American Linden or Basswood
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*(Tilia americana)*  

**General Description**  
A medium to large tree native east of the Missouri River in North Dakota. Desirable as a landscape tree for its large stature, shade and aromatic flowers. Fruit with attached pale-green bract, gives tree a two-tone appearance in late summer. The largest tree in North Dakota is 75 feet tall with a canopy spread of 64 feet.

**Leaves and Buds**  
**Bud Arrangement** - No terminal buds. Lateral buds are alternate.  
**Bud Color** - Reddish-brown in color.  
**Bud Size** - Lateral buds are 1/8 to 2/5 inch long, somewhat flattened, lopsided, and smooth or slightly downy at tip.  
**Leaf Type and Shape** - Simple, broad-cordate or heart-shaped, oblique base.  
**Leaf Margins** - Coarsely-serrate with long-pointed teeth.  
**Leaf Surface** - Leathery with tufts of hair along midrib and veins.  
**Leaf Length** - 3 to 6 inches.  
**Leaf Width** - 3 to 6 inches.  
**Leaf Color** - Green above, paler below; yellow fall color.

**Flowers and Fruits**  
**Flower Type** - Borne in 3 to 7 flowered pendulous cyme, attached to a large, pale greenish-yellow, leaflike bract.  
**Flower Color** - Creamy-white to pale-yellow perfect flowers.  
**Fruit Type** - Fruit is a pea-sized nutlet about 1/4 inch in size, thick-shelled, and without ribs.  
**Seed Color** - Brown to tan when mature.

**Form**  
**Growth Habit** - Pyramidal when young, becoming rounded when mature.  
**Texture** - Medium-coarse, summer; medium-coarse, winter.  
**Crown Height** - 50 to 70 feet.  
**Crown Width** - 30 to 50 feet.  
**Bark Color** - Gray to brown, broken into many long narrow, flat-topped scaly ridges.  
**Root System** - Wide spreading.

**Environmental Requirements**  
**Soils**  
Soil Texture - Grows well on deep, fertile, well-drained loam and clay soils. Flood plain tree.  
Soil pH - 5.5 to 7.5.  
Windbreak Suitability Group - 1, 3.

**Cold Hardiness**  
USDA Zone 2.

**Water**  
Intermediate tolerance to flooding. Not drought resistant. May develop leaf scorch under drought conditions.

**Light**  
Full sun, but will tolerate shade.

**Uses**  
**Conservation/Windbreaks**  
Medium to tall tree for farmstead windbreaks, and riparian plantings in eastern third of North Dakota.

**Wildlife**  
Old hollow trees make good den trees for wildlife.

**Agroforestry Products**  
**Wood** - Light, soft, and tough. Sold mainly for lumber, dimension stock and veneer; used in making drawing boards, furniture, tongue depressors, and for carving.  
**Food** - Honey derived from linden flowers is regarded as the best in the world.  
**Medicinal** - Used for indigestion, hysteria, nervous stomach or palpitations.

**Urban/Recreational**  
Used as shade, boulevard, and park tree in open landscape areas due to its large size and spreading root system.

**Cultivated Varieties**  
Dakota Linden (*T. americana* ‘Dakota’) - Hardy, pyramidal selection by the late Ben Gilbertson, Kindred, North Dakota.  
Pyramidal Linden (*T. americana* ‘Fastigiata’) - Narrow, upright growing cultivar. ‘Boulevard’ is new cultivar name.  
Redmond Linden (*T. americana* ‘Redmond’) - Striking pyramidal form. Believed by some authorities to be a Bigleaf Linden (*T. platyphyllos*) x Littleleaf Linden (*T. cordata*) hybrid.

**Related Species**  
Bigleaf Linden (*T. platyphyllos*)  
Mongolian Linden (*T. mongolica*)  
Hybrid Lindens, eg, ‘Dropmore’, ‘Wascana’ and ‘Glenleven’ are derived from American Linden x Littleleaf Linden (*T. cordata*) parentage. Hardy in Northern Plains.

**Pests**  
No serious pest problems in North Dakota.