

# Retail Value of Christmas Trees Set \$50 Million for This Year

Thursday, December 13, 1934

MAIL TOWNE—NINE

Washington—Some 38,000,000 Christmas trees, with an estimated retail value of \$50,000,000, will be displayed in American homes this year, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Most of these are produced in states along the Canadian border. Montana, one of the leading producers, harvests about 3,000,000 trees annually under normal conditions.

Nearly one-third of the Christmas tree harvest—an estimated

12,400,000—comes from Canada, the only significant outside source. In past years small numbers have been brought in from Newfoundland, Labrador and the Dominican Republic.

**A Dozen Companies**

Most of the U.S. production, estimated at 25,400,000 comes from private land. The remainder is cut from federal, state and county property.

While the bulk of the nation's Christmas trees grow in a natural state, about 3,300,000 are

cultivated on plantations. About 225,000 acres, mostly in Pennsylvania and New York, are now devoted to Christmas tree planting.

About a dozen companies are responsible for production and distribution of Christmas trees. Their representatives contract with woodland owners for tree delivery at roadside or railroad siding.

After shipment to urban areas, the trees are forwarded by wholesalers to the various retail

outlets, an enterprise similar to that for distribution of other semi-perishable commodities.

**The Desirable Ones**

The department, which says "there is no best all-around Christmas tree species," lists the following characteristics as the most desirable:

1. Retention of needles from time of cutting through Christmas holiday.
2. Full, symmetrical shape.
3. Limb strength adequate to support ornaments and lights.

4. Sufficient non-prickly foliage of a healthy green odor.
5. Fragrant odor.
6. Springy branches that can be tied for shipment without breaking and regain their shape when released.

While no one tree is "best" there are several species which conform closely to these desirable characteristics.

**Douglas Fir**

The balsam fir, once the most commonly used tree but now becoming scarce in easily acces-

sible areas, is seen in central and eastern markets. Its short, flat, dark green needles are attached to opposite sides of the tree limbs in a feather-like arrangement.

The Douglas fir is now the number one commercial tree. This tree, marketed nationally, is common in the West. Its blue-green or dark yellow-green needles, soft and pliable, are attached all the way around the limb, giving it a bushier, fuller appearance.

The black spruce, grown in the swampy areas of northern Minnesota is a small, thickly needled tree usually selected for coloring. Most of the colored trees seen on the market are of this variety.

There are a dozen other species in Christmas tree production, some of which have one or more undesirable characteristics. The white spruce, for example, while holding its needles well, gives off a disagreeable odor. And all of the five species of southern

**CURIOSITY**

Holland, Mich.—(U.P.)—Harry Plaggemars, 34, stepped off the curb to look at a car-truck accident. Damage wasn't too severe until, seconds later, a car struck Plaggemars, pinning him against the stalled car and breaking his leg. By that time, accumulated damages to all three vehicles amounted to \$1,450.

pitch and shortleaf—have prickly cones.

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