



2012 NCTA Convention & Trade Show Aug. 8-11, 2012 Sacramento, California

National Tree Contest Details

Bring Your Best to California!

Schedule of Events

Wednesday, Aug. 8, 2012

8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Tree Contest Set-up
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Tree Contest Judging

Thursday, Aug. 9, 2012

8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Popular Voting for Tree Contest

Friday, Aug. 10, 2012

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Take-down of Tree Contest (with exception of 1st Place trees)
5:30 p.m. Awards Banquet

For additional schedule and program details, visit www.christmastree.org/convention2012.cfm.

Important Reminders:

- The National Tree Contest will take place in the Sacramento Convention Center. Check-in for the tree contest will begin at 8 a.m., and all trees must be in place by 11 a.m.
- If you will be bringing your tree in early, a refrigerated truck will be available beginning at 5:00 p.m. Monday (Aug. 6). For access to the truck, you will need to call the designated cell phone number, which will be provided to you in advance or posted at hotel check-in.
- You must be on-site during the designated time to check in and set up your tree. If you will not be available, you will need to designate and contact someone to do this on your behalf – please let NCTA know in advance if someone will be handling your tree for you.
- Stands for all trees will be provided by the contest sponsor.
- If your tree is selected as a first-place tree, it will be transported by NCTA to the banquet location. You may claim your tree following the banquet if you wish.
- Please review all rules and guidelines carefully before entering.
- Questions? Please contact NCTA at 636/449-5070.

Good luck!

NCTA NATIONAL CHRISTMAS TREE CONTEST

Contest Rules and Procedures

The following items shall establish the Purpose of the Contest, Eligibility of Entrants, General Requirements for Entries, Entry Procedure, Judging Procedure, Contest Awards and Recognition, and Responsibility for Interpretation of the Contest Rules and Procedures.

Purpose of Contest:

- To promote and encourage the use of farm-fresh Christmas Trees through media events and releases about the White House Christmas Tree presentation and the Christmas Tree at the Residence of the Vice President.
- To select and recognize NCTA members for outstanding Christmas Tree production. These growers shall receive the honor of presenting a farm-fresh Christmas Tree to the White House and the Vice President's residence (pending approval).

CONTEST RULES

Eligibility of Entrants

- Each NCTA affiliated chartered association is eligible to enter two trees in the NCTA Christmas Tree Contest.
- Entrants are to be the first and second place winners of the most recent affiliated chartered association contest.
- If an affiliated chartered association has a biennial contest, that association may select four winners and determine the order in which two entrants are eligible to represent that association for the two contests following that biennial contest.
- Each person, family or farm may enter only one tree.
- Entrants shall be United States residents.
- Entrants shall be 'Members in Good Standing' of the National Christmas Tree Association and their respective affiliated chartered association.
- All parties agree that promotion of winning status and media coverage shall be coordinated through the NCTA office. (This aids NCTA in keeping its covenant with the White House to gain proper approvals and ensures that the program is used to promote all real Christmas Trees, not specifically one species or region. Promotional participation by the contest winners and his/her chartered association is encouraged.)
- All parties agree to promote the Real Tree industry in a positive manner. Winners will be an ambassador for the industry.
- The Grand Champion and Reserve Champion winners of the NCTA Christmas Tree Contest and their immediate families are not eligible to participate in the National Christmas Tree contests held during the three years immediately following the contest in which they won. Eligibility of the winners and their immediate family is restored beginning with the fourth year subsequent to their win. (Example: the 2011 winners are next able to participate in 2015).

General Requirements for Entries

- The tree contest shall be held at a site convenient to the convention site.
- The five contest classes shall be: (A) true firs (B) Douglas-firs (C) all pines (D) all spruces and (E) cypress, cedar and other species.
- Eligible trees shall:
 - Be commercially cultivated.
 - Be no less than 6 feet in height, and no more than 8 feet in height measured from the bottom of the handle to tip of leader.

- Have a handle which shall be no less than 6 inches and no longer than 12 inches measured along the trunk from the bottom of the handle to the bottom of the first branch(es).
 - Not be artificially colored or flocked.
 - Not have branches and limbs that are wired, tied or inserted in any fashion within the tree.
- Any tree failing to meet these requirements shall be disqualified by the tree contest committee prior to judging.
 - At the conclusion of the contest, no trees are to be removed from the Convention/contest site unless permission is specifically granted by a member of the contest committee. No tree is to be released to anyone other than the person who entered it. All unclaimed contest trees shall be recycled.

