https://www.acf.org/resources/identification/>
3. Mail in the form along with the leaf and twig sample to TACF's regional office for your state chapter.

You can also use your mobile device to document the location of a tree by downloading the TreeSnap app:
<https://treesnap.org/>



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