



## *A Guide to Insure the Quality of Christmas Trees Throughout the Season*

At the Christmas tree lot as well as the customers' home or business, every practical effort must be made to minimize moisture loss from the Christmas tree and to prevent limb breakage or freezing. Set up a schedule of several shipments with trees arriving as they are needed.

### *For Warm Locations*

#### **In Storage**

1. Keep trees out of direct sunlight and wind until they are displayed.
2. Keep trees off hot surfaces (asphalt, cement) prior to display.
3. Trees are best stored upright with butts in sawdust material under a shaded area.
4. If trees must be stored on their sides in extremely hot weather, they should be set on pallets, covered with burlap, and stored in a shaded area.
5. If stored on sides, allow trees to breath in storage with trees stacked no higher than four feet.
6. To keep trees moist, stored trees should be watered lightly at night. (Do not leave moistened trees in piles more than one week to avoid mold forming.)

#### **On Display**

1. During display, shade should be maintained if possible.
2. Keep the relative humidity as high as possible. Cut one-inch off the butt and display trees in a water-filled basin. (Keep the water level above the base.)
3. Instruct your customers on the proper care of their trees. The importance of keeping trees moist can not be stressed enough.

### *For Cold Locations*

#### **In Storage**

1. If possible store trees in a refrigerated trailer or warehouse set at 40 degrees Fahrenheit with a moisture level of 90%
2. When trees must be stored outside, they should be covered with tarps, particularly in freezing weather.
3. Consider renting a tent or constructing inexpensive plywood shelters with poly sheeting to further protect trees from wind damage when trees must be stored outside.
4. Keep trees off the pavement by putting them on tarps or pallets.
5. Some trees, such as West Coast Douglas Fir, do not tolerate storage or display below freezing weather and cold dry winds.

#### **On Display**

1. To prevent limb breakage, unbale and fluff out the trees when the temperature is above freezing, or in a warm area.
2. Display only a small portion of your inventory at a time. Trees unsold each day should either be restacked and covered with tarps at night or moved to a more sheltered area to minimize their exposure to the cold.
3. When weather is above freezing, display trees in water with a fresh cut off the butt of the tree. (A good practice for all firs.)
4. Some species (particularly coastal Douglas Fir) do not tolerate below freezing weather. Display in a warehouse or warmed tent when weather is below the freezing level.
5. Instruct your customers on the proper care of their tree. The importance of keeping trees moist cannot be stressed enough.

#### **Encourage Customers To:**

1. Cut 1/2" - 1" off the butt.
2. Display in water stand with at least one gallon capacity within 30 minutes after making cut.
3. Keep water level above the base of the tree.