



TREEmendous News

Florida Christmas Tree Association's Newsletter



March 2011

FCTA SPRING MEETING CANCELLED

We have cancelled the Spring Meeting that was scheduled for May 14 & 15, 2011, in Tallahassee, Florida, because the membership survey in the planning stages did not show enough support to meet the minimum motel stay nights or enough support for a successful banquet.

In years past when we had a larger group, we had to be aware of the minimums, but we met them without difficulty. A majority of the survey respondents suggested we discontinue the Spring Meetings and only have a Fall Meeting each year where you could pick up vendor supplies. This has been discussed at prior BOD meetings. The Georgia Christmas Tree Association has adopted the Fall Meetings only approach.

We have decreased from over 100 member farms to around 30. This trend has been nationwide. Many of the former State Associations have merged into Associations of two, three, or more states formally or for the purpose of having meetings. Our BOD has discussed: should we liquidate our Association? Should we merge with the Georgia? Should we merge with a larger association? The conclusion has always been that we should keep our individual association, but consider meeting