

*This Year Purchase  
A Real Tree*



*A Traditional Christmas  
Begins With a Real Tree*

Brought to you by:

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land  
Stewardship, Patty Judge, Secretary  
&

Iowa Christmas Tree Growers Association

## *Real Christmas*

- ✓ There are approximately 33 million Real Christmas Trees sold in North America every year.
- ✓ Real Trees are a renewable, recyclable resource. Artificial trees contain non-biodegradable plastics and metals.
- ✓ For every Real Christmas Tree harvested, 2 to 3 seedlings are planted in it's place the following spring. In the spring of 1999, over 56 million Real Christmas Tree seedlings were planted in the U.S.
- ✓ One acre of Christmas Trees produces enough oxygen daily for 18 people.
- ✓ The top selling Christmas Trees in Iowa are Scotch pine, white pine, Fraser fir, balsam fir, Douglas fir, spruce, and concolor.

**The Iowa Christmas Tree Growers Association (ICTGA) was founded in 1963. Today they have over 175 members.**

## *Recyclable*

“Unlike artificial trees, Real Christmas Trees are renewable and recyclable. However, many people still perceive cutting trees down as bad for the environment and that’s not the case. Real Christmas Trees no longer come from the forest. They are grown on farms throughout Iowa,” says Patty Judge, Secretary of Agriculture. She went on to say, “Christmas Trees are like other crops. They are meant to be harvested, just like corn, soybeans or vegetables. Since trees are a crop, they are managed on a sustainable basis.”

Many communities chip the trees and use the chippings for mulch, hiking trails, playground areas, animal stalls or landscaping. Whole trees are recycled for an even greater variety of uses: river shoreline stabilization, sand dune erosion prevention, marshland sedimentation, fish habitats, winter garden decorations, wild bird feeders, and even hazardous chemical clean-ups.

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### *Traditions*

For many families, picking out their traditional Real Christmas Tree at a choose and harvest farm, has become an annual event. Getting the family together revolves around warm, peaceful traditions that sometimes date back generations

Iowa Christmas Tree farms receive visits on Thanksgiving Day and after from families who keep family traditions by selecting a fresh tree in an outing. Many combine this activity with other traditions such as taking a family picture beside the tree before it is cut down. Looking back over the years of pictures gives a neat history on how the family has grown. Also ornaments symbolizing family events can bring back very fond memories. Creating your own traditions can be most rewarding.

## Care and Safety

Caring for your real Christmas trees is easy...the most important thing to remember is that real trees need water – just like a fresh bouquet of flowers. When you bring your tree home, cut one-quarter inch off the base of the trunk so it absorbs water readily. Until you are ready to decorate, leave your tree outside, protected from the wind and sun. Before bringing your tree inside your home, make another fresh cut on the base to open the tree stem so it can take up water. Immediately place your tree in the stand and fill it with fresh water. Keep in mind to never let the water drop below the fresh cut area. Trees can be very thirsty and can drink between two pints and a gallon of water per day.

Remember real trees by themselves don't start fires. There must be a spark or heat source. Therefore, check all lights and replace cords that are worn or frayed. NEVER use lighted candles on your tree. Place your tree away from fireplaces and other heat sources. Be sure to turn all decorations off before retiring at night and any time you leave home.

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*For more information contact:*

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship



Patty Judge, Secretary of Agriculture

[www.state.ia.us/agriculture](http://www.state.ia.us/agriculture)

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Iowa Christmas Tree Growers Association



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**For a directory of Iowa Christmas Tree Growers contact the IDALS web site: [www.state.ia.us/agriculture](http://www.state.ia.us/agriculture) or call the IDALS office.**

Contact your local Christmas Tree Grower for further information:

