



Tree Line



New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association

June 2007

Special points of interest:

♦ Fall Meeting:

The fall meeting of the NHVTCTA will be held at Bill Asack's farm in Barton, Vt., on September 22. More details to come in the next issue of *Tree Line*.

♦ Group Buying:

The NHVTCTA offers a number of group buying opportunities designed to help members cut costs. The Association recently negotiated a group insurance benefit package for its members with the Co-operative Insurance Companies, based in Middlebury, Vt. Contact your local insurance agent for details. And NHVTCTA has had a long and successful group chemical group buying program with Helena Chemical; see advertisement on page 14.

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Summer Meeting Preview: Balsam Acres

The summer meeting of the NHVTCTA will take place Saturday, June 23, at Tom and Judy Lang's Balsam Acres farm in Worcester, Vt. For more information on the meeting, contact Jim Horst at (802) 447-1900. Thanks to Tom and Judy for sharing a little history of the farm, below:

Balsam Acres was actually conceived in the mid to late 1950's when owner Tom Lang, then a teenager, helped Washington County Foresters Henry (Hank) Duquette and Norm Hudson plant trees on weekends. It was in the planting of thousands of mostly red pines, which were touted as the tree of the future for utility poles, that Tom's love of growing trees was germinated.

After completing his educational requirements at UVM, where he majored in economics, Tom was fortunate enough to be able to buy his old family home at what is now 36 Elmore Road in Worcester. He and his five siblings were raised. It took him two attempts to purchase the property but in 1966 but he finally succeeded at the unbelievably high price of \$15,000.

Soon after he purchased the property his love of planting trees burst forth and he decided he would plant a few Christmas trees on the north side of the property in the area now known as the "Sugar House Lot." Four hundred seedlings were purchased from a Pennsylvania

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Update: NCTA Convention in Bangor, Maine

The National Christmas Tree Association will kick off its new annual convention schedule this summer in Bangor, Maine, and you won't want to miss it.

From a great line-up of speakers to a tasty lobster bake, the NCTA Convention & Trade Show will offer something for everyone. Mark your calendars now for Aug. 15-18 and begin making plans to attend. (Complete details at www.christmastree.org/convention.cfm)

This year, you'll have the opportunity to choose from four great programming tracks: Production, Marketing, Agritainment and Business Management. Here is a small

sample of what's in store:

- Facing Down Phytophthora
- Building a Mail-Order Business

Case Studies

- Wreath Production & Trends
- Retail Lots Q&A
- Web Sites 101 & 102 - Beginning & Advanced

■ Proper Selection & Use of Herbicides

- Building Mazes at Your Choose & Cut Farm

The Opening General Session is designed to keep you up-to-date on all the things going on at NCTA and show you how you can get involved, so you won't want to

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President's Message

Hello again fellow growers and related industry experts,

As I start to write this article I am eagerly awaiting the buds on my newly planted transplants to flush. Do you get the same questions going through your head?...Did all the roots make it below and facing down, did I go too slow with the sprayer, should I have planted the Fraser in that spot, did I plant too close, should I have checked the pH, will we have another wet year, etc. You get the idea.

Thank you to Jim Horst for organizing the Canaan Fir delivery this season. As this group buy program was put together late it didn't take long before the trees were sold out. If the initial order with this new supplier pans out we can think about increasing it for future years. Thanks again Nigel for providing a pick-up location.

We had a very good directors meeting June 6 in White

River Jct., Vt. Your representatives are moving forward on plans to improve our Web site. We are embracing technology with regards to the vendor.

At this meeting, we talked with Stephanie Johnson, an investigator with the N.H. Fire Marshall Office. It seems there might be potential for a joint effort between our association and the Fire Marshall Office to make fire safety suggestions, in regards to public buildings, for local fire chiefs.

We are a long way off on this subject as well as the need to bring Vermont in on this matter.

An exciting time of year it is. Anyway...may your roots always face down and your sprayer make steady speed.

The summer meeting will be at Tom and Judy Lang's on Route 12 just north of Montpelier, Vt., on June 23. Hope to sell all of you then.

Best Regards,

Mike Ahern, president

Trading Post

FOR SALE: Two Kelco electric wreath machines, three years old, \$1,300 each or both for \$2,400. Call 802-563-2369.

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New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association



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2007 Tree Line Publication Schedule


Issue	Ad/Submission Deadline	Mailing Date
January	December 22, 2006	January 15
June	May 18	June 15
September	August 24	September 7



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Research Report: Phytophthora root rot of Fraser and other true firs

Excerpted from a 2003 report on "Nursery, Landscape and Christmas Tree Research Projects and Educational Programs" published by Michigan State University.

Phytophthora root rot of Fraser fir, can be caused by several species of Phytophthora and is a limiting factor in production if trees are planted in low areas with poor soil drainage.

Increased acreage of Fraser fir in Michigan has resulted in more trees being planted in unsuitable soils. In these situations, Phytophthora root rot can cause devastating losses in transplant beds as well as in plantations.

Project objectives

The purpose of this study was to survey Michigan Christmas tree plantations and nurseries for root rot and identify

the species of Phytophthora associated with diseased Fraser fir. This knowledge will allow us to institute management plans for Phytophthora root rot in Michigan Christmas tree plantations and to identify fir species resistant to Phytophthora root rot.

Results

Similar to a results of a survey conducted in 1986, the most common species of Phytophthora found associated with Fraser fir plantings in Michigan were *P. citricola* and *P. cactorum*. Although *P. cinnamomi* is highly pathogenic to Fraser fir and is problematic in North Carolina, it was not recovered in Michigan in this or the 1986 survey. It has been suggested that *P. cinnamomi* is poorly adapted to the cooler temperatures of Michigan soils.

Of significance, however, was the finding of another

species that has been difficult to characterize. Different aspects of this strain resemble both *P. megasperma* and *P. cryptogea*. Other *P. megasperma* isolates have not been able to cause disease on Fraser fir, but this novel strain is strongly pathogenic to Fraser fir and appears to be new to Michigan farms.

Using the most pathogenic Phytophthora species from our recent survey, we inoculated various fir species in greenhouse tests. In these assays, it appears that Canaan and balsam fir were more tolerant of root rot than Fraser fir.

A unique opportunity to test the results of our greenhouse studies on root rot resistance in Canaan fir appeared during our survey. Both highly pathogenic and weakly pathogenic isolates of Phytophthora were present in the soil where a severe root rot

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Weed control options for the summer

By John F. Ahrens, Plant Scientist Emeritus, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Valley Laboratory, Windsor, Conn.

We have come to expect that an April application of a suitable preemergence herbicide (often a mixture of two or more herbicides) will prevent weeds in our plantations until at least August. Then, in September we could start applying fall treatments to clean up perennials and brush. However, depending on the predominant annual and perennial weeds on a site and the weather, this often doesn't happen and, alas, starting in June weeds

again start to invade. What those weeds are and how troublesome they become should determine whether we decide to control them in the summer or ignore them until fall.

Often spot treatments to control especially troublesome weeds in sections of a plantation are warranted, but sometimes it is necessary to treat whole fields. There is no substitute for walking the fields at least every week or two, starting in May, not only to look for weed problems but also to scout for insects, mites and other problems. That is the way to avoid unpleasant "surprises" in the form of damaged trees, or weeds and brush that get out

of control. Weeds like Canada thistle, hedge and field bindweeds (many erroneously call them morning glories!) and annual grasses such as foxtails and barnyard grass are best controlled in their seedling stages—less chemical is required and treatments are more effective.

For some spot treatments a wick applicator containing 1 part Roundup and 2 to 3 parts water, carefully directed to minimize contact with sensitive conifer foliage, can be very effective, especially when the weeds are less than 6 to 8 inches tall. The wipers are light and less tiring than knapsack sprayers.

However, I like to add a pre-emergence herbicide to Roundup to provide residual control, and that is not possible with wick applicators. Examples of mixes for backpack spraying that might be used are: Roundup at 3/8 to 1/2 cup plus one of the following per 3 gallons of water: a) Princep L at 3/8 to 1/2 cup; b) Princep L at 3/8 to 1/2 cup plus Surflan at 1/4 cup; c) SureGuard at 1/2 to 1 tablespoon or d) Pennant Magnum 1/2 cup alone or plus Princep L at 3/8 to 1/2 cup. The latter (d) is a good mix for kill of yellow nutsedge and extended control. These treatments all have to be directed to avoid contact with conifer foliage.

