



Shearing Season and Another Heat Wave



Chris Nicholson

It's hard to get motivated with farm chores when another heat wave is settling in. It's a good excuse to wait for the fall to start shearing but then the other farm activities start calling. Will this be the year that I am not

shearing the day before I open in November? Probably not but I will try again this year. If you are out in the field shearing, please be sure to hydrate and don't over exert yourself. See the article in this newsletter about heat exhaustion so you know the signs and know when to stop and take a break.

Our twilight meeting was held in June and well attended by our members and representatives from Rutgers. John Melleady was our host and did a great job discussing his growing techniques at Triple Dog Dare You Christmas Tree Farm. Director Bob Bruch gave an informative talk on the changes to Farmland Assessment and the reporting paperwork. Thank you to everyone that made this Twilight Meeting a big success!

Our summer meeting will be held at Wyckoff's Christmas Tree Farm in Belvidere on Saturday, August 29th. This will be an opportunity to learn about growing tips and techniques from the grower of the 2013 National Grand Champion Christmas Tree! The Wyckoff family has a great meeting planned plus you will be able to get pesticide credits. Set aside the day to tour a beautiful Christmas tree farm, learn about weed control in Christmas tree plantations, and spend some time chatting with other growers. I'm looking forward to seeing you at the summer meeting!

Sales Tax Requirements Regarding Christmas Trees

At the June 11, 2015 NJCTGA twilight meeting during the presentation on the changes for farmland assessment qualification, the subject of collecting New Jersey sales tax was discussed. Charles Dupras, retired NJCTGA executive secretary brought forth in addition stating the price of a tree and adding sales tax, a farm can advertise that the price of the tree includes sales tax.

Christmas trees are subject to sales tax when sold at retail. Also, the law authorizes most New Jersey retail vendors to advertise that the vendor will pay the 7% New Jersey sales tax for customers. Below is the notice updated on 08/20/14 from the New Jersey Division of Taxation, "We Pay the Tax" which is available online at www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/wepaythetax.shtml.

Notice to Businesses "We Pay the Tax" Days Authorized

The law authorizes most New Jersey retail vendors to advertise that the vendor will pay the 7% New Jersey sales tax for the customer in particular transactions. This is a change from the prior law, which prohibited vendors from advertising in this way. Sellers of natural gas, electricity, and utility services are NOT authorized to advertise in such a manner.

In order to take advantage of the new law, the vendor must meet the following conditions:

- The advertisement must indicate that the vendor is paying the tax for the customer and cannot imply that the sale is not subject to tax;
- If the customer receives a sales receipt, invoice or other written statement of the transaction, it must indicate that the 7% New Jersey sales tax is being paid by the vendor;
- The vendor must pay the tax as trustee for the State and is liable for the tax in the same manner as if it were collected from the customer.
- The tax is to be reported and remitted as "sales tax," not as "use tax" because the vendor is assuming the obligation to pay the sales tax FOR the customer. All sales where the vendor pays the tax under these conditions must be included in the vendor's gross receipts and the tax must be remitted accordingly.



The Wyckoff family will be opening their doors to host the annual NJCTGA Summer Meeting on Saturday, August 29, 2015!

Located just outside of the town of Belvidere in Warren County, the farm was established in 1839 by Simon Wyckoff. Transitioning with time, the first trees were planted in 1958 by John W. Wyckoff Sr. and John W. Wyckoff Jr. Currently, the 170 acre farm is primarily a cut your own operation with 65 acres of trees in production. B&B and wholesale are also incorporated in the business. The day promises a full agenda including farm tour, speakers, demonstrations and more! Pesticide credits will be available.

See page 2 or contact the Exec. Secretary, Donna Cole, concerning registration or for more information.



New Jersey Christmas Tree Growers' Association

and

Wyckoff's Christmas Tree Farm

246 County Road 519 • Belvidere, NJ 07823 • 908-489-2186

www.wyckoffs.com

invite you to join them and your fellow NJCTGA members for the

SUMMER MEETING

August 29, 2015

Registration 8:15am • Breakfast 8:15am – 9:00am • Meeting 9:00am – 3:30pm

The Wyckoff Family is graciously hosting this year's meeting and trade show!

