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# UPROOTED: THE TREE-MENDOUS JOURNEY OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE

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“We're kicking off our fun old fashioned family Christmas by heading out into the country in the old front-wheel drive sleigh to embrace the frosty majesty of the winter landscape and select that most important of Christmas symbols.” Chevy Chase so eloquently uttered these words in the classic holiday movie Christmas Vacation. Of course the symbol he was talking about was the Christmas tree. For those who don't venture into the woods to cut down your own trees, there are plenty available to buy as the season approaches. The Christmas tree supply chain takes a lot of planning. Like many things associated with the holiday season, it's big business. [According to the National Christmas Tree Association there are between 25-30 million real trees sold every year.](#)

### **Here's How:**

- The trees grow on over 15,000 farms in the US, spanning over 350,000 acres.
- The top five Christmas-tree-producing states are Oregon, North Carolina, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.
- The growing time for an average size tree is about 7 years, or between 7' and 7.5'

### **Roots in the Recession?**

Due to the fact that the [“ideal” trees take between 7 and 10 years of growth to meet their ideal height](#), millions of new trees are planted every year to ensure there are enough for future holidays. In 2008, when the recession hit the United States, the demand for trees was at an all time low. People did not have the extra money to afford them. The growers were unable to sell a majority of the trees they cut for the prices they were worth and many farmers lost a substantial amount of money. In the years following the economic downturn, less and less trees were planted to avoid the same financial situation. Compounding the problem are tree farmers who are turning to other crops and uses for their land. This is especially true in Oregon, where tree acreage is down. The growers are turning to more profitable crops like grapes for wine, and cannabis as that industry begins to

take off in the Beaver State.

### **Farm to Family Room**

Your local tree lot or major home improvement store won't run out of trees, however you will be paying a substantial amount of more money than in previous years. [According to the National Christmas Tree Association](#) the price of trees has doubled since 2008. This is especially true if you live far from any of the major tree producing states. The cost of shipping has contributed to the price increase as well. The easiest mode of transport is on a flatbed truck, however shippers avoid this because it leaves the goods susceptible to the elements & some other potential debris or hazards. The best mode of transport is via refrigerated truck. The trees grow in cold conditions, and they can dry out if they are kept in a place without circulation. Reefer trucks are a more expensive method of transport than traditional trucks. It's also worth mentioning that carriers cannot make multiple pick ups and drop offs with trees because they need to get into water as soon as possible. Despite these obstacles the central symbol of the Christmas season is still bountiful in homes across America.

### **Home For The Holidays**

Broadcast journalist Andy Rooney once said, "the best Christmas trees come very close to exceeding nature. If some of our great decorated trees had been grown in a remote forest area with lights that came on every evening as it grew dark, the whole world would come to look at them and marvel at the mystery of their great beauty."

Logistics and the supply chain have enabled us to forego the forest or farm to witness this majesty. Today consumers can rejoice in the ease of purchasing a tree -- thanks to an efficient supply chain and the willingness to pay more green for their holiday greenery.