



Tree Line



New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association

June 2005

Special points of interest:

♦ Fall Meeting Set:

The NHVTCTA Fall Meeting will be held September 24 in Bennington, Vt. The meeting will be hosted by Jim Horst at Mt. Anthony Farm. Complete details and an agenda will be mailed later in the summer.

♦ Director Nominations:

Anyone interested in serving as a director should contact the nominating committee—Nigel Manley at (603) 444-6228 or Ben Hoyt at (603) 838-6403.

♦ Group Buying Program:

The NHVTCTA has available group buying opportunities on several items, including Christmas tree boxes, chemicals and other supplies. Contact Jim Horst at (802) 447-1900 for info.

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Summer Meeting: Dan Beloin's Farm

The NHVTCTA's Summer Meeting will be held on June 25 at Daniel Beloin Tree Farm in Colebrook, N.H.

"Dad started here back in 1948 and I bought it in 1990," says Beloin of the farm's history. "It was nothing but wild balsam then, and we were recovering from wicked spruce budworm."

In the mid-1970s, before the budworm hit, Beloin says, "We were selling about 8,000 trees a year—all low-grade stuff, but that was the market back then." The budworm claimed about 80 percent of the farm's trees and continued doing damage for a decade.

At the time, dairy farming was the main concern and

Christmas trees were a sideline. After selling the cows in 1982 and turning to Christmas trees full-time, Beloin set about to build the stock of trees back up. Today, with his two brothers—Ronnie and Fernend—the Beloins sell about 10,000 trees a year, both wholesale and through a retail outlet in Manchester, N.H.

The balsam stock on the farm is wild, and there's very little balsam planting to be done. "I do some replanting, not in rows or anything," he says. "But I do very little of that—usually I'm destroying balsam. They grow here very well. If a 12-inch

continued on page 12

NCTA Update: Traditions in Trouble?

New research conducted on behalf of the National Christmas Tree Association shows a major erosion of key aspects of Christmas celebrations among U.S. adults since a similar survey conducted in 1996. A summit was recently convened on the subject, attended by Nigel Manley, NHVTCTA's representative to the national group.

While activities associated with commercial elements have remained about the same in the last 10 years, the research showed that activities revolving around Christian values and Christian celebrations have dropped dramatically.

Among activities traditionally considered Christian:

- attending a religious service has declined 20 percentage points from 63 percent to 43 percent

- taking time for religious reflection has declined 22 percentage points from 57 percent to 35 percent

- giving food, money or clothing to those less fortunate has declined 15 percent from 68 percentage points to 53 percent

- reading the Bible or other religious books has declined 27 percentage points from 51 percent to 24 percent
- volunteering for charitable activities has declined 23 percentage points from 36 percent to 13 percent

Meanwhile, among activities often considered more commercial:

continued on page 12



President's Message

As I write this column on June 6 it's a little early to report on insect outbreaks in our plantations, but when we gather on the 25th we will get a preliminary sense of the location and magnitude of twig aphid and gall midge activity.

We should observe a moment of silent prayer for our friends and colleagues in the maple business, either timber or syrup, as they struggle through a building outbreak of forest tent caterpillars.

Despite the hardships we endure when aphids and mites invade, at least our cash crop is at eye level, and controls are more easily applied than by an airplane based 1,000 miles away.

I hope to see a great turnout at the June 25th meeting at Dan Beloin's in Colebrook, N.H.

This farm is as heavily influenced by an arc welder as a shearing knife, and low-tech rules the day. (And pays the bills!)

The views of the upper Connecticut River valley are beyond awesome.

The fall meeting will be at Jim Horst's in Bennington, Vt., on September 24.

We were at Jim's about 10 years ago, but his marketing has changed, his management is a little different, and his battles with root rots are on-going.

With the fall '06 meeting set for the Tonyr farm in Hampton, N.H., we need a volunteer to host next spring's meeting in Vermont.

Please note the article about Trees for Troops which appears on page 8. The plan to distribute certificates to families of deployed troops, instead of actual trees, will save a lot of time and energy. It will give the families an opportunity for an outing, and a chance for us to thank them in person for their family member's service. Kudos to Peter Mollica for setting this up.

Russell Reay, President

Old Farmer's Advice

1. Your fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight and bull-strong.
2. Life ain't about how fast you run, or how high you climb, but how well you bounce.
3. Keep skunks, bankers and lawyers at a distance.
4. Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.
5. A bumble bee is considerably faster than a John Deere tractor.
6. Forgive your enemies. It messes up their heads.
7. Do not corner something that you know is meaner than you.
8. It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.
9. When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.
10. Most of the stuff people worry about ain't never gonna happen anyway.
11. Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
12. Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.
13. If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.