A mix that I like for controlling bindweed (and vetch in June) before the vines deform the conifer leaders, is Goal 2XL or Galligan at 2/3 ounce plus Stinger at 1/2 teaspoon per gallon of water. The vines are sprayed lightly just to wet their foliage from about mid-June to early July. This mix also controls thistles and many other broadleaf weeds. It has not injured conifer foliage when lightly sprayed.

To control annual grasses such as foxtails, barnyard grass and crabgrass with post-emergence herbicides such as Fusilade, Vantage or Envoy, treating before the grasses exceed about 8 inches tall is important.



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It takes less chemical to kill of immature grasses and better results are achieved. Perennial grasses such as quackgrass also are more easily controlled when immature, although rates are higher for perennial grasses and a second application 10 to 14 days later often is required. Follow the label rates for those herbicides and add a non-ionic surfactant to sprays of Fusilade or Envoy. Vantage needs no added surfactant. These herbicides are safe over-the-top of conifers (including seedlings/ transplants) even during active growth but they only control grasses, not sedges or broadleaf weeds.

Although their labels may caution against mixing the above postemergence grass herbicides with other herbicides, we have found that mixtures with simazine (Princep, etc.) are safe on conifers (transplant size and larger) and mixtures with Goal 2XL at 1 qt/acre are safe from early June on. Adding Goal will allow postemergence control of many broadleaf weeds such as ragweed and pigweeds. Adding Stinger as a third component at 4 to 5 ounces per acre will control young horseweed, thistles, clovers and vetch also with safety over conifers.

There are two other herbicide mixes that I like for suppressing perennial weeds and killing annuals starting about June 10 both in transplant beds and plantation-grown true firs and Douglas-fir and white pine. (We have not tested it in white or Colorado spruce.) These mixes are for calibrated sprays-either tractor-mounted or knapsack and have been applied over the tops of conifers. By "calibrated" I mean that the spray volume per acre is known and controlled by maintaining constant speed, pressure and swath width.

The first is Roundup Original (or equivalent) at 4 ounces per acre plus Goal 2XL or Galligan at 16 ounces (1 pint) per acre. This works well in killing annual grasses and certain

broadleaf weeds and suppressing perennial grasses. To broaden the spectrum of control to include a broad range of broadleaf weeds, mostly annual but also some perennial, we add Stinger to the mix at 3 to 4 ounces per acre. For those who treat with knapsack sprayers I suggest that you use Goal Tender 4F at 8 ounces per acre plus 1/4% non-ionic surfactant instead of Goal 2XL at 16 ounces per acre. Adding surfactant to Goal 2XL or Galligan is unnecessary and may cause injury to the conifers. Goal Tender is less volatile and does not have the odor that can be objectionable to applicators. Goal Tender will be available in the Northeast for the first time this year. We also have tested the two combinations above in July in seedbeds of Fraser fir, Balsam fir, white pine and Douglas-fir with excellent results in controlling annual weeds without seedling injury.

In addition to herbicides, periodically mowing weeds and perennial grasses between the tree rows helps to reduce competition for light, nutrients and water. Some growers like to keep their row middles like a lawn, with several mowings a season. This is a matter of preference but it can be a waste of time and money. Three mowings-one in June, one before shearing (to make it easier to shear) and the last in the early fall is sufficient in many plantations.

Reminders: The 2007 New England Guide to Chemical Weed and Brush Control in Christmas Trees is available for downloading at the University of New Hampshire website: http://extension.unh.edu/Forestry/Docs/NEG_TWC.pdf

To download pesticide labels, go to www.CDMS.net

Finally, if you have questions about specific weed problems, do not hesitate to give us a call.

Our new Web site is coming soon...

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Research Report: Grafting Fraser seedlings

The following is republished with permission. Copyright ScienCentral, Inc. (www.sciencentral.com). Funded in part by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. ESI-0201155. Look for a more detailed look at grafting research in the next issue of Tree Line.

Picking just the right Christmas tree can be as much of an art form as decorating it. Some people go for the short bushy ones, while for others it's a tall, slender tree with small needles that fits the bill. For those who want a pleasing aroma, dark green color, and needles that don't fall off as soon as your ornaments go on, the Fraser fir (*Abies fraseri*) is a top choice.