CONTEST PROCEDURES

Entry Procedure

- Each entrant shall submit a completed Entry Form to NCTA to be received by NCTA at least 14 days prior to the contest. (Entry forms are available from the affiliate chartered association, on the NCTA website or can be faxed or mailed to the contestant. Entrants whose eligibility is determined less than 21 days prior to the contest can request and receive an extension for filing the form.)
- The completed entry form shall certify the entrant as the duly selected representative and 'member in good standing' of the contestant's affiliated chartered association. Affiliated chartered association certification shall be by the association executive director, president or executive secretary.
- Upon receipt of the Entry Form, NCTA shall certify that the entrant is a 'member in good standing' of NCTA.
- NCTA will provide directions to or details regarding the location of the contest site at the convention, as well as the list of contact persons, phone numbers and times for early arrivals.
- NCTA will coordinate with the hosting affiliated chartered association to provide adequate, climate-controlled storage facility for early arrival.
- Each entrant is solely responsible for delivering his or her contest tree to the contest area.
- All trees must be presented to the check-in officials at least one half hour prior to the end of the specified set-up period. In the event that a backlog of trees prevents an entrant's tree from being measured in a timely manner, that entrant may be granted additional set-up time, not to exceed one half hour after it is certified as eligible. Trees which are not in place and ready for judging at the appointed time shall be disqualified.
- Check-in of all tree contest entries shall be conducted by an NCTA staff person and minimum of one contest committee member.
- Entrance to the tree check-in area shall be limited to the tree contest entrant and one (1) additional "helper" (i.e. spouse, family member, employee). No contestant or helper shall have entry to the contest area for any purpose prior to check-in of their tree.
- At check-in, tree stands must be removed and each entry will be measured for height and the length of handle. Entrants must lay down their tree for the handle to be measured. The handle shall be measured from the lowest branch to the butt of the tree. The height of the tree shall be measured from the butt of the tree to the tip of the leader.
- All adjustments and/or cuts to meet contest requirements shall be made prior to placement in the stand. All decisions of the check-in staff member and contest committee members are final.
- Upon approval, each entry shall be placed in a stand provided by the contest sponsor.
- Each tree shall have a sealed envelope securely tied to the tree containing a card with the grower's name, address, telephone number and address of the tree farm. The species of tree

must be clearly printed on the outside of the envelope. The outside of the envelopes shall not identify the contestant.

- At the close of the contest set-up time, all contestants and helpers shall leave the tree contest area. Any contestant or helper interfering with the administration of the contest or another contest entry during the set-up or voting period shall be subject to disqualification and/or suspension from future contests. Interference can be defined as “physical” (touching or moving another contest tree) or “verbal” (lobbying for or against specific trees); this determination is the purview of the NCTA Executive Committee.

Judging Procedure

- A panel of at least six (6) judges will determine the first, second and third place winners in each category.
- Judges will not have access to the contest area until all contestants and their helpers are out of the area.
- Judges may be growers, retailers, wholesalers, researchers or university personnel who have extensive knowledge of the Christmas tree industry.
- Judges cannot be affiliated with any family, farm or individual participating in the contest.
- Judges should be from varied geographic areas, ideally with one from each of the six regions that NCTA recognizes for its convention rotation.
- Judges will participate in a pre-contest orientation conducted by NCTA staff. At orientation, judges will be given scoresheets and an explanation of contest procedures.
- Each judge shall complete a scoresheet for each tree entered into the contest.
- Scoresheets that are illegible, incomplete, or otherwise compromised may be excluded from the final tallies.
- Completed scoresheets for each tree shall be averaged to determine the final score for each tree. The tree that receives the highest score in each class shall be declared the first place winner in that class. The tree that receives the second highest score shall be declared the second place winner and the tree receiving the third highest score shall be declared the third place tree.
- In the unlikely event of a tie score, the judges will be asked to re-evaluate trees involved in the tie and determine the order of placement for those trees.
- The first place winning trees shall be prominently displayed and randomly alphabetically labeled (A, B, C, D, E) for the determination of Grand Champion and Reserve Champion.
- Non-first place trees may be relocated to be used as decoration for the convention. Non-first place trees will be displayed with a sign showing the growers name and contest award, if applicable.
- Grand and Reserve Champion trees shall be determined by popular vote of convention primary registrants and at least twenty (20) non-industry personnel who are consumers of real Christmas Trees.
- Each person casting a vote shall vote for one tree.
- Primary registrant votes will count for 50% of the total votes and the consumer votes will be mathematically weighted to account for 50% of the total.
- Soliciting votes for particular trees within 50 feet of the contest area may result in disqualification and/or suspension from future contests.
- The popular voting period will be open for no less than four (4) hours on the second day of the Convention. The consumer judges shall vote following the close of the popular voting time, or before 12:00 (noon) local time on the third day of the convention.
- At the end of popular voting, entrant information for the first-place trees will be displayed.
- Ballots shall be counted and winners determined by a panel of three NCTA board members.
- The Grand Champion and Reserve Champion winners shall be announced at the Convention Banquet or at a time determined by NCTA.

- Decisions of the judges and counting panel are final. Copies of scoresheets will not be provided to the contestants.

CONTEST AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- The top three places in each class shall receive ribbons: First place – blue ribbon; second place – red ribbon; and third place – white ribbon.
- The Grand Champion shall be awarded a purple ribbon, a recognition plaque and the honor of furnishing the tree for the Blue Room in The White House the Christmas following the contest. Presentation of the Christmas Tree to The White House is subject to approval and permission granted by The White House.
- The Reserve Champion shall receive a purple ribbon, a recognition plaque and the honor of furnishing the Christmas Tree to the Residence of the Vice President. Donation of the Christmas tree to the Vice President's residence is subject to approval and permission granted by The Residence.

INTERPRETATION OF RULES AND PROCEDURES

- The tree contest committee shall consist of three NCTA board members appointed by the NCTA President.
- Interpretation of the Rules and Procedures for the NCTA National Christmas Tree Contest shall be the sole responsibility of NCTA's Executive Committee.