Wyckoff's Christmas Tree Farm consists of 170 acres of which 65 are currently dedicated to Christmas trees: White pine, Norway spruce, Blue spruce, Serbian spruce, Douglas fir, Canaan fir, Fraser fir, and Concolor fir.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 8:15 – 9:00 | Registration, Breakfast, Visit with Vendors |
| 9:00 – 9:15 | Welcome by NJCTGA Exec. Secretary/Treasurer, Donna Cole and Chris Nicholson, President |
| 9:15 – 9:30 | All About the Farm by John Wyckoff |
| 9:30 – 10:30 | Weed Control in Christmas Trees by Tracey L. Harpster, Research Associate, Dept. of Horticulture, Penn State University.
<i>This session will consist of 1 hour in the classroom.</i> |
| 10:30 – 11:00 | Break - Networking with fellow growers and visit with exhibitors |
| 11:00 – Noon | Weed Control in Christmas Trees by Tracey L. Harpster, Research Associate, Dept. of Horticulture, Penn State University.
<i>This session will consist of 1 hour in the field.</i> |
| Noon – 1:00 | Lunch, Networking and Visit with Vendors |
| 1:00 – 2:00 | Sales Practices and Equipment used on the Farm |
| 2:00 – 2:30 | Vendor demos |
| 2:30 – 3:30 | Core Presentation by Bruce Barbour, County Agricultural Agent, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Warren County.
<i>We are approved for 2 Core and 4 PP2 credits.</i> |

A picnic fare luncheon will be provided by the NJCTGA and the Wyckoff Family
(Please bring lawn chairs)

For directions to the meeting visit www.wyckoffs.com or enter this address into your GPS:
246 County Road 519, Belvidere, NJ 07823

Grower's Spotlight:

HIDDEN POND TREE FARM

By: Tim Dunne



Tim Dunne

Hidden Pond Tree Farm in Mendham, Morris County is a hidden gem. Just off of the Main Street in Mendham, you wind your way back through a mature woodland, past a pond (the hidden pond) and the forest opens up to fields of Christmas trees. The 25 acre farm has been operated by Chris Nicholson since 2000. Chris grows Canaan fir, Norway Spruce, Colorado blue spruce and the latest addition – Meyers spruce. The farm also includes a large field with several varieties of boxwoods sold

as B&B stock and used in the farms beautiful wreaths and centerpieces at Christmas time.

During the busy December season Hidden Pond Tree Farm is truly a family affair with Chris's Mom and Dad handling sales with assistance from his wife Heidi and his daughter Emma. The farm experience includes a hay ride as well as hot chocolate and marshmallows roasted over an open fire free to all customers.



Snowy evening at Hidden Pond Tree Farm's shop.

Chris has been a member of the NJ Christmas Tree Growers Association since 2007. "I love the sharing of information and ideas discussed between growers at winter, summer and twilight meetings and find that is one of the most valuable things about being a member of the association" said Chris. Winning the state tree contest in 2009 was a highlight of his Christmas tree growing career. Having the

NJ Secretary of Agriculture and all the media at the farm "really helps boost sales" says Chris. You probably recognize Chris's name and picture as he has been our state association's president for the last 3 years. Chris is as enthusiastic a Christmas tree grower as I have ever met, and that enthusiasm and hard work have resulted in the association's success under his tenure as president.



Chris Nicholson with a beautiful boxwood wreath ready for sale

Chris had several tips for new growers he wanted to share: "New growers should visit several existing farms before they ever plant a tree. Learn from others, see what they are doing and ask lots of questions" said Chris. He said "the best way to meet new growers

– join the state association and attend every meeting you can, that's what I did". Other things to carefully consider are the farm layout - for tree planting, mowing, movement of customers through the plantation at harvest time. Be sure to plan an adequate parking area at the busy Christmas season, especially if you win the state contest and grow a NJ Grand Champion Christmas tree like Hidden Pond Tree Farm did!



Some of the lovely wreaths made at Hidden Pond Tree Farm on display at the farm.



Field of boxwoods at Hidden Pond Tree Farm.



Beautiful Norway spruce sheared to perfection at Hidden Pond Tree Farm in Mendham, Morris Co.

Tim Dunne, owner of Woodsedge Farm, Belvidere, Warren County, visits farms throughout the state and writes the Grower's Spotlight.

