



Tree Line



New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association

January 2009

Special point of interest:

◆ **Group Buying:**

The NHVTCTA offers a number of group buying opportunities for members. Those interested should contact Jim Horst at (802) 447-1900 for more information.

◆ **Planning Ahead:**

Upcoming NHVTCTA meeting dates and locations have been set:

Summer Meeting
June 20, 2009
Paxton Green
Cuttingsville, Vt.

Fall Meeting
Sept. 26, 2009
Sibgo Tree Farm
Colebrook, N.H.

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Winter Meeting Preview

The New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association's annual winter meeting will take place at the Canadian Club in Barre, Vt., on Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2009.

Following the business meeting, members will hold a marketing update and roundtable discussion.

Thom McEvoy, UVM professor and extension forester will discuss the cost-effective use of fertilizers in Christmas tree plantations.

After the traditional roast beef luncheon, Ronald Kelley, forest insect and disease specialist with the state of Vermont, will provide a preview of coming

attractions that growers should keep an eye out for in their trees. In particular, Kelley will discuss the use of OnyxPro for balsam gall midge control.

Finally, Nigel Manley will explain the "marketing check-off program" that's being debated in the Christmas tree industry, followed by a discussion on the topic.

Pesticide and forester licensing credits have been applied for.

Members are encouraged to enter a tree or wreath in the Vermont Farm Show competition, held the day of the meeting.

Registration for the meeting will be available at the door. Hope to see you in Barre.

Trees for Troops a Success

New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association members contributed 420 trees to the national Trees for Troops program.

Nationwide, a total 17,082 trees were delivered to members of the military at 53 bases around the country, with 410 sent to soldiers overseas.

"From my end we saw a great response from the public and the guard families who were involved," reports Bob White, who helped to organize the effort in Vermont. "We had far more media attention than I had envisioned. I requested and received help from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, they provided their publicity specialist who over night

pulled things together for us with the media. Three TV networks did stories and at least three newspapers ran articles. We spoke this year about remembering that while we all are in hard financial

times its important that we remember there are many of our country's soldiers in harms way that need our support in anyway we can give it to

them."

Nigel Manley oversaw the Trees for Troops effort in New Hampshire. "Thanks to Nigel's suggestion we asked several deployed and fallen Guard families to come help cut the trees and talk with the media, it was a very positive experience. During one interview

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President's Message: Facing the Challenge

Happy New Year to everyone...at least I hope it's going to be. I feel change is necessary and good, but can sometimes cause stomach acid! And what will be changed? How much control do I have?

What is my New Year's resolution? Not to worry (too much) about the state of our economy and how that is going to effect not only our own farm, but all of you and your farms as well.

Have you checked out the new American Christmas Tree Association? The Web site is www.christmastreeassociation.org. There are some interesting articles like "Carbon Footprint study finds artificial trees best for the environment."

Then, please go to <http://checkoffstudy.com/> and give some serious consideration to whether you think a checkoff program would be good for our

industry. [Editor's Note: Upcoming issues of *Tree Line* will have more information on this topic.]

Do we need to bring back a Vermont Christmas Tree Promotion Board? Is there money to do so in our present state of economics?

Am I going to be able to dig out a tree for the Vermont Farm Show on January 27?

Are we going to get any new volunteers to run for election to our board of directors in 2009?

How will we improve if we don't?

Are we going to be able to attract some new and younger growers to Christmas tree farming? Will the industry survive without new farms?

Am I going to be able to afford to go to the Northeast Christmas Convention and Trade Show January 23-25 in Saratoga Springs? I wish I had enough

money to even consider going to the CT Plus Meeting in Las Vegas, February 24-25. Should I seriously consider going to the 2009 NCTA Convention and Trade Show in Chattanooga, Tenn., August 12-15. There's so much out there to help us maintain and build our farms!...but so far away....what will the price of gas be then?....what will have changed?

At the same time we are trying to be realistic about our economy, we must continue to strongly market our trees and greens and stick to our longer term visions for our industry...in other words...stay the course and stay strong!

Happy New Year everyone!