"Fraser firs are considered one of the premier Christmas trees species in the U.S.," says Christmas tree geneticist John Frampton.

But hundreds of thousands of these North Carolina natives are dying. A microscopic fungus called *Phytophthora cinnamomi* rots away the roots of the trees, and spreads from tree to tree through

moisture in the soil. 87 species of *Phytophthora* have been identified around the globe, and they attack a whole array of plants.

"We estimate that it causes direct losses every year of one and half million dollars," he explains. "Once the *Phytophthora* is in the soil it makes it impossible to go back and replant Fraser firs in that area."

Frampton and his colleagues from the Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources at North Carolina State University are looking for ways to fight back.

Grafting Fraser seedling onto resistant roots

Studying fir trees from all over the world, Frampton has found several species that have a natural resistance to the fungus. He grew seedlings and inoculated them with *Phytophthora cinnamomi* to look for resistance. "The most resistant species was Momi fir which is from Japan. Two other fir species that we're interested in are Pindrow fir, from the Himalayan Mountains, and Turkish fir from Turkey," he says.



Grafting Fraser seedling onto resistant roots

Frampton has shown that "grafting" Fraser fir seedlings onto the stem and roots of a resistant tree passes on some of the resistance to the Frasers. He has since begun teaching the grafting techniques to local growers. But, even among the resistant species, some trees are more resistant than others. "We still need to do research to ensure that we can get material that is consistently resistant," he says. So now he's searching for the most resistant trees to use for grafting — based on both genetic makeup and the environment in which they grow. Something he hopes to find by studying the seeds of the Turkish and Trojan firs he recently collected in Turkey.

"We're assembling a collection of seeds with as much genetic diversity of these two species as possible... to understand how resistance to this disease varies geographically. So that we can in the future go back and reliably get resistant material of these two species," explains Frampton.

He plans to grow out trees from the seeds and inoculate them with *Phytophthora cinnamomi* to look at resistance among the offspring, or progeny, of those trees.

A big problem

While a threat to one of the America's top selling Christmas trees is daunting, the stakes are

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even higher for Frampton's home state. Growing more than 50 million Fraser firs in the mountains, North Carolina is the nation's second largest Christmas tree producer, with a \$100 million industry.

"Fraser is our most important crop in North Carolina. Unfortunately it is also the most susceptible to Phytophthora root rot," explains Frampton's colleague, horticultural scientist Eric Hinesley.

"If you get Phytophthora root

rot into a field, you are pretty much out of luck. Fungicide is so expensive that it would cost so much to try and get rid of the fungus that you could pretty much buy a new farm."

Phytophthora is believed to have originated in Southeast Asia and have arrived in the U.S. through southern seaports in the 1800's. But it only became a problem for the North Carolina Christmas tree industry in the 1960s when the industry went from using trees from natural

groves to plantations.

Frampton hopes his grafting strategy could make such problems a part of the past, and allow the replanting of Fraser firs in areas currently spoiled by the fungus, preserving what some consider the Cadillac of Christmas trees.

On the other hand, he says the Turkish firs also make some good-looking Christmas trees, so we could one day be adding a bit of an international feel to the holidays.

Summer meeting preview: Balsam Acres

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source, planted and the farm was born. The original intent was to furnish Christmas trees for family and close friends. Things didn't go too well at first. Tom didn't really know much about the business, didn't use herbicides and lots of the first seedlings died off pretty fast. Soon a new seedling source was selected from a more northern climate and things began to look better. Most of the trees lived and did quite well despite the lack of herbicides or pesticides. The grass didn't grow too well in that location anyway and a little fertilizer was all it took to get things going with the new seedling source. Soon inspiration took over and the "Garden Lot" was created south of the Sugar House Lot.

In 1982 the North Branch Grange approached Tom and offered to sell him the field contiguous to the southern edge of his property on the other side of Minister Brook. It was a natural for Tom, the Grange was happy with his plans to expand his farm on the land and the deal was done. The Brook Lot was born, then the East end of the Village Lot followed shortly by the West end of the Village Lot.

Only a few trees were harvested until the late 1990's. As we all know it takes a long time to begin to realize a substantial harvest in the Christmas Tree busi-

ness. The lack of vegetation control contributed heavily to this problem. With the aid of knowledge gained from his associates in the NH/VT Christmas tree association herbicide use began in earnest in the late 1980's and business picked up.