Author Unknown



New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association



2005 Officers

President	Russell Reay	(802) 492-3323
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Group Buying Chair	Bill Nichols	(603) 353-4832

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2005 Tree Line Publication Schedule

Issue	Ad/Submission Deadline	Mailing Date
January	December 31	January 14
June	May 27	June 10
September	August 26	September 9

*Denotes second consecutive term

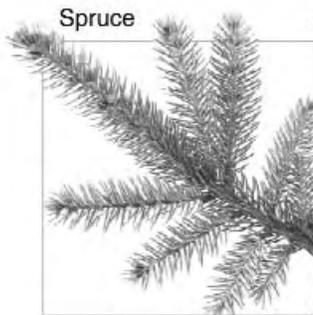
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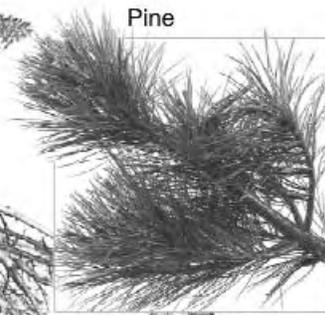
Fir

Balsam
Canaan
Concolor
Douglas
Fraser



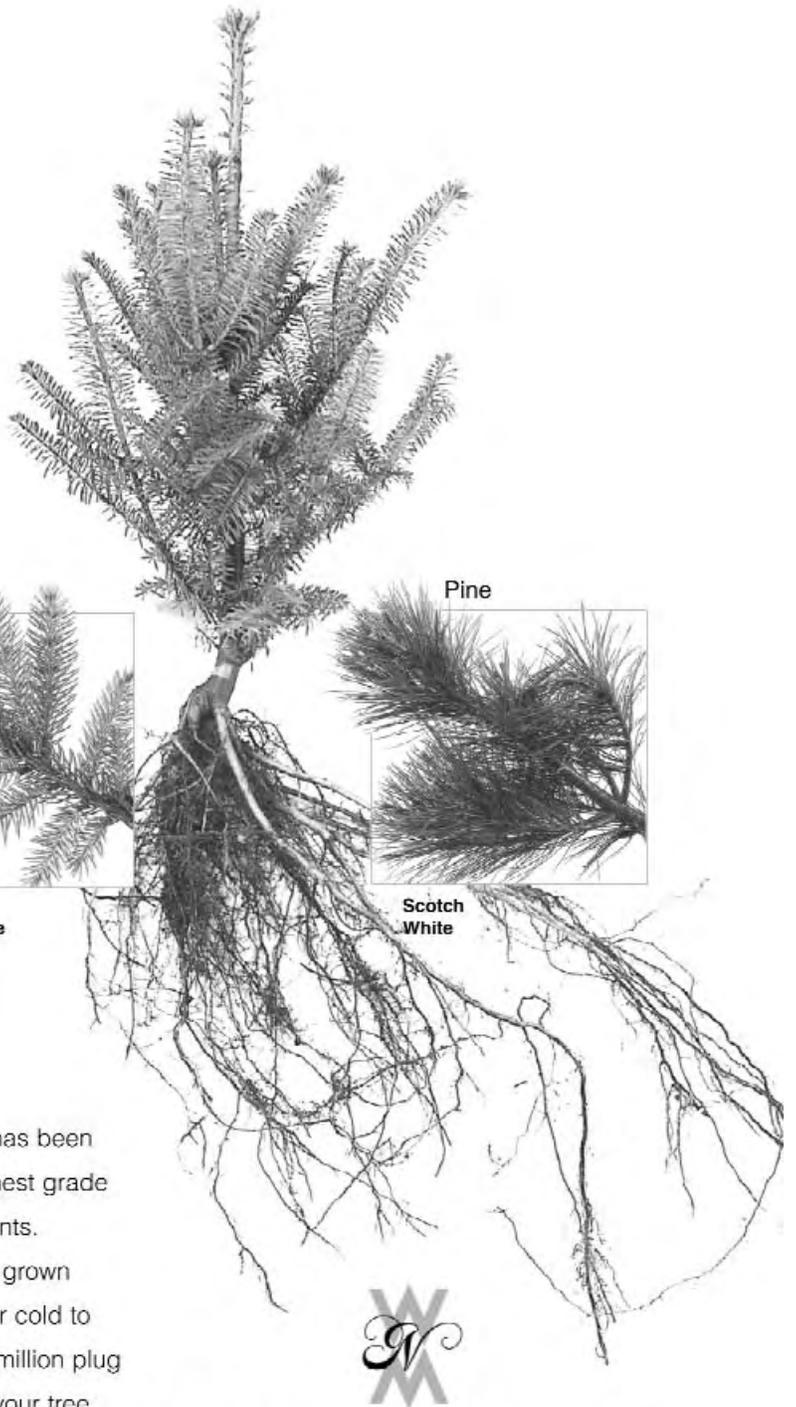
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Research Report: Balsam Fir Needle Retention