*Rich Rockwood,
President*



New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association



2009 Officers

President	Rich Rockwood	(802) 685-4343
Vice President	Jay Weir	(603) 237-8617
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Executive Secretary/Treas.	Jim Horst	(802) 447-1900
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Nigel Manley	(603) 444-6228	(2008)
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Alternate Directors

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Jay Weir (NH)	(603) 237-8617	(2008)

Contact Information

Jim Horst, Executive Secretary
569 Pleasant Valley Road
Bennington, VT 05201-9637
Phone: (802) 447-1900
E-mail: info@nh-vtchristmastree.org
Association Website: www.nh-vtchristmastree.org

For matters related to *Tree Line* only:

Patrick White, Editor
NHVTCTA *Tree Line*
18 Merritt Road
Middlesex, VT 05602
Phone: (802) 223-3880
E-mail: pwhitvt@aol.com

2009 Tree Line Publication Schedule

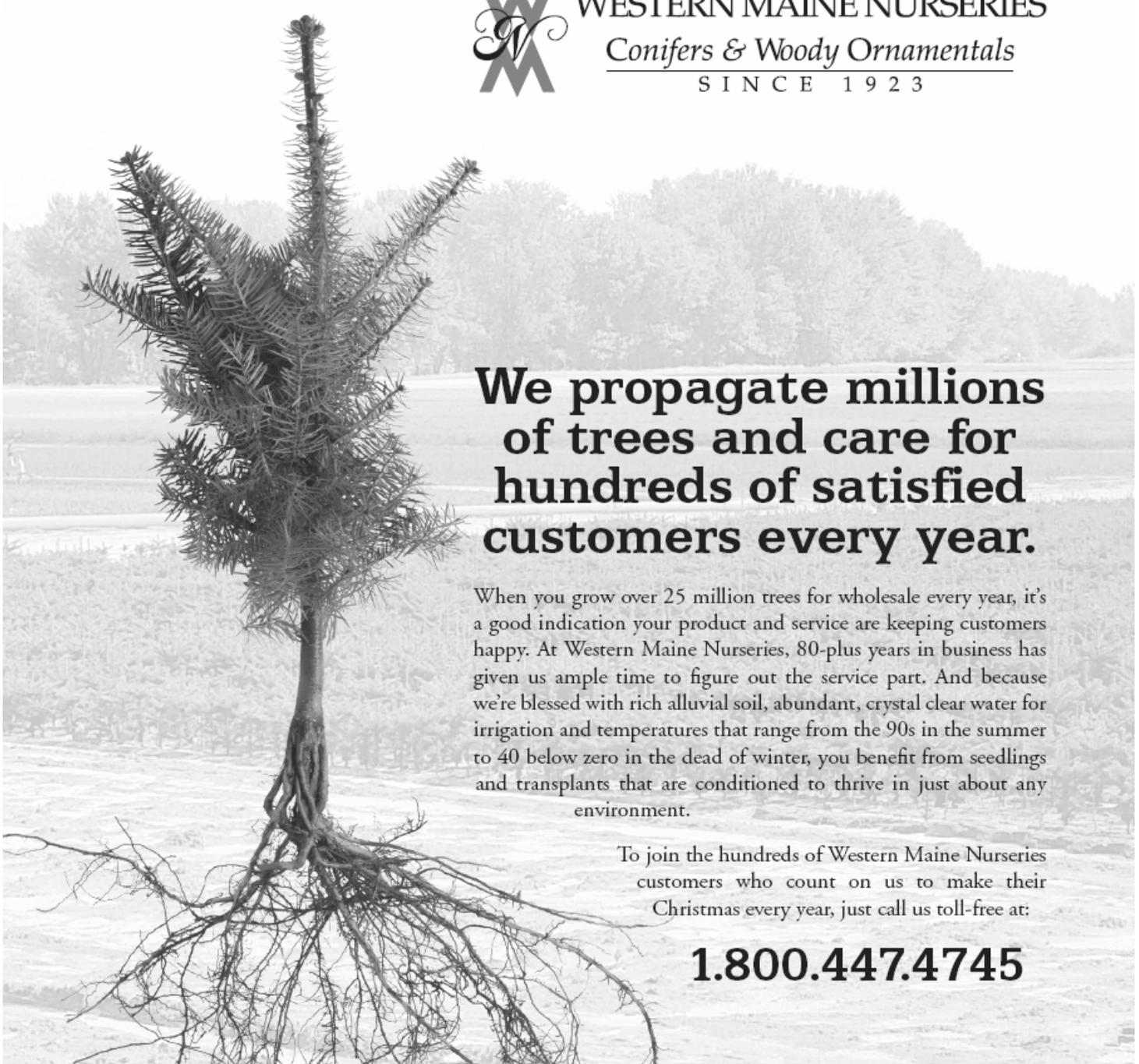
Issue	Ad/Submission Deadline
January	--
June	May 15
September	August 14