Just about that same time centerpieces and wreaths were added to the business. After the untimely passing of his first wife, his present spouse, Judy, joined the business in 1998. As luck would have it she not only possessed the business acumen need-

ed but we found she loved the growing and marketing part of the business, as well.

The business grew rapidly, maximum production was reached in 2004 and expansion began in 2005 with the addition of the Sutton Lot just below the new log home on the property, owned by Tom's niece and her husband—Will and Sue Sutton. The Suttons have expressed a deep desire to one day own the property and the business thus the future of Balsam Acres looks promising.

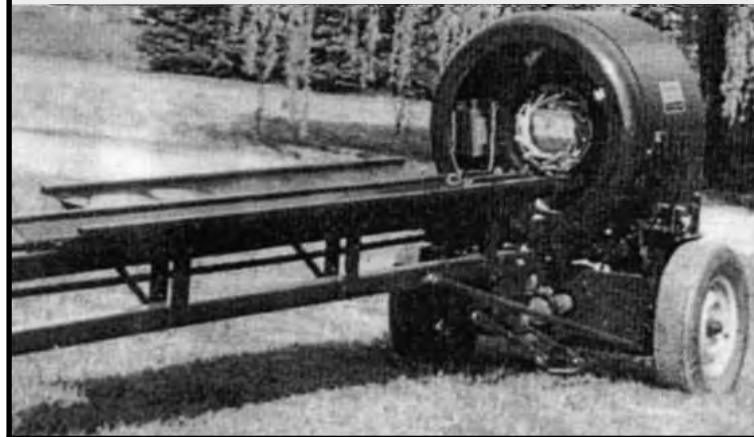
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Research: Phytophthora in Fraser fir

continued from page 4

epidemic was occurring. It was obvious at the outset that the root rot was associated with contaminated nursery stock from an out-of-state nursery since diseased trees abruptly stopped in the eighth row of a 14-row landing where nursery stock from one nursery was changed to that of another. The next six rows of Fraser fir were from an in-state nursery and no trees in these 6 rows showed symptoms of root rot.

Furthermore, not only did the Fraser fir in this field originate from different nurseries, but the Fraser fir landings at one point were separated by a landing (16 rows) of Canaan fir. Similar to our greenhouse results, the Canaan fir did not develop root rot even though water drained from the diseased trees directly through the Canaan fir landing. Another landing of Fraser fir planted to the far side of the Canaan fir began to develop Phytophthora root rot later in the study.

This disease pattern strongly supports the probability that Phytophthora spores were carried

by the drainage water through the Canaan fir planting to the Fraser fir landing on the far side. Yet, the passage of Phytophthora spores through the Canaan fir did not lead to any root rot of the Canaan fir suggesting some level of field tolerance in Canaan fir. These observations supported our greenhouse inoculation assays that suggested higher levels of resistance to Phytophthora root rot could be found with Canaan fir as with Fraser fir.

Future directions for research

These results open two directions for future research. First, it may be possible to select balsam or Canaan fir with high levels of root rot resistance with better needle retention than currently available; or, second, it may be possible to graft Fraser fir to fir root stock with high levels of root rot resistance. This at first would appear to be prohibitively expensive. But, using these grafted trees to expand fir acreage into areas where root rot would normally be expected to infect trees could increase premium fir production acreage in Michigan.

National trees needed

The State of Vermont has the honor of giving a gift of the National Christmas Tree this year. Along with this large tree there are many trees of varying heights that are needed. These companion trees will be going to many government buildings, legislature offices, and VA hospitals.

At this time, we are looking for 45 6-8 foot, 10 8-10 foot, 4 12-14 foot, and 1 23-foot Christmas trees to fill this honor. The committee is in the process of receiving monies from different sources is determining a plan to compensate growers. I will keep you informed if we are able to accomplish this. The Vt. Dept. of Forests and Parks has agreed to pick up the trees from the growers.

At this time I ask any growers who would like to have a Christmas tree in Washington—affixed with a special name tag, which we are also working on—to please e-mail me your full name, address, phone number, e-mail, and most important how many trees and what sizes. I hope to be at the June meeting to answer any questions and start a list.

