

DIRECT RETAIL Farm Marketing

Christmas Trees

Larry Kuhns, a Penn State University professor and Christmas tree marketer, gave his opinions on the current market conditions for Christmas tree retailers.

Professor Kuhns has a tree farm, in central Pennsylvania, with wholesale and retail markets.

The "hottest" tree for today's consumer is the Fraser fir. Unfortunately, it is very site-demanding and will not grow in all parts of Pennsylvania.

Number two on the list is a well-adapted Pennsylvania tree, the Douglas fir.

These two species command the highest retail price. Professor Kuhns says it's hard to go wrong with these two types, unless your

customers are very low-price conscious.

Another tree that is commonly grown locally, and is number three in the consumer's mind, is the Colorado spruce.

When you receive Colorado spruce, be prepared for a mix of the blue and green types, no matter what you ordered. This species remains a favorite, because of its stiff branches. Your customers can really pile on the ornaments and not bend the branches.

Following these three are the balsam fir, scotch pine and white pine. These trees are often used as the low-priced draws. It can be difficult to make a profit with these low-margin species.

The current retail prices are ranging from \$20 per tree to \$5 to \$6 per foot, with the 6- to 7 1/2-foot sizes still the most popular.

Retailers need to keep in mind that the Christmas tree selling season starts the first weekend after Thanksgiving and is in full swing the following weekend.

Professor Kuhns offered these points when considering tree retailing:

- Start small, 100 trees is a fair start for a beginner.

- Order a species mix, heavy on the Fraser and Douglas fir, light on the spruce and pines.

- Retailing tree stands with good water-holding capacity can add to your net profits.

- Wreaths, lights, tree-life extenders and tree removal bags are demanded by today's consumer. Keep in mind that wreaths tend to sell best early in the season.

- If you are serious about tree retailing, get a net baler.

- A tree shaker and tree drill/stand system are the next steps toward achieving total customer satisfaction.

Kuhns offered these final words of wisdom: Adequate parking and effective signage are critical areas often overlooked by beginning tree retailers, and selling after dark will lead to increased sales.

(Continued from Page A2)

lighter weights were 10.00-20.00 higher in a light test. Slaughter ewes sold steady to 2.00 lower.

SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Choice and Prime 2-3 40-60 lbs 95.00-120.00; 60-80 lbs 75.00-90.00; 80-110 lbs 65.00-75.00. Good and Choice 80-110 lbs 60.00-65.00.

SLAUGHTER EWES: Utility and Good 1-3 28.00-40.00.

GOATS: All goats sold by the head. Billies: Large 100.00-130.00. Medium 75.00-100.00. Nannies: Medium and Large 40.00-60.00. Yearlings: Choice and Prime 55.00-70.00. Kids: Choice and Prime 40.00-60.00. Good 20.00-40.00.

Lancaster Co. Weeklies

NEW HOLLAND, PA
FRI NOVEMBER 6, 1998

	CATTLE	CALVES
THIS WEEK	2324	1834
LAST WEEK	2653	1707
LAST YEAR	3081	1732

CATTLE: Compared to last week's closing prices, slaughter steers closed mostly steady to .50 lower. Western direct fat cattle movement was mostly 1.00 lower at 63.00 live and 98.00-99.00 in the beef. Boxed beef prices held firm this past week, despite fierce competition from pork. Local slaughter hog prices fell to 18.00, their lowest point in over 27 years. Local Holstein steers and slaughter heifers sold steady to weak in a limited test. Slaughter cow prices ended the week 1.50-2.50 lower, while slaughter bulls finished mostly steady. Supply was made up of around 39 percent slaughter steers, 10 percent slaughter heifers, 39 percent slaughter cows, 5 percent bulls.

SLAUGHTER STEERS: High Choice and Prime 2-4 1105-1430 lbs 62.00-68.00, mostly 62.50-65.25. Choice 2-3 1070-1490 lbs 60.25-63.50, high dressing 1-2 up to 66.75 and low dressing 4-5 down to 57.50. Select and low Choice 2-3 1050-1500 lbs 55.00-61.00; 1500-1780 lbs 51.50-58.50. Select 1-3 940-1440 lbs 52.50-59.50.

HOLSTEIN STEERS: Few High

Choice and Prime 2-3 1240-1490 lbs 54.25-55.50. Choice 2-3 1320-1555 lbs 52.25-54.25; few 1605-1675 lbs 52.35-52.85. Select and low Choice 2-3 1115-1610 lbs 49.00-52.75; few 1725-1800 lbs 45.00-46.00. Select 1-2 1255-1610 lbs 47.00-48.75. Few Standard 1-2 1230-1470 lbs 44.00-46.00.

SLAUGHTER HEIFERS: Choice 2-4 1045-1380 lbs 58.75-61.00, individual 1245 lbs 62.00; low dressing 4-5 930-1400 lbs 50.50-58.25. Select and low Choice 2-3 960-1475 lbs 53.00-59.75.

SLAUGHTER COWS: PERCENT LEAN WEIGHT BULK LOW DRESSING Breakers 75-80 pct lean over-1400 lbs 32.25-36.50 29.75-33.00 Boners 80-85 pct lean over-1200 lbs 30.50-34.50 27.00-31.25 Lean (Hi-Yield) 85-88 pct lean over-1200 lbs 28.00-33.00 26.50-30.00 Lean 88-90 pct lean over-1000 lbs 25.50-30.50 24.00-28.00 Lean (Light-Wt) 85-90 pct lean 750-1000 lbs 24.25-28.75 22.50-26.00

SLAUGHTER BULLS: Yield Grade 1 1150-2015 lbs 40.00-50.50, several outstanding 52.75-56.75; individual Charolais-X 1410 lbs 59.25. Yield Grade 2 1000-2145 lbs 34.50-43.00. Bullocks: Select, few Choice 1-3 900-1490 lbs 45.25-54.00.

CALVES: Compared to last week, vealers sold steady to 2.00 higher with good demand all week. Slaughter calves closed mostly steady. Holstein bull calves returning to feed ended the week fully steady in moderately active trading. Demand for Holstein heifer calves slipped some this week and prices closed mostly 10.00 lower.

VEALERS: Good and Choice 70-110 lbs 21.00-35.00. Standard and low Good 60-90 lbs 12.00-23.00, few down to 10.00.

SLAUGHTER CALVES: Good and Choice 200-350 lbs 70.00-80.00; 350-500 lbs 60.00-75.00. Standard 200-350 lbs 62.00-70.00; 350-600 lbs 40.00-58.00.

RETURNED TO FARM: Holstein bulls 90-125 lbs 65.00-102.00, late mostly 75.00-100.00. Plainer-type bulls 80-115 lbs 30.00-72.00. Holstein heifers 80-115 lbs 135.00-195.00. Plain heifers 70-100 lbs 65.00-140.00.

Northeast Quality Forage Conference

WILLIAMSPORT (Lycoming Co.) - The northeastern offices of Penn State extension are again planning to offer the Quality Forage Conference Tuesday, Nov. 17 at the Holiday Inn/TGIF in Williamsport.

Doors open at 9:30 a.m. and the meeting will be over by 2:30 p.m. Various commercial displays will be set up.

The program will feature speakers in the morning and farm visits in the afternoon. Harold Harpster, Penn State University professor of animal nutrition, will speak on "How Feeding Systems Influence Forage Quality and Animal Performance," Kurt Rappel, forage specialist with Pioneer Hi-Bred International, will speak on "Managing Storage to Minimize Losses," Marvin Hall, Penn State, extension forage specialist, will speak on "Successful Forage Crop Establishment." Heather Karsten, Penn State university professor of crop ecology, will speak on "Managing to Optimize Pasture Production."

During the afternoon, participants will have their choice of farm visits. One visit will be at the farm of Mike and Nancy Jarret near Williamsport in Lycoming County. The Jarretts own and operate a dairy farm where they milk 160 cows. Silage is stored in upright and bunker-type silos. Harold Harpster will discuss research that he has conducted on a new baler design. The baler and a sample bale will be at this site for participants to study.

The second farm visit opportunity will be at Camerer Farms near Jersey Shore. At this site participants will see the unique feeding system used on this farm to feed beef cattle. The program makes use of silage from male corn plants. Marvin Hall will also speak on using alfalfa for grazing.

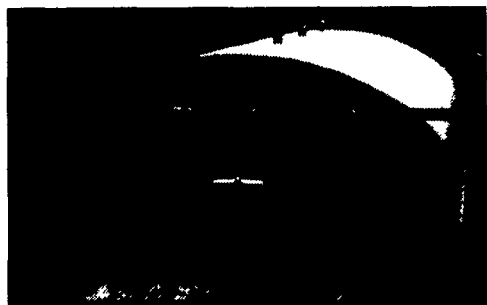
Registration cost is only \$10 for this meeting. This covers your meal and bus ride to the farm of your choice. For a registration brochure, call the extension office nearest you. Registration deadline is Nov. 9.



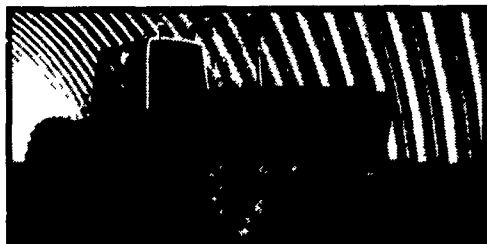
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