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Research Report: Alternative leader control in Fraser/Korean fir

The following research was conducted by Pascal Nzokou, Jill O'Donnell and Bert Cregg at Michigan State University and reported in 2007.

Excessive leader growth is a challenge for Christmas tree growers who are seeking about 30-35cm (12-14") shoot elongation for good balance between height and lateral growth. In 2006 we investigated the use of a growth regulator Naphthalene Acetic Acid (NAA) and a girdling process using the Top-Stop Nipper (a 5-blades plier) as alternative methods to slow leader growth in Fraser fir, and Korean fir. **[Editor's Note: for more information on the Top-Stop Nipper, see page 6.]**

The Fraser fir study was conducted at Korson's tree farm, and the Korean fir study was established at Mathisen tree farm. Both trials were established as separate experiments

and were conducted on trees planted in 2003. The experimental designs for the two tests were randomized designs with seven NAA concentrations applied to single tree plots, replicated 50 times for a total of 350 treated trees. The NAA used was a commercial formulation called Sucker-Stopper (Monterey Lawn and Gardens Products Inc. Fresno, CA). The seven NAA concentrations (0, 80ml/L, 120ml/L, 160ml/L, 250ml/L, and 500ml/L) were prepared by mixing the appropriate volume of concentrate with water. About 5ml of WA 100 surfactant (BASF Chemical Inc.) was added to the mixture to lower the surface tension of the solution. Each concentration was applied to the leader using a double-sided roller (Easy Roller™). The treatments were applied to healthy uncut leaders with 7.5-15 cm (3-6") of current year leader growth.



Michigan State University

NAA growth regulator applications are made to leaders.

NAA applications at rates of 40ml/L to 160ml/L reduced the height growth in both Fraser fir and Korean fir.

However, in Fraser fir, other morphological parameters such as the leader straightness and bud density were generally adversely affected.

The highest rates of 250ml/L

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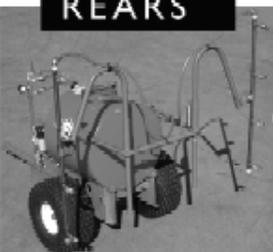


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Research Report: Shearing shape

The following information appeared in the November 20, 2008, issue of ScienceDaily.

The Fraser fir is gaining popularity among American consumers looking for beautiful, long-lasting Christmas trees. Consumers favor Fraser fir for its conical shape, dark green foliage, pleasant aroma, and excellent needle retention.

Consumer surveys indicate that the shape of a tree is the most important factor affecting Christmas tree selection, followed by needle retention, species, and price.

Traditionally, Americans have preferred dense trees, whereas Europeans have preferred more natural, or "open" trees. Open trees have more space to hang ornaments, holding up to two-thirds more decorations than heavily sheared trees, and tend to weigh less than dense trees, providing advantages for growers and consumers alike.

Researchers and Christmas tree growers are working to shape Fraser firs that satisfy public preferences. M. Elizabeth Rutledge, a graduate student in the Department of Forestry and



The Top-Stop Model 2008/2010 at work, as seen on <http://www.top-stop.dk/uk>. The company claims that, "With the Top-Stop Nipper you can now make staggered cambial incisions on the leader. This reduces the flow of sap to the top bud, limiting the length growth. Mechanical growth control with the Top-Stop Nipper has been tested and developed during the last 10 years."

Environmental Resources North Carolina State University, is the primary author of a recent study of shearing techniques on Fraser fir. Rutledge and her collaborators evaluated the use on Fraser fir of the Top-Stop Nipper (TSN) a four-bladed, hand-held tool used to reduce growth in Christmas trees.

