

The Real Christmas Tree 2023 Supply Fact Sheet



Context for media who cover the season
and reassurance for consumers who need
one less thing to worry about

Supplying the country with real Christmas trees is complex and affected by transportation, long-term growing cycles, economic ups and downs, and weather, but these are offset by a diverse and decentralized industry, and the industry has never run out of trees.

Bottom Line for 2023

- There's a real Christmas tree for everyone who wants one.
- Supply remains steady – again.
- The industry didn't run out of trees last year, the year before that, or any previous year, and it won't this year either.
- 85% of respondents to a 2023 survey say they found the tree they wanted at the first place they went last year.¹

Key Context and Background

Scale, Scope, and Decentralization of the Industry

- No single retailer, lot, nursery, or farm is reflective of the entire industry.
- Real Christmas trees are grown in every state and many trees sold in the U.S. also come from Canada. Without the context of that scale and scope, reports of challenges in any one area can be misleading, in the same way that it would be erroneous to assume that just because a restaurant in your neighborhood is out of fries, other restaurants around the country must also be out of them.
- The largest Christmas tree-producing states are Oregon, North Carolina, and Michigan. Their wide-spread and diverse geographic locations are beneficial to the resilience of the industry overall.

Transportation

- The real Christmas tree industry doesn't import product from overseas, but it does rely on freight to move trees from major growing regions to retailers throughout the country.
- As with many industries, transportation speed can be affected by isolated supply chain issues and labor shortages.

Economic Fluctuations

- During the 2008-2011 recession, many Christmas tree growing operations went out of business or retired, triggering a drop in supply. In response, other large growers and new farmers began planting more trees following the recession, which are just now starting to become available. Those trees should help bolster future supply.

Extreme Weather Events

- Despite speculation to the contrary, leading scientists and research experts who work with Christmas tree farms have not seen any evidence of negative effects on Christmas tree production from recent Canadian wildfires.²
- Seedling losses during past droughts in production areas likely have contributed to smaller harvests in recent years.
- Extreme heat and drought impacts are challenging for individual growers. But generally, these events are very localized and typically affect only small or vulnerable trees without impacting the overall market.

Growing Cycles

- It takes eight to 10 years to grow a Christmas tree, depending on the variety and growing location.
- It's possible to "borrow" from future supply for the current year, when necessary, which the industry has had to do in some recent years.

¹ABOUT THE 2023 CONSUMER SURVEY

TRUE Global Intelligence (TGI), the in-house research practice of FleishmanHillard, fielded a survey of 1,499 Americans adults ages 21 to 54 years. All survey respondents either celebrate/observe Christmas or display a Christmas tree. Respondents were required to either decide or share in the decision of whether and what kind of Christmas tree to put up in their home each year or influence their home's decisionmaker. The survey was fielded from August 21 to September 6, 2023. The survey has a margin of error of ±2.5% and higher for subgroups.

²ABOUT THE EXPERTS

The experts referenced, Dr. Cregg, Dr. Whitehill and Dr. Chastagner are generally regarded among the top researchers and instructors of Christmas tree production in the U.S. They are not employed by the Real Christmas Tree Board, however each has received research funding from the RCTB.