

2018 Virginia Grown Christmas Tree Month

SELECTING A FRESH CUT CHRISTMAS TREE

Tree freshness is always a concern. A visit to a choose-and-cut farm and cutting your own tree is one way to assure freshness. Pre-cut trees on retail lots require a closer inspection. The foliage of a pre-cut tree should be flexible when the needle is bent and when the tree is shook very few needles should drop. Thoroughly inspect a tree for pests such as invasive insects before purchasing the tree.

CARE OF FRESH CUT CHRISTMAS TREE

When a Christmas tree is cut, more than half of its weight is water. With proper care, you can maintain the quality of your tree. The following are a few tips for caring for a fresh cut Christmas tree:

As soon as you get your tree home, make a fresh straight 1/4 inch cut across the base of the trunk and place it in a bucket of water. Use a tree stand that will hold a gallon or more of water. A fresh tree may take up three or more quarts of water a day for the first few days after it is placed in water.

Do not place the tree near a source of heat and never let the water level in the bowl drop below the base of the tree.

Check the stand daily to make sure that the level of water does not go below the base of the tree. With many stands, there can still be water in the stand even though the base of the tree is no longer submerged in water.

Keep trees away from major sources of heat (fireplaces, heaters, heat vents, direct sunlight). Lowering the room temperature will slow the drying process, resulting in less water consumption each day.

Make sure light cords are in good working order and are turned off when you go to bed or leave the house.

Use of lights that produce low heat, such as miniature lights, will reduce drying of the tree.

Always inspect light sets prior to placing them on the tree. If worn, replace with a new set.

Always turn off the tree lights when leaving the house or when going to bed.

Monitor the tree for freshness. After Christmas or if the tree is very dry, remove it from the house.

Search for tree recycling programs near you when disposing of the tree.

Never burn any part of a Christmas tree in a wood stove or fireplace.