They found that the TSN, when combined with traditional knife shearing or growth regulator treatments, "might offer a method to produce dense trees with minimal shearing or to leave longer leaders to produce a more open "European-style" tree with a layered, natural appearance.

According to the study, published in the April 2008 issue of *HortTechnology*, use of the Top-Stop Nipper shows promise for tree growers, but "there is so much variation among trees that the effect of the TSN on long-term appearance, quality, and marketability of Fraser firs is yet unknown."

One thing is certain: researchers and growers will listen to consumer preferences and create ways to produce picture-perfect Christmas trees.



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Colorado Blue Spruce (Picea pungens glauca)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	7-14"	28.75	46.00	230.00	Zones 2-7
4 yr. seedlings*	4-0	10-18"	36.25	58.00	290.00	
4 yr. transplants	2-2	6-12"	93.75	150.00	750.00	
• 5 yr. transplants*	2-3	12-20"	106.25	170.00	850.00	
6 yr. transplants*	3-3	24-36"	156.25	250.00	1250.00	
Colorado Blue Spruce (Majestic®)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	7-14"	50.00	80.00	400.00	Zones 2-7
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	12-20"	125.00	200.00	1000.00	
Norway Spruce (Picea abies)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	10-18"	34.50	55.00	275.00	Zones 2-7
4 yr. seedlings*	4-0	14-28"	37.50	60.00	300.00	
4 yr. transplants	2-2	8-16"	112.50	180.00	900.00	
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	14-24"	125.00	200.00	1000.00	
Black Hills Spruce (Picea glauca var. densata)						
4 yr. seedlings	4-0	10-18"	43.75	70.00	350.00	Zones 2-6
• 6 yr. transplants*	3-3	14-28"	106.25	170.00	850.00	
Engelmann Spruce (Picea engelmannii)						
6 yr. transplants*	3-3	14-22"	93.75	150.00	750.00	Zones 2-7
Serbian Spruce (Picea omorika)						
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	14-24"	112.50	180.00	900.00	Zones 4-7
6 yr. transplants*	3-3	24-36"	125.00	200.00	1000.00	
Meyer Spruce (Picea meyeri)						
4 yr. transplants	2-2	6-12"	93.75	150.00	750.00	Zones 2-7
6 yr. transplants*	3-3	10-18"	118.75	190.00	XXXXX	
White Spruce (Picea glauca)						
• 6 yr. transplants*	3-3	24-36"	118.75	190.00	950.00	Zones 2-7

FIR VARIETIES

	Age	Size	Per 50	Per 100	Per 1000	
Fraser Fir (Abies fraseri)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	4-8"	34.50	55.00	275.00	Zones 4-7
4 yr. seedlings	4-0	6-12"	37.50	60.00	300.00	
5 yr. seedlings*	5-0	12-20"	50.00	80.00	400.00	
4 yr. transplants	2-2	8-16"	93.75	150.00	750.00	
• 5 yr. transplants*	2-3	12-20"	106.25	170.00	850.00	
• 6 yr. transplants*	3-3	16-24"	118.75	190.00	950.00	
• 7 yr. transplants*	3-4	20-30"	125.00	200.00	1000.00	
Fraser Fir (Ayers Seed Orchard)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	4-8"	37.50	60.00	300.00	Zones 4-7
4 yr. seedlings	4-0	7-14"	43.75	70.00	350.00	
5 yr. seedlings*	5-0	12-20"	50.00	80.00	400.00	
4 yr. transplants	2-2	8-16"	100.00	160.00	800.00	
• 5 yr. transplants*	2-3	14-24"	118.75	190.00	950.00	
Fraser X Balsam Fir Hybrid (Abies fraseri x balsamea) New!						
5 yr. transplants	2-3	12-20"	100.00	160.00	800.00	Zones 4-7
Balsam Fir (Abies balsamea)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	4-8"	34.50	55.00	275.00	Zones 3-6
4 yr. seedlings	4-0	8-16"	37.50	60.00	300.00	
Bracted Balsam Fir (Abies balsamea var. phanerolepis)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	4-8"	37.50	60.00	300.00	Zones 3-6

