



M E D I A R E L E A S E

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

www.PickTnProducts.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 12, 2015

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A VISIT TO A CHRISTMAS TREE FARM IS FUN—NATURALLY!

Nashville— Are you looking for a way to generate some holiday spirit that doesn't involve a mall? Between now and Christmas, there's no better place for an outing than a nearby Christmas tree farm. Even if you already have your tree, tree farms offer all sorts of options from wagon rides and hot chocolate to wreath-making classes and visits from Santa.

Natural trees from local tree farms are completely renewable, recyclable, 100 percent biodegradable and are close to home, leaving a negligible carbon footprint.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide and other gases and emit fresh oxygen as they grow. Christmas trees are often grown in soil that doesn't support other crops. Their root systems help stabilize soil, protect area water quality and provide refuge for wildlife. Grown on farms just like any other crop, one to three new seedlings are planted for every tree harvested to ensure a constant supply.

Artificial trees are made from petroleum plastic and various metals, including lead, which is an ingredient in PVC (polyvinyl chloride) plastic. About 85 percent of artificial trees start in China, leaving a huge carbon footprint on their way to retail stores. Plastic trees don't biodegrade, so they end up sitting in American landfills for centuries.

Do you already have an artificial tree? Do allergies prohibit you from having a real tree indoors? You can still make the most of a fun trip to the tree farm by choosing and even making your own natural wreaths and garland for use outside the home.

After the holidays, cut trees and other natural décor can be dropped off at local receiving sites to be turned into mulch for area trails. Balled and burlapped live trees are replanted once the holidays are over. Tree farmers are happy to give tips on planting and care for transplanted trees.

Finding nearby Christmas tree farms is easy with the free Pick Tennessee mobile app. App users can quickly locate farms, then use GPS mapping for directions. The Pick Tennessee Products website, www.PickTnProducts.org, offers a statewide directory of Tennessee Christmas tree farms. You can also follow Pick Tennessee Products on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram.

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TAKING CARE OF YOUR TENNESSEE CHRISTMAS TREE

- Displaying trees in water in a traditional reservoir type stand is the best way to keep them supple and fragrant.
 - Before putting a tree in a stand, be sure you or the tree farmer makes a fresh cut to remove about a 1/2-inch thick disk of wood from the base of the trunk. Don't cut the trunk at an angle, or make a v-shape!
- Once home, place the tree in water as soon as possible. Don't bruise the cut surface or get it dirty.
- Keep the freshly cut trunk submerged in a bucket full of water until placing it in a stand for decorating.
- Avoid whittling the sides of the trunk down to fit a stand. The outer layers of wood are the most efficient in taking up water and should not be removed. Drilling a hole in the base of the trunk does not improve water uptake.
 - Keep trees away from major sources of heat (fireplaces, heaters, heat vents, direct sunlight). Lowering the room temperature will slow the drying process, resulting in less water consumption each day.
 - Make sure that the level of water does not go below the base of the tree.
 - Use of lights that produce low heat will reduce drying of the tree.
 - Always inspect light sets prior to placing them on the tree. If worn, replace with a new set.
 - Do not overload electrical circuits.
 - Always turn off tree lights when leaving the house or when going to bed.