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## The Meyer Spruce

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# The Meyer Spruce

Bill Meyer, WSU Senior Groundskeeper (Retired)



It's funny how one winter can be so different from another. Last winter started out with numerous, heavy snowfalls, while this winter started out with little snow and mild temperatures. From a tree's viewpoint, it seems that the

deep snow insulates the roots of the tree, and fewer problems occur the following spring. This winter's early lack of snow plus the low rainfall in the fall may point toward problems this coming spring. Will the mid-January snow help? Time will tell.

Let's take a look at one of the newer spruces the nurseries are offering as both an ornamental and Christmas tree. The Meyer Spruce is closely related to the Dragon Spruce of China and resembles the very popular Colorado Blue Spruce tree. It seems like everyone would like to have a Colorado Blue Spruce in the

yard. Its attractive blue needles and conical shape make it a popular choice for any landscape.

However, the Meyer Spruce is a nice alternative to the Colorado Blue Spruce and has a number of advantages. It has a very dense blue green foliage and is very winter hardy. So it is tailor made for our Minnesota winters. Because the Meyer Spruce can tolerate our humid summers better than the Colorado Blue Spruce, fewer fungal problems should plague the Meyer Spruce. Finally, the tree can grow to over 40 feet. The disadvantages include having a slow growth rate and being difficult to find at your local nursery. Be persistent. I found a tree farm in northern Minnesota that grows the tree.

This finely named tree can be found at the main entrance to the Tau Center on the West Campus. Standing next to the smaller Meyer Spruce, which was planted about 3-4 years ago, are several mature Colorado Blue Spruces. Make a point of checking this tree out.