Concolor Fir (Abies concolor)						
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	14-24"	137.50	220.00	1100.00	Zones 3-7
Canaan Fir (Abies balsamea phanerolepis)						
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	12-20"	137.50	220.00	1100.00	Zones 4-7
Corkbark Fir (Abies lasiocarpa var. arizonica)						
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	10-18"	106.25	170.00	850.00	Zones 4-6
Korean Fir (Abies koreana)						
6 yr. transplants*	3-3	14-28"	125.00	200.00	1000.00	Zones 4-7
Douglas Fir (Lincoln N.F. New Mexico)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	10-18"	34.50	55.00	275.00	Zones 4-6
4 yr. seedlings*	4-0	20-30"	50.00	80.00	400.00	
4 yr. transplants	2-2	8-16"	93.75	150.00	750.00	
• 5 yr. transplants*	2-3	24-36"	125.00	200.00	1000.00	
Douglas Fir (Deep Mountain®)						
4 yr. seedlings	4-0	12-20"	50.00	80.00	400.00	Zones 4-6
6 yr. transplants*	3-3	18-28"	112.50	180.00	900.00	
Douglas Fir (Shuswap Lake Region, B.C.)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	10-18"	43.75	70.00	350.00	Zones 4-6
• 5 yr. transplants*	2-3	18-28"	112.50	180.00	900.00	

PINE VARIETIES

	Age	Size	Per 50	Per 100	Per 1000	
Scotch Pine (Lake Superior Blue II®)						
2 yr. seedlings	2-0	5-10"	28.25	45.00	225.00	Zones 5-8
Scotch Pine (East Anglia)						
3 yr. transplants	2-1	6-12"	65.75	105.00	525.00	Zones 2-8
Scotch Pine (French Highland)						
2 yr. seedlings	2-0	4-8"	25.00	40.00	200.00	Zones 2-8
Eastern White Pine (Pinus strobus Northern Seed Source)						
4 yr. transplants	2-2	6-12"	90.75	145.00	725.00	Zones 3-8
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	14-24"	106.25	170.00	850.00	
Eastern White Pine (Pinus strobus Southern Seed Source)						
4 yr. seedlings*	4-0	16-28"	56.25	90.00	450.00	Zones 3-8
5 yr. transplants*	2-3	20-30"	112.50	180.00	900.00	

OTHER VARIETIES

	Age	Size	Per 50	Per 100	Per 1000	
American Arborvitae (Thuja occidentalis)						
3 yr. seedlings	3-0	6-12"	47.00	75.00	375.00	Zones 3-6
• 5 yr. transplants*	2-3	14-24"	112.50	180.00	900.00	
Canadian Hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)						
• 5 yr. transplants*	2-3	14-24"	112.50	180.00	900.00	Zones 3-7
• 6 yr. transplants*	3-3	20-30"	137.50	220.00	1100.00	

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Research Report: Leader control in Fraser/Korean fir

continued from page 4

and 500ml/L caused unacceptable reduction in growth and in many cases leader death.

NAA applications on Korean fir resulted in significant reduction of leader growth and significantly increased the bud density without negative impact on leader straightness. Partial girdling of stems was not effective at reducing the leader height, in both Fraser fir and Korean fir.

This study was repeated in 2007 at Mathisen tree farm testing low NAA rates on Korean fir. Some of the treatments look promising, and the results are being analyzed.



In the Michigan State research, NAA treatments produced promising results on Korean fir (left) but not acceptable on Fraser fir (right).

Trees for Troops

continued from page 1

the wife of a deployed soldier got a cell phone call from her husband in Afghanistan which turned into a special story," adds Bob White.

Larry Krygier and Gary Foote were featured in several stories. The *Burlington Free Press* sent a reporter to ride along as we picked trees were picked up. The Vermont Dept. of Forests and Parks again supplied the transportation in northern Vermont. Russel Reay handled the southern Vermont pickup route.

Below is just one e-mail that came to mystory@treesfortroops.org expressing thanks for a tree received in a delivery ceremony, complete with Santa visiting children, at Fort Knox in Kentucky:

Thank you so much Trees for Troops and Glove Hollow Farm. We appreciate your donation and your continual support for soldiers and their families. It is very encouraging that you care.

Sgt. Justin Miller, Emily and Davis

Fort Knox, KY

Trading Post

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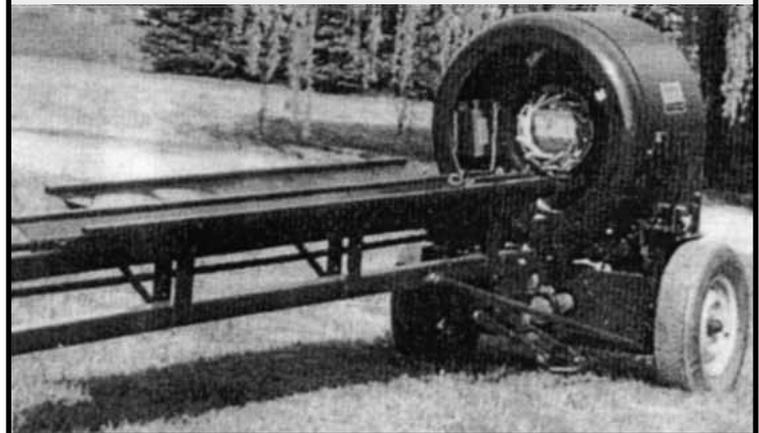
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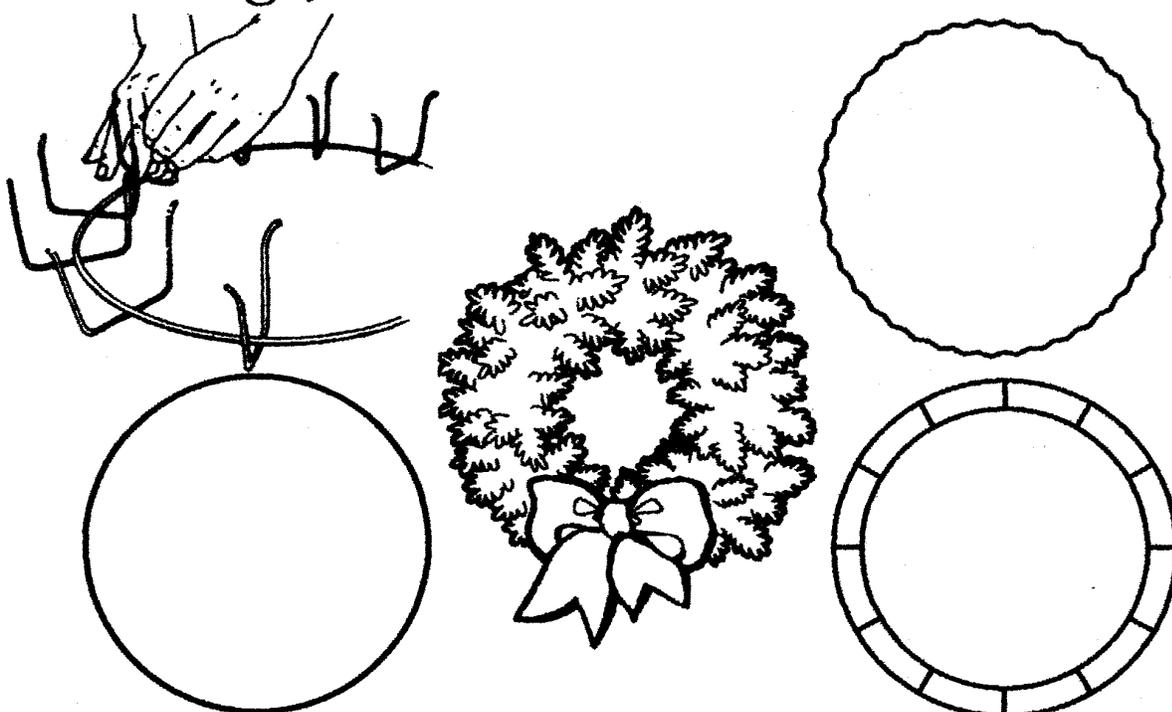
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Member Perspective: 19 Reasons Never to Allow Tagging!

