

NH Christmas Tree Industry Donates Trees For Official Holiday Festivities

New Hampshire Christmas tree growers across the state are now in the thick of the busy annual Christmas tree selling season. But through a tradition begun by the NH Christmas Tree Promotion Board, New Hampshire Christmas Tree growers have, for years, provided fresh trees for “official” holiday decorating to the New Hampshire State House and to the Bridges House (site for numerous official functions).

The New Hampshire Christmas Tree Promotion Board conducts numerous industry promotion activities throughout the year. These activities include brochures, advertising, displays and exhibits on behalf of the growers of New Hampshire. The group maintains a website with links to Christmas tree farms across the state: www.nhchristmastrees.com.

This year, the official state holiday trees come from Sibgo Tree Co. in Colebrook donating a Fraser fir tree and Mountain Star Farms of Swiftwater, donating a Balsam fir tree.

Mountain Star Farms is owned by Mike Garvan who established the operation in 1982. The farms consist of 100 acres of owned and leased land with over 110,000 trees, primarily Balsam and Fraser fir. Garvan and farm manager Ben Hoyt, run the business which includes wholesale, retail, cut-your-own and mail and internet order segments. Not only trees, but wreaths, roping, ornaments and other accessories are shipped nationwide. Mountain Star Farms is a New Hampshire Farm of Distinction.

Sibgo Tree Co., owned and operated by Michael Godzyk, has about 150,000 Christmas trees on 200 acres. The farm, which was established in 1969 by Michael Godyk Sr., specializes in Balsam, Fraser and Fralsam (cross between Balsam and Fraser) fir. Eighty percent of the production is Fraser. A unique component of the farm operation is that all tree seedlings that are planted in the field are started and grown in a nursery on the premises, allowing Sibgo to control tree quality from seed to harvest.

The New Hampshire Christmas tree industry is valued at over \$6 million annually and involves over two hundred growing operations of all sizes. In addition to trees, other important products from this industry are wreaths, roping and related items. Fresh New Hampshire Christmas trees and Christmas tree products are available at retail outlets throughout the state, and right at the farm. Many operations offer the opportunity to select and cut your own tree and experience other seasonal treats such as hay rides, sleigh rides, hot mulled cider and browsing holiday craft shops. For more information about where to get a fresh New Hampshire Christmas tree near you, contact the New Hampshire Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food at 271-3788, or www.agriculture.nh.gov or visit the NH Christmas Tree Promotion Board website: www.nhchristmastrees.com.

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