



Q: Do some trees lose their leaves because it's so cold in the winter?

A: Not quite, its short winter days that are to blame. Trees use leaves to feed themselves by capturing sunlight. Leaves are complex structures that require constant supplies and maintenance. So the question becomes then: How much do leaves take from the food they make? The answer: Quite a bit. A shorter day means that ultimately less food can be made by the leaves and trying to maintain a big, broad leaf in winter would require tremendous resources. Unlike evergreens, deciduous trees lack the "tools" necessary to fight the winter's harsh weather. The tree would be "spending" way more to get way less in return. Not good business. Those resources are instead better spent on maintaining the rest of the plant and preparing next year's buds. It is a risky plan that hinges on stored resources and the strength to re-grow a crown once conditions have improved. Deciduous trees are the new kids on the block relative to conifers (evergreens). Time will tell if it is a better system for survival.

Brad Durfee
CT Licensed Arborist #S-4283
Senior Arborist
Sprigs & Twigs Tree Service
www.sprigsandtwigs.net
860.884.9563