**By Mike Ahern
Glove Hollow Farm
Plymouth, N.H.**

Ask yourself, before you start to allow tagging: is it worth all the "bad will" associated with this program? We made the mistake and tried to make it work at our farm for 8 years. Since stopping, we discovered that there are people who come to our farm because we state that we don't allow tagging. These are some of our tagging experiences:

#1: Lost customers who go elsewhere because their tree they picked out in the fall was taken. They get a refund and go elsewhere to get a tree. They leave unhappy.

#2: Lost customers who come to the farm and leave because the best trees are already taken. Especially at the end of the season there is a big difference between tagged trees and the shorter trees no one cut yet. Without tagging they would never see the difference of what they could have. They leave unhappy.

#3: The time it takes to explain to a customer how to tag during a busy retail day knowing they may be back in a day or two to cut it.

#4: Looking up information on Dec. 23 for the phone numbers of the families who tagged a tree but have not returned to cut it. Oh that's right, despite giving direction to pay when you tag, four families never paid at the time of tagging. These perfect trees left in the field will have to be sold to a bargain hunter who may only have it up a couple of days at most.

#5: The 5th tree standing was paid for so it was left in the field for the family to cut Christmas eve. Come spring it is cut down to replant the area. Next Christmas the family is upset they can't get a refund on the tree they never came back for. They leave unhappy.

#6: When you finally get smart and end tagging so you get

the word out to your tagging customers that you are ending tagging. Next thing you hear is that you are getting out of the Christmas tree business. Word spreads that you are not opening up this season.

#7: We grade our trees by height and quality for wholesale with different color ribbons. Families who tag will often use our grading ribbons to mark the few trees they are trying to decide between. When we start to cut for wholesale we start noticing trees with 2 sometimes 3 color ribbons on it and some trees with non. The whole harvest stops, 3 to 4 men sit around as I frantically try to put the ribbons on the right trees. Imaging running over an acre of trees swearing at the top of your lungs. Every time you cut a tree you're wondering, "Did someone switch the tag on this tree too?"

#8: No matter how hard we try some trees don't get paid for when they are tagged. When harvest comes around and a family leaves with their tree showing us the tagging ribbon as they are driving by in their vehicle. We are left trying to figure if it was actually paid for or not.

#9: When people come to tag a tree they always have questions for anyone around especially when you are trying to keep a 3-man wholesale crew working. The harvest stops and you try to be as courteous as possible.

#10: Sensing that people were tagging without paying and cutting without paying you try to keep the tagging to one area. Big mistake: they still tag where they want to. When you remove their tagging and streamers and family dog picture and Patriots banner and santa hat mail it back to them at your cost. They never come back or they come back unhappy. If you don't remove this tagging quick enough, others start tagging in the same wrong area.

#11: Families are getting smart and won't go to a farm that

allows tagging.

#12: Seeing a small child whaling/crying as they look down at the decorations next to the stump of the tree that was to be the center of their Christmas.

#13: Night time or dusk customers have a hard time noticing tagged trees and feel terrible when you point out that they have cut someone else's tree. They have to go back down and cut another or they say they will come back another day. You have to take time away from your day to call a tagging customer that their tree was cut by mistake.

#14: You will lose sleep trying to please your tagging customers. They will expect tagging and will pressure you to keep it going. They will not understand your reasons to end tagging and will find somewhere else to get a tree when you stop.

#15: Picking up tinsel for 1 hour off the ground (off a tagged tree) before it goes into a neighboring field.

#16: Bookkeeping is miserable: you try to check off folks when they pickup their tree, then Dec. 8 comes around someone wants to tag and come back next week to cut. Then Dec. 15 comes and someone else wants to tag.

#17: Each season we tried to find a way to tell a few thousand people not to cut 55-100 trees that are specially tagged. More and more time was spent directing folks around the tagged trees, which takes away from educational opportunities or just spending the time catching up on the past year.

#18: It is just bad business to limit what people can pick. It hurts feelings of children and adults and just pushes them to another farm.