The following information was condensed from Michigan State University's 2003 Nursery, Landscape and Christmas Tree Research Projects Reports. The principal investigators in the research are Gary Chastagner and Kathy Riley of Washington State University and Paul Kaufmann and Jill O'Donnell of Michigan State University.

Significance/importance to the industry

Numerous consumer surveys have shown that needle retention is a major concern associated with the use of real Christmas trees. Although it is possible to reduce needle loss problems with some species of Christmas trees by delaying harvest, this approach is not very effective if there are unusually warm fall temperatures.

Balsam fir (*Abies balsamea*) is an important Christmas tree in the northeastern portion of the U. S. and eastern Canada. Postharvest studies have shown that there is tremendous tree-to-tree variability in needle loss when most true fir Christmas trees, including balsam fir, are displayed dry. Recent work with Nordmann (*A. nordmanniana*) and Canaan (*A. balsamea* var. *phaneroleplsis*) firs has shown that it is possible to identify provenances and/or individual trees with superior needle retention using detached branches. Work with Nordmann fir has also shown that needle retention is under strong genetic control and that there is a highly significant correlation between the needle retention characteristics of maternal trees and their progeny. This research indicates that the Christmas tree industry has the opportunity to significantly reduce the potential for needle loss problems by identifying trees with superior needle retention and then utilize these trees to establish seed orchards.

At Washington State

University, a number of projects are underway to identify sources of different species of Christmas trees with superior needle retention. Typically, branches are removed from trees and displayed under controlled conditions for a period of 10 days. As the branches begin to dry, branches from trees with poor needle retention will typically begin to shed green needles within about three to seven days. In an effort to identify balsam fir trees with superior needle retention, a three-year cooperative project involving Washington State University and MSU was initiated in 2002.

Objective

Determine variation in needle retention among a limited number of trees from six sources of balsam fir and one source of Canaan fir.

Methods

The trees used in this study were planted between 1997 and 1998 at a site near McBain, Michigan. During the fall in 2002 and 2003, a pair of two-year-old branches was harvested from 10 trees from six sources of balsam fir (Bracted, Charlotte, Cook, Granville, Lunenberg, and Rangley) and one unidentified source of Canaan fir. In 2002, the branches were harvested on November 29 and in 2003, they were harvested on September 29. Daily maximum and minimum temperature data from September 1 through the dates of branch harvest in 2002 and 2003 were obtained for Lake City, Michigan, which is located approximately 10 miles from the site where the trees are grown.

The branches were tagged, placed in plastic bags and shipped via overnight mail to Washington State University in Puyallup, Washington. Upon arrival at Puyallup, the branches were removed from the plastic bags and placed in racks on a table in a postharvest display

room. A single branch from each tree was randomly placed in each of two display racks. The temperature of the room was maintained at 66° F with about 40-60% relative humidity. The fluorescent lights in the room were left on continuously.

To obtain information on rates of moisture loss during the test, branches from three trees of each source were selected at random in 2002 and small shoots were removed from each branch upon set up and after 3, 7, and 10 days of display to determine changes in their percent moisture content. Moisture content measurements were made on branches from the same trees in 2003. Needles loss from all of the branches was assessed after 3, 7 and 10 days of display by gently rubbing the current season and one-year-old needles on each branch and rating the extent of loss on a 0 to 7 scale, where 0 = none, 1 = <1%, 2 = 1-5%, 3 = 6-15%, 4 = 16-33%, 5 = 34-66%, 6 = 67-90% and 7 = >90%. (See chart on page 10 for comparisons.)

Results

Temperatures prior to harvest – Given the much later harvest of branches in 2002, the trees were exposed to colder temperatures prior to branch harvest in 2002 than in 2003. The lowest temperature in 2002 was 14° F, while the lowest temperature in 2003 was 35° F. In 2002, there were 46 days with low temperatures < 32° F and 57 days with low temperatures < 40° F. In 2003, there were no days where the low temperatures were < 32° F and only 8 days with low temperatures < 40° F.