Signs of Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke



The summer tree shearing season is here! Risk factors for heat illness include: high temperature and/or humidity; no breeze or wind; direct sun exposure; strenuous physical labor; and heavy or waterproof clothing. Even though you want to get the trees sheared as fast as possible, you need to stay alert for signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat exhaustion happens when the body has lost too much water and salt and usually causes excessive sweating. Heat stroke is a more serious problem related to excessive exposure to heat. When this happens, the body becomes unable to control its temperature. Body temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the person is unable to cool down. When heat stroke occurs, the body temperature can rise to 106 degrees Fahrenheit or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke is a very serious condition and can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given. Be safe and be aware of the following trouble signs and treatment for heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat Exhaustion Symptoms

- Heavy sweating
- Extreme weakness or fatigue
- Dizziness, confusion
- Nausea
- Clammy, moist skin
- Pale or flushed complexion
- Muscle cramps
- Slightly elevated body temperature
- Fast and shallow breathing

Heat Exhaustion Treatment

- Move to a cooler location
- Remove any tight or unnecessary clothing
- Take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath
- Drink water (avoid alcohol and caffeine)
- Apply cool, wet towels to the body

Heat Stroke Symptoms

- Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
- Hallucinations
- Chills
- Throbbing headache
- High body temperature
- Confusion/dizziness
- Slurred speech

Heat Stroke Treatment

- Move person to a cool shaded area
- **Call 911 immediately – this is a medical emergency!**
- Reduce body temperature with cool towels, bath or fan
- Have person lie down and elevate their feet
- Sip cool water if possible

**Christmas Tree Pruning Services
Offered to Christmas Tree growers
of New Jersey**

Please Contact Michael Martin for information
@ (518) 335 - 7512

Christmas Tree Contest Results

The Annual Contest of the NJ Christmas Tree Growers Association was held this year at the Middlesex County Fairgrounds. Every tree entered was an excellent example of the quality available on farms throughout New Jersey. Thank you to judges, Robert Bruch, NJCTGA Director and Rich Weidman, Middlesex County Extension, for their difficult job judging the many trees entered this year. Also thank you to Alan Habiak for arranging the details at the fairgrounds and to the Contest Chairman, Andy Alpaugh for making the contest a success. Now for the results:

Spruce Category

- 1st Place
Wyckoff's Tree Farm
John Wyckoff
- 2nd Place:
Hidden Pond Tree Farm
Chris Nicholson
- 3rd Place:
Yuletide Tree Farm
John and Alan Perry

Fir Category

- 1st Place
Wyckoff's Tree Farm
John Wyckoff
- 2nd Place
Wintergreen Farm
Bill Allison
- 3rd Place
Evergreen Valley CTF
Sam and Kate Alpaugh

Pine Category

- 1st Place
Wyckoff's Tree Farm
John Wyckoff
- 2nd Place
Spruce Goose Farm
John Benton
- 3rd Place
Evergreen Valley CTF
Sam and Kate Alpaugh

Table Top Category

- 1st Place
Wyckoff's Tree Farm
John Wyckoff
- 2nd Place
Hidden Pond Tree Farm
Chris Nicholson
- 3rd Place
Simonson Farms
Roger Jany

Grand Champion – Wyckoff's Tree Farm, John Wyckoff
Reserve Grand Champion – Wyckoff's Tree Farm, John Wyckoff

Congratulations to all of our winners and thank you to all who participated!



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Contact Donna Cole, Exec. Secretary, at (908) 735-4658 or email execsecretary@njchristmastrees.org

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Twilight Meeting Revisited

The annual Twilight Meeting was held on Thursday, June 11 on the Triple Dog Dare You Christmas Tree Farm in Franklinville. Farm owner, John Melleady, described his growing methods and discussed his experiences growing Christmas trees. Also at the meeting, NJCTGA Director Bob Bruch explained the Farmland Assessment qualification changes for this year, and Mark Vodak discussed shearing techniques.



Members sharing growing information and tips at the Twilight Meeting.



Bob Bruch discussed the changes to Farmland Assessment.

Mark Vodak and Twilight meeting host, John Melleady discussed shearing and growing a perfect Christmas tree.



Twilight meeting host, John Melleady (left) discusses his experiences growing Blue Spruce on his farm in Franklinville.

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