

# Ida's Notebook

by  
Ida Risser



As we head into winter, I find that I'm still busy even though our gardens have finished producing. Now other things seem to crowd our days.

One day we are asked to volunteer at church and help put together an Advent booklet of devotions written by church members. Then another day we visit a housebound relative in another county. We share frozen fruit and they give fresh apples and cider

that they made.

In the middle of the week, we go to New Jersey with a group to Hunterdon Hills Playhouse to see a play and have a meal. We had a wide choice of entrees but as usual we chose seafood as that is something that we don't have very often at home unless I catch some in the Conestoga River. As our son butchers pigs and a steer, that is what fills our freezers. Chicken is something that I buy when it is

**HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.)**  
—Consumers seeking to purchase Christmas trees will find an abundance on sale at the store.

Recently, I relived what I did years ago on the farm. You see, some mornings I would clean and dress six or more chickens. What reminded me of this was doing a duck before Thanksgiving day.

It is so easy to fall into the habit of buying convenience foods. The one thing that I buy is canned soup for a Sunday meal. Otherwise, when I make a pumpkin pie, I start with a pumpkin from the garden. And, when I make filling, I cut up bread and let it dry before using it. I've also dried my own corn and grown my own sweet potatoes. The pickles and jellies are homemade too and I like to tell our guests that almost everything but the cranberries are homegrown.

# Real Christmas Trees

Quality Christmas trees have bright, green color and a fresh scent. To help determine freshness in a pre-cut tree, run your hands down one of the boughs of the tree. If many needles fall off, the tree may have begun drying out.

Consumers can get help making their selections by using free "Facts and Information about Pennsylvania Christmas Trees" and "Where to Select Your Pennsylvania Grown Christmas Tree" guides offered by the Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association. To receive the guides, mail a stamped, self-addressed, business size envelope to the Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association, 44 Cessna Drive, Halifax, PA 17032.

Two dozen varieties of Christmas trees are grown in Pennsylvania. Douglas fir, Scotch pine, White pine, Blue spruce and Norway spruce are long-time favorites, with more exotic varieties like the Fraser fir gaining in popularity.

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