



SARATOGA HORTICULTURAL FOUNDATION, INC.

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Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywood'

With the increasing nursery production and planting of this tree in California for landscape and street tree use, it would be prudent to give some considerations to the likely, future short comings of this tree if current production methods continue.

The climate in California is conducive to the rapid growth of this subject and consequently consideration of the use of rootstocks should be relevant.

It has been (and still is) the practice to work this cultivar onto the species of Ash which are conventionally used in nursery practice for the production of the american Ash species, hybrids and cultivars. The cultivar 'Raywood' is a selection of the species F. oxycarpa (it is sometimes included in the species F. angustifolia) and as such is a tree with a much finer habit of growth and slower increase in girth when compared with the american species usually used for rootstock purposes. When worked on these species, or indeed even F. excelsior, a distinct shoulder develops because of the greater increase in girth of the rootstock. This will inevitably lead to a decline in vigour and a shortening of the life of the tree.

It would be a pity if this valuable ornamental tree gained a poor reputation because of convenient nursery practices which could be avoided. It would be more reasonable to use F. oxycarpa as a rootstock and so obtain a compatible growth pattern.