



Christmas Tree Production in Tennessee

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Tennessee Christmas Tree Production Manual



- **PB1854**
- **Available in supply room**

Topics



- Planning
- Site selection
- Species
- Planting
- Schedule of Activities
- Weed and Insect Control
- Shearing
- Marketing \$\$\$
- Insurance / risks

PLANNING

- Final size (number of trees)
- 6x7 foot spacing = 1037 trees per acre
- Estimate selling 60%-70% of planted seedlings
- 5 to 10 years until sold (6 to 8 for most)
- Layout of Farm – trees, parking, buildings

Site selection

- Soil Test – 5.5 to 6.0 Ph preferred
- Drainage – wet soil – root rot issues
- Traffic / parking area



Species

- Fastest growing 5-6 yrs
 - Murray/Leyland Cypress
 - Virginia Pine
 - Green Giant (Thuja)
- Other Species 6-10 yrs
 - Eastern White
 - Scotch Pine
 - Blue Spruce
 - Norway Spruce
 - Arizona Cypress (Blue Ice or Carolina Sapphire)
 - Canaan Fir
 - Red Cedar



Planting

- Spacing & Alignment of rows
- Shading issues
- Subsoiling
- Dibble bar vs. Auger
- Age of seedling / potted seedling
- Source of seedlings/trees - handout



Schedule of Activities

- Page 18-20 in manual
- Busiest months
 - Planting December or April
 - Shearing June & July
 - Sales November & December
- Determine Labor Needs



Disease Control

- **Phytophthora Root Rot**
- **Needle Cast / Needle Rust**
- **Stem Rusts/ Cankers**



Shearing

- Required to obtain high quality sellable tree
- Timing important - Varies with growing season
- Reduce leader to 12-14 inches of growth
- Shear sides to maintain 40%-60% taper
- Pines only shear new growth
- Shearing knife, Beneke, Saje – SAFETY IMPT!



Equipment

- Sprayer – backpack, small mounted 15-25 gal
- Planting bar and/or auger
- Shearing knife / motorized
- Mower(s)
- Baler, Shaker, Saws, Twine, other sales items



Sales Equipment

- Baler,
- Shaker,
- Saws,
- Twine,
- Other – bags, preservative, tree stands, etc.
- Gift Shop



Marketing

- Tennessee Christmas Tree Growers Assoc.
- Pick TN Products website
- Facebook / Website
- Selling Precuts trees before Choose-n-cut
- Planning for year 3-4 of sales

Insurance

- Farm/Home policy
 - Verify coverage
 - What is not covered?
- Separate Christmas tree farm policy
 - Entertainment covered?



On Farm Risks

- Beyond cutting and selling trees
- Securing trees – who ties it on - signage
- Wagon rides, slides, playground, etc.
- Ziplines!
- Food – packaged vs prepared
- Additional labor needs



Preventing Risks

- Thorough walk through
- Fix past issues – stumps, holes,
- New features – new risks
- Add signage, brief, clear
 - (lots of it)!



Training

- Employee / workers
- Plan for accidents/issues
- What to do when.....
- Who calls 911 if needed?
- Where is first aid kit?



Other Issues

- Parking – using attendants , clear signage
- Allow space when families stay longer
- Photography (before or during sales)



Closing thoughts

- Growers love selling Christmas trees
- Common Sense is in short supply
- Think through all possible risks
- Eliminate those you can
- Be as prepared as possible



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Questions?

