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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Christmas Tree Tradition Still Strong

(Chesterfield, Mo.) – The National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA) recently released results of Christmas Tree purchases for the 2010 holiday season. The industry group commissions an annual consumer tracking poll with Harris Interactive, Inc.

Poll results show that consumers in the United States purchased 27 million farm-grown Christmas Trees in 2010, a slight decrease from the previous year. Consumers only purchased 8.2 million artificial trees in 2010, a 30% decrease over the previous year.

The average amount spent on a farm-grown tree was \$36.12, down from \$40.92 in 2009. While some might attribute that decline to a “bad economy,” the analysis is not so cut and dry. Many factors could influence how much a family or individual spends on their particular tree, including size, species, quality, where purchased, day purchased and even just budget reasons.

“There are many growers and retailers in our industry trying to offer more variety to customers,” said NCTA President Richard Moore, a tree farmer from Groton, N.Y. “If you sell a three-foot-tall table top tree, you probably won’t get as much for it as a typical six-foot tree, but it might help you get a new customer, or keep a long-time customer whose home situation has changed and a smaller tree makes more sense.”

Industry experts point out that many factors can influence sales, including harvest conditions, weather conditions, number of consumers traveling for the holidays and even the number of days between Thanksgiving and Christmas. There is simply no way to accurately forecast price tags on trees in any given year, and the survey instrument does not delve into why people spend more or less on their tree than in previous years.

The number of trees purchased was within 4% of the last two years in spite of the bad economy and that bodes well for the industry’s future. “The good news for family farms growing Christmas Trees is many families, especially young families are much more likely to have traditional Christmas Trees,” said Moore. “Younger people want the real thing, not a plastic tradition.”

It is estimated that Christmas Tree farms in North America planted about 40 million new tree seedlings in 2011 to replace harvested crops and meet future increased demand.

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