*Thank you,
Greg DeCell
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Contact Information:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

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

Ship To: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Select approximate shipping date (Note: Stock sold in the fall is custom lifted. Contact bill to set dates.)

Late April

Early May

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

Season	Seedlings	Tree Age	Price per Seedling	Qty	Total
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam Fir: Mountain Strain Vermont Seed Source	3-0	\$0.30		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam Fir: Mountain Strain Vermont Seed Source	2-2	\$0.65		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam Fir: Cooks Strain Vermont Seed Source	2-0	\$0.20		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam Fir: Cooks Strain Vermont Seed Source	3-0	\$0.30		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam Fir: Cooks Strain Vermont Seed Source	2-2	\$0.65		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Fraser Fir: Vermont Seed Source	3-0	\$0.30		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Fraser Fir: Vermont Seed Source	2-2	\$0.65		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Fraser Fir: North Carolina Seed Source	2-0	\$0.20		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam-Fraser Hybrid: Vermont Seed Source	2-0	\$0.20		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam-Fraser Hybrid: Vermont Seed Source	3-0	\$0.30		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Balsam-Fraser Hybrid: Vermont Seed Source	2-2	\$0.65		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Canaan Fir: West Virginia Seed Source	2-0	\$0.25		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Meyer Spruce:	2-0	\$0.25		
Fall 2007/Spring 2008	Velichii Fir:	2-0	\$0.25		
Total Seedling Cost					

Terms:

Payment: 25% Deposit, remaining balance due 3 weeks before ship date. Note: Deposits are nonrefundable.

Minimum order of 100 seedlings or transplants.

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 8-3A)

Vermont Residents Add 6% sales tax

Add 20% of total seedling cost for shipping via UPS ground.

Total Cost (Sum of the 3 lines above)

Payment (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: _____

NCTA Convention in Bangor, Maine

continued from page 1

miss it. Be sure to sign up for one of the farm tours, which are a great way to explore the farms of the area while taking home tips to use at your own business.

Be sure to catch the latest products and services on display at the 2007 Trade Show, as well as visiting with exhibitors and industry members. The Trade Show will open on Wednesday, Aug. 15, with a special reception, and breaks have been planned in the convention program to give you ample time to explore all the trade show has to offer.

The NCTA Convention & Trade Show offers numerous opportunities to promote your farm or business within the industry. If you are interested in exhibitor or sponsorship opportunities, please call 636/449-5070 for more information.

Want to put your skills to the test? Be sure to sign up for the wreath-making competition, a new addition for this year's convention. As in the past, NCTA will host a national Wreath Contest and Gallery of Trees, as well as a regional Christmas Tree Contest. Please note: There will not be a National Tree Contest in 2007.

There's more to the convention than just learning—it's also an opportunity to have a great time with your fellow members. No trip to Maine would be complete without a lobster bake, so be sure to sign up for the Taste of Maine Theme Night, sponsored by the Maine Christmas Tree Association. Find out "who won what" at the traditional closing banquet. Explore all the area has to offer - from Acadia National Park to New Brunswick - on one of the three pre- and post-tours.

These events have been planned to offer a complete experience for the whole family.

As you can see, there's something for everyone at the 2007 NCTA Convention & Trade Show. Start planning now to attend by reserving your room at one of the four convention hotels:

■ Bangor Ramada - 207/947-6961 - \$119/night

■ America's Best Inn & Suites - 800/237-8466 - \$110/night

■ Days Inn - 207/942-8272 - \$79/night

■ Four Points Sheraton - 207/947-5721 - \$120 (2 doubles) or \$130 (king)

Please note: Some of the hotels are small and the NCTA room blocks will fill up quickly.

Find out more about all the Bangor area has to offer by visiting www.bangorcvtb.org or www.visitmaine.com.



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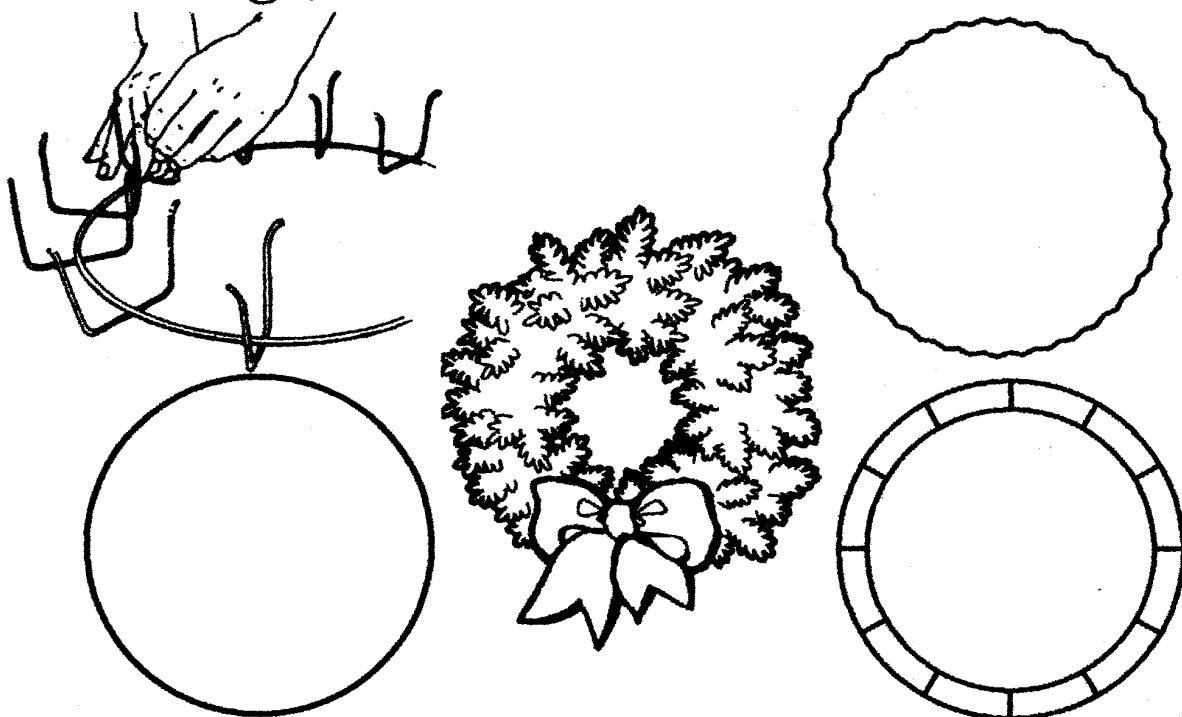
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Editor's Desk

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

VT Big E Voluneers

Rich Rockwood writes to let everyone know that Vermont Christmas tree growers who are members of the NH-VT Christmas Tree Association have been granted three days in the Cultural Heritage Space in the Vermont building at Big E to promote Vermont Christmas trees and our farms. The dates are Sept. 28-30. This will be a great year to promote Vermont Christmas trees because the National Christmas tree will come from the Green Mountain National Forest this year!

"We have had the same space for the last two years and have been very successful in answering lots of questions, selling lots of seedlings, and probably most importantly, giving out lots of business cards, brochures,

and information," says Rich. "By selling seedlings at \$1 a piece or 6 for \$5 we have been able to pay most of our expenses for our time at Big E. Stephanie and I participated in the event both years and feel that it benefits both Vermont Christmas tree business and growers, and our own farm."

Please let Rich know (e-mail redrock.farm@hughes.net) if you are interested in participating or would like more information.

VT Farm Show Results

In tree and wreath judging at the Vermont Farm Show, held in Barre this past January, the following winners were honored:

Mary Gilbert took home best of show in the fir class.

In "other" species, Carl Szych was the class winner.

And in the wreath category, Paul Lemire won best of show with a stunning 12-inch, double faced wreath.

Web site remodel

The NHVTCTA is in the process of redesigning its Web site to improve its looks and functionality. Notchnet, based in Littleton, N.H., has been contracted to assist in this process. Representatives from that company are planning to be onhand at the June meeting to discuss plans and answer questions.

Wholesale Buyer's Guide

This year will see a change to the format of the Wholesale Buyer's Guide. Instead of printing and mailing the guides, we will instead produce them electronically (in PDF format) on the NHVTCA's new Web site (*see above*). This will make the information (both listings and display ads) available to a wider audience without an increase in costs, and also provide growers a chance to edit/update their listings as the sales season unfolds.



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