#19: People will stop going to your farm the longer you continue to allow tagging and seek out farms that don't allow tagging. *We are now picking up families because we started to promote "No tagging" at our farm.*

ASACK AND SON TREE FARM ORDER FORM SPRING 2010



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Shipping Information (if picking up at the Nursery in Barton VT, leave blank)

Ship To: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Select approximate Shipping date (Shipping dates may vary due to weather)

Late April

Early May

Questions?? contact Bill Asack evenings 6-8 pm. 1-802-754-6934

Season	Seedlings	Tree Age	Price per Seedling	Qty	Total
Spring 2010	Balsam Fir: Mountain Strain Vermont Seed Source	3-2	\$0.80		
Spring 2010	Balsam Fir: Cooks Strain Vermont Seed Source	2-2	\$0.70		
Spring 2010	Canaan Fir: West Virginia Seed Source	2-2	\$0.80		
Spring 2010	Balsam-Fraser Hybrids: Vermont Seed Source	2-2	\$0.70		
Spring 2010	Fraser Fir: North Carolina Seed Source	2-2	\$0.70		

Total Seedling Cost

Terms:

- 1) Payment: 25% Deposit, remaining balance due 3 weeks before ship date. Note: Deposits are nonrefundable.
- 2) Orders under \$100 dollars must pay in full.
- 3) Minimum order of 100 transplants.
- 4) All Buyers purchasing seedlings and transplants for production of products for sale on a farm, nursery or green house are exempt from Vermont sales tax. (Requires completion of state of Vermont Agriculture Sales Tax exemption Certificate form S-3A)
- 4) Guarantee: We guarantee our stock to be healthy, fresh dug, true to name and shipped in a timely manner. However due to the great many variables that effect survival rates, that are out of our control, we do not guarantee survival rates and do not make any allowances for replacement of stock.
- 5) Due to the volatility of UPS Shipping rates we can no longer offer a flat fee for shipping. Add thirty percent for estimated shipping. In the event that the UPS charges at the time of shipping exceed the estimate you will be billed and are responsible for paying the extra shipping charges. In the event that the estimate exceeds our actual UPS cost we will refund the difference to you within a month after our spring shipping season ends.
- 6) Add \$3 per 100 trees for packing material and shipping cartons (For trees that are to be shipped via UPS only). Orders picked at farm have no additional packaging costs.

Vermont Residents Add 6% sales tax	
Add 30% of total seedling cost for Estimated Shipping via UPS ground. (See Term 5)	
Add \$3 per Hundred Trees for Packing materials and shipping cartons. (UPS Only)	
Total Cost (Sum of the 4 lines above)	
Deposit of 25% of total cost. Orders less than \$100 dollars must pay in full. (amount to be charged or enclosed with form)	
Balance Due (Amount owed before ship date if any).	

Payment Information:

- Check enclosed
- Pay with Credit Card
- VISA
- MASTERCARD

Amount to charge _____

Account Number: _____

Expiration Date _____

Name of Card Holder _____

Purchasers Signature _____

Billing Information (incomplete or incorrect information will delay shipment of orders)

Bill to Name: _____

Street Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Editor's Desk

A number of newsworthy items have crossed my desk since the last issue of *Tree Line*.

Mail Order Honor

The *Wall Street Journal*, following a practice it has conducted in the past, placed orders for mail-order Christmas trees from various farms around the country, to help its readers evaluate the quality of trees, ease of ordering and promptness of delivery of each. The newspaper noted that mail-order Christmas trees offer many advantages for customers, but also noted several problems it experienced with some trees it had delivered.

Of the various farms it ordered from around the country, the *Wall Street Journal* wrote that it was a NHVTCTA member farm that stood out above the rest: "The tree that topped them all came from the family-run

Weir Farms in Colebrook, N.H. The company steered us to a 7.5-foot-plus Fralsam Fir, a hybrid it has developed that combines the strength and durability of the Fraser with the fragrant appeal of the Balsam. It also had a natural triangular shape—no signs of aggressive pruning here—and its branches were plentifully filled out. Our expert was so impressed that he was tempted to order one for himself."

National News, part II

Another NHVTCTA member was in the national news over the holidays. Bloomberg News carried a story about The Rocks in Bethlehem, N.H., noting that the beautiful setting and chance to go and select a Christmas tree provided just the old-fashioned experience that many people were looking for in stressful economic times. "Families pick out a

tree to bring home, along with taking sleigh rides, chatting with Santa Claus and eating s'mores made with marshmallows toasted over an open fire," Bloomberg reported.

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