Needle loss – There was considerable variation in the extent of needle loss among the trees included in this test. (See chart.)

Conclusions

Data collected during the first two years of this study,

continued on page 10

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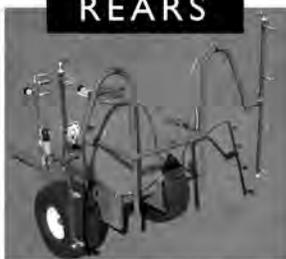
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Research Report: IPM Checklist for Fraser Fir

By Dr. Jill R. Sidebottom,
North Carolina State University
Extension Forestry

Integrated pest management or IPM is a sustainable approach to controlling pests by combining biological, cultural, physical and chemical tools in a way that minimizes economic, health, and environmental risks. Why is IPM important? By adopting IPM practices a grower can potentially use fewer pesticides and fertilizers, improve tree quality and growth, protect beneficial organisms, and preserve soil and water resources—all while managing pests in the most efficient way possible.

Growers may already be doing some practices that are considered IPM and don't know it. This checklist is designed to give ideas of some additional practices that may be adopted so that tree production can become closer to the IPM ideal.

These suggestions are for established Fraser fir Christmas tree plantations. Proper site selection and site preparation are also important considerations in IPM. For more information on these activities, contact your county extension agent.

Step 1: Getting IPM started

Attend IPM training. An IPM program is based on a thorough understanding of cultural practices, fertilizers, pesticides and pest biology. New skills in scouting and record keeping are required. Contact your local extension service center for more information on IPM educational programs.

Set goals. Make IPM and reducing pesticide use an objective for the Christmas tree plantation. Write down this objective someplace where it can be seen often.

Start small. Don't try to change everything at once. Set achievable goals for the next 6 to 12 months. Experiment in a small way at first. It may take several months to become confident in pest scouting and to learn new practices.

Step 2: Keep accurate records

The cheapest and easiest practice to become more efficient in controlling pests is to keep accurate records. Have a map of each field block. Record where transplants come from and when they are set out. Record all scouting visits and all fertilizer, herbicide, and insecticide applications. Keep soil sample and plant tissue

sample reports for a block in the same file.

Detailed records can help determine the cause of problems that may develop. Pest control practices can be improved by learning from past mistakes.

Step 3: Do regular scouting

Regular scouting should be a major aspect of any pest management program. Beginning in early spring and continuing throughout the summer, scout for each potential pest on a schedule appropriate to its life cycle as described in this checklist:

The Checklist

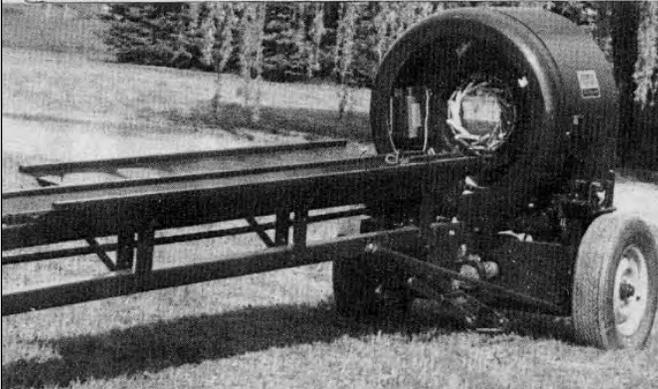
Ground cover management:

Ground cover management affects all aspects of tree production from fertilizer uptake, to soil erosion, to pest predator populations. The goal of good ground cover management is to increase the benefits of weed cover while decreasing weed competition with trees. Be aware that ground cover management will and should change as trees mature.

- At no time through the growing season are trees grown on bare ground.
- Pre-emergent herbicides are only used in the tree row, not broadcast.
- An inventory of all the types of weeds in each field is taken every year in late summer.
- A ground cover management plan (pre-emergent and post-emergent herbicide use, mowing, ground cover seeding, etc.) is devised each fall based on the general weed mix, problem weeds, and the size of the trees for each field.
- Problem weeds are eliminated at the appropriate time of year.
- Weeds that can be managed are suppressed with chemical mowing techniques.
- Weed growth stage and height is monitored to determine the appropriate timing of herbicides.

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Editor's Desk

A number of newsworthy items have crossed my desk since the last issue of *Tree Line*. (Most of these updates are courtesy of Walt Rockwood, thanks Walt.) Until next time, happy shearing.

AC at Champlain Valley Fair

The Christmas tree and wreath exhibit at Champlain Valley Fair 2005 will be inside the fair's newest building. It will be air conditioned. Trees will be spaced along outside walls to help show off commercial exhibits in the center area. Traffic flow will be huge. Bark mulch will set off the trees and hold signs about each exhibitor. Exhibitors will be invited to decorate their tree.

NHVTCTA 50th Anniversary

Mark September 28-30, 2006, on your calendar. No 2006 calendar yet? So, write it on the refrigerator door, kitchen wall, or wherever it will remind you. That's when we'll celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Association at The Tonry Farm, Hampton Falls, N.H.

New England tree growers, wreath makers and the industry in general will join us as the New England Christmas Tree Alliance (NECTA) holds its biennial conference in conjunction with our celebration.

Commercial exhibits, pesticide credits, state business sessions, topnotch speakers, field tours, women's program—and a Friday evening Shore Dinner are in the plans.

We're expecting as many as 400 people. Good weather is planned but tents are reserved. And six portable toilets!

Save those dates!

VT Growers Back at Big E

There was a time when NHVTCTA had a booth in the Vermont Building at Big E. That ended when the building became commercial mid-1990s. But

thanks to Jennifer Grahovic of the Vermont Agency for Agriculture, we'll be back in a booth there for 8 days in 2005.

Sherwin and Doris Davis, Springfield, are taking the lead in putting together booth materials and people to work in the booth from September 25 to October 2. Booth workers will greet visitors, hand out tree promotional materials and sell balsam fir and blue spruce seedlings (plugs). Entry and parking tickets will be provided and a \$62 room rate will be available at the new Hilton Garden Inn in Springfield.

"This will be an effort by Vermont tree growers and wreath makers to promote our industry. New Hampshire growers will do the same thing in the days before our booth opens September 25," Sherwin says. "We plan to sell 2,000 seedlings and will use net income to subsidize hotel costs for our volunteer booth workers," he adds.

Needed: Volunteers, especially couples, to work a day or more in the booth. You'll meet interesting people, get feedback about your industry, and have time to look around Big E as well. Six-hour booth sessions will be 3 p.m. until 9 p.m. and 9 a.m. until 3 p.m.—drive down one and go home the next. Or stay another night and volunteer to work in the New England Christmas Tree Alliance's 50-tree display at Big E.

Booth workers will be allowed to promote their own business and a handout pamphlet will be developed to include a listing for any interested Vermont growers.

Call Sherwin at (802) 885-4638 to volunteer for booth work and or e-mail Walt Rockwood redrock@direcway.com to be listed in the pamphlet.

2005 Weed Guide Available

Marshall Patmos lets us know that the 14-page *2005 New*

England Guide to Chemical Weed and Brush Control in Christmas Trees is now available. The guide is available from New England Extension Foresters and can be obtained online at: www.ceinfo.unh.edu/Pubs/PubsFWV.htm or <http://ceinfo.unh.edu/Forestry/Docs/NEGTWC.pdf>

Tips for Taking Plastic

In response to a request for tips on how to go about accepting credit cards, the NCTA provided the following advice about a program it has arranged:

"We selected Capital Q of Phoenix, Ariz., which is a broker of services. Rocky Mountain Bankcard System, Denver, Colo., is the processor. In addition to discounted rates for NCTA members, the company offers seasonal accounts, which means you can discontinue your merchant account for the off season and reactivate it the following season.

"Equipment leasing is something else to consider. You can purchase or lease both new and used equipment through Capital Q, which offers NCTA members a 10% discount on equipment purchases. Solutions for special situations, i.e. no phone lines or electric on location are also available.

"For more information, visit www.capitalq.com/ncta or call Capital Q at (800) 887-6227."

Buyer Beware

Gordon Page sends the following friendly "heads up" to his fellow members about his experience with one particular supplier:

"Marc Caron of Bechedor, Inc., showed up at the Farm and Forest Show in Manchester, N.H. in February looking for business and handed out brochures. Larry Scammon and I ordered trees. There may have been others. He was to deliver them in person in early May but never showed up. No payments had been requested or made by us."

Scholarship Awarded

The NHVTCTA directors, acting on the recommendation of the scholarship committee, voted at its May meeting to award a \$1,000 scholarship to Bryce Derosia.

Bill Schmidt, chair of the scholarship committee, offered the following information in the recommendation:

Bryce is currently completing his first year in a four-year forestry program at the University of New Hampshire. He is also looking into taking classes to minor in business as well. His Christmas tree experience has been at Mountain Star Farms where he has worked over the past four years on the planting crew, the shearing crew, in the harvesting of trees, and with the public at the harvest-your-own farm.

Mike Garvan, who wrote Bryce a strong letter of recommendation, said he "frequently put him in a supervisory position because of his leadership and reliability."

Bryce concluded his application letter by saying: "My work experience on the farm and education at UNH will give me the tools I need to start my own business one day."

Congratulations Bryce!

Trees for Troops: A New Approach

Thanks to the generosity of many members—and the time devoted by Walt Rockwood—the NHVTCTA's "Trees for Troops" program was a big success in 2004. Some 384 trees and 106 wreaths were donated to the families of National Guard soldiers from New Hampshire and Vermont currently deployed.

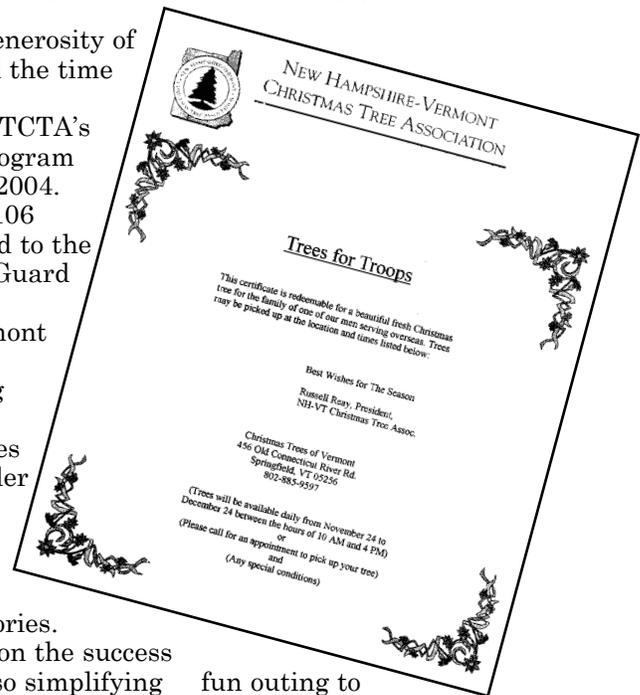
The undertaking also resulted in Walt racking up 1,318 miles on his truck and trailer as he picked up trees at farms across both states and delivered them to various National Guard armories.

Hoping to build on the success of last year, while also simplifying the program, Peter Mollica has volunteered to coordinate a revised Trees for Troops initiative that uses paper certificates (see sample above), allowing the families to visit a donating tree farm near them to pick out a tree.

This means there's no need to pick up and deliver trees, and also gives families a chance to enjoy a

fun outing to go choose their own tree. And growers can add conditions (hours of operation, size of tree, etc.) to their certificates.

We're also hoping to get more members involved. Donating trees and wreaths is simple—just contact Peter at (802) 885-9597. We'll also be contacting members individually about taking part.



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Research Report: IPM Checklist for Fraser Fir

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Fertility:

Proper fertility including proper soil pH, phosphorus, calcium and other nutrient levels can reduce pest problems by reducing the number of years in a rotation and by making the tree stronger to ward off pests. A long-range fertility plan should be developed for each field to achieve and maintain optimum soil fertility.

- A representative soil sample is taken with a soil probe. Soil samples are taken annually until soil fertility goals are reached. Soil samples are then taken bi-annually to maintain optimum soil fertility.

- Plant tissue samples are taken the 3rd year in the field and the fall before sale.

- Soil samples and accompanying plant tissue samples are taken anytime there are problems with poor color or growth in the trees. Accompanying these are similar samples from good growing trees in the same field for comparison.

- Annual prescription fertilizer plans are developed and followed each year based on soil and plant tissue reports within the context of the long-range plan.

- Fertilizers are spread to achieve maximum soil coverage.

Balsam woolly adelgid (BWA): Proper BWA control requires early detection of tree infestation and thorough pesticide coverage. Care should be taken that pesticides applied to control BWA do not make spider mites worse, since broad spectrum insecticides can kill beneficial predators that keep mites in check.

- Trees are scouted for the presence of crooked tops each year from the time they are waist-high until harvest.

- Scouting is done from July through October.

- Trees with crooked tops are examined for the presence of live BWA by removing bark with the

white wool and examining with a handlens.

- Trees are treated, if necessary, using a pesticide which does not kill mite predators, or during the winter when predators are not present.

- If a pesticide treatment is necessary, it is applied with a hydraulic sprayer and hand-held gun, treating from two directions and no more than two rows at a time to completely cover the entire tree.

- Large Fraser fir near the field which cannot be adequately sprayed for BWA are removed.

- Trees with BWA that have not had a straight top for two years or more are cut and removed before spraying.

Spruce spider mite (SSM):

Control of the SSM requires integrating several management practices including ground cover management and pesticide selection. Adequate scouting is required to prevent damage from SSM.

- Trees are scouted throughout the growing season for SSM. The schedule for scouting trips is determined by the size and value of the trees, and the amount of rainfall throughout the growing season.

- Treat promptly with an appropriate pesticide if SSM numbers exceed treatment

thresholds.

- The same miticide is not used every time treatment is necessary as mites can become resistant.

Balsam twig aphid (BTA):

The BTA is easily controlled with proper timing of pesticide applications.

- Trees are treated for BTA the year before sale and the year of sale. Younger trees are only treated if high levels of past damage indicates it is necessary.

- During May and early June, trees that were not treated for BTA are scouted to determine the extent of needle curl and any need for treatment the following year.

Phytophthora root rot (PRR):

The spread of PRR is enhanced by increased soil moisture and soil movement from infested to uninfested areas. Disease development increases as the inoculum density of the fungus increases. The key to PRR control is disease prevention.

- Plant only healthy, disease-free Fraser fir transplants and plant them only on suitable sites.

- Care is taken that soil from infested areas does not contaminate the rest of the farm.

- In areas of the field where trees have died from PRR, trees are removed as soon as possible.

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Balsam Fir Needle Retention

continued from page 4

clearly show the effect of harvest date (exposure to cold temperatures) on the overall extent of needle loss that can occur when balsam and Canaan fir are allowed to dry during display. These data also confirm that even when har-

vested at this time of year provides a better opportunity to identify trees that have superior needle retention characteristics than harvesting them later in the fall.

About 6% of the trees harvested on September 29, 2003 had no needle loss and about 19% of the trees had needle loss ratings

Table. Number of trees with needle loss and average needle loss rating for trees that lost needles after 10-day test

Source	2002 test			2003 test		
	# with NL ¹	NL rating ²	# with NL < 1 ³	# with NL ¹	NL rating ²	# with NL < 1 ³
Canaan fir	3	1.2	8	8	2.6	3
Bracted balsam fir	6	1.0	8	9	2.6	3
Cook balsam fir	3	0.4	10	9	2.4	2
Charlotte balsam fir	2	3.8	9	10	2.8	2
Rangley balsam fir	2	0.6	10	10	3.4	2
Lunenburg balsam fir	3	0.4	10	10	3.8	1
Granville balsam fir	1	1.8	9	10	3.9	0

¹Number of trees out of 10 with some needle loss

²Average of the current season and one-year-old needle loss ratings for the trees with needle loss.

³Number of trees with current season and one-year-old needle loss ratings < 1.

vested after exposure to 46 days with low temperatures < 32°F, there was high enough levels of needle loss that would probably not be acceptable to consumers with about 8% of the trees.

Although growers would not normally harvest trees in late September, testing branches har-

< 1. The correlation between the needle loss rankings in 2002 and 2003, indicate that trees that had high needle loss ratings in 2002 also tended to have high needle loss ratings in 2003.

Additional testing will be conducted to confirm the results from these experiments.

Trading Post

Members may advertise goods and services related to the tree and wreath industry for no charge. Non-members may advertise items for \$10. Submit ads/ questions to the *Tree Line* editor. E-mail pwhitevt@aol.com

For Sale: Vermeer tree spade, model TS-20, very good condition, 3 pth mount. Will work well on a 40 HP tractor. Digs 20-inch diameter root ball, great for live Christmas trees or hardwood shrubs, \$2,500. Contact Russell Reay at (802) 492-3323 or dcreay@sover.net.

For Sale: Large (200 gal.) mist blower. Has never had chemicals in it. Requires 45hp tractor minimum. With 45hp, it will throw a 200-foot mist. The rig has hydraulic elevation and rotation controls. If interested, I can e-mail photos. The unit is located in Strafford, N.H. Price: \$5,250. Call Eric Rowe at (603) 269-4781 or e-mail him at bluberry@worldpath.net

For Sale: 1993 Howey model 214A, with a B&S Vanguard 9 hp electric start motor, dolly wheel, veeder root counter, wheels and tires, extra cable, tree tongs, automatic cone and a new box of baler twine. I bought the unit new and it's in good operating condition. The price is \$3,000. Phone is (802) 463-2205 in Bellows Falls, Vt. or e-mail rod@dayspringfarm.com

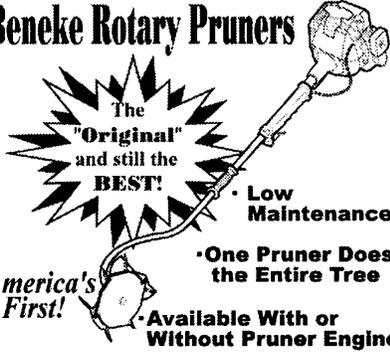
Wanted: Older model skid steer to operate 30-inch tree spade. Must have at least 1,500-lb. lift capacity. Must be old enough to be free of the multi-faceted safety interlock system. Contact Russell Reay at (802) 492-3323 or e-mail dcreay@sover.net.



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New Hampshire-Vermont Christmas Tree Association Summer Meeting June 25, 2005 Dan Beloin Christmas Tree Farm, Colebrook, NH

8:30-9:30	Registration and coffee, visit vendors
9:30-10:00	Business meeting
10:00- 10:15	Welcome to the farm - <i>Dan Beloin</i>
10:15-11:00	Public Relations and Market Expansion - <i>Rick Sible, National Christmas Tree Association</i>
11:00- 11:30	Concurrent Sessions
	<p>A. Fraser fir site considerations, root rot, and foliage loss problems- <i>Ron Kelley, forest protection specialist, VT Dept of Forests and Parks</i></p> <p>B. Creations of an Active Mind: Machinery and equipment modifications to address specific needs - <i>Dan Beloin, grower and results-oriented thinker</i></p>
11:30-Noon	Repeat concurrent sessions
Noon-1:00	Lunch - Cornish game hen, potato or macaroni salad, rolls and desert
1:00-3:00	Field tour - Walking tour of the farm. Subjects will be:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild balsam cultivation: layout, herbicide program, management cycle, growing trees in unlikely locations • Colorado blue spruce: site considerations, insect challenges • Plantation cultivation of Fraser fir • Road construction and maintenance • Pond location and management

Tour will be lead by Dan Beloin, farm owner, accompanied by Ron Kelley, forest protection specialist

Pesticide recertification credits have been applied for

DIRECTIONS TO DAN BELOIN FARM:

From the center of Colebrook take Route 26 east for about 1 ½ miles, turn left on Fish Hatchery Rd. Go 2 + miles to a "yield" sign, turn right onto Stevens Hill Road. Farm is at the top of the hill on the right. Follow NHVTCTA signs.

The New Exotic Experience

continued from page 1

seedling is too close to another one, I'll pull it out and just throw it on the ground. Two years later we'll go by and it will have started to grow again. They really like it here."

Other species of trees have to be introduced in a more traditional way. "In 1991 I planted 5 acres of blue spruce, which was a big mistake. Shortly after I started planting about 3,000 fraser fir every year in my old hay fields," says Beloin. Those fraser just started being harvested last year. All totaled, he now has about 25,000 fraser on-site. "Demand is just off-the-wall for fraser," he says. "And balsam is just the same."

Beloin admits it's tough to grow fraser on his farm. "I don't have the right soil—I know that. But I try to get it as close as possible and it's working."

Beloin says the first thing visitors to the farm notice is the

beautiful mountain view. "I don't look at it anymore," he says. More than likely that's because he's too busy modifying a piece of equipment to do just what he wants it to do.

That's one of the topics on the agenda at the June meeting, he says: "I'll be talking about why I modify equipment this way or that way. Why I build things to my specs, the way I want them rather than just running stock equipment." Beloin has modified his harvesting trailer, tree baler, sprayer, bush hog and more.

The farm has just one full-time employee. The crew (including his brother Donald and nephew David) runs between five and seven during harvest, but shearing is done with just two men using knives.

"It's definitely what you call a family business," Beloin says. "There's six of us working here and we all have the same last name."

NCTA: Traditions

continued from page 1

- exchanging gifts has increased eight percentage points from 77 percent to 85 percent

- decorating a Christmas tree was about the same at 74 percent

- decorating the home was about the same at 71 percent

- sending greeting cards was about the same at 69 percent

- attending Christmas parties was about the same at 56 percent

Among other activities during the Christmas holidays:

- cooking a holiday meal has declined 11 percentage points from 73 percent to 62 percent

- making Christmas cookies, candy or desserts has declined nine percentage points from 61 percent to 52 percent

- playing Christmas music has remained the same at 68 percent

Stay tuned for NCTA proposals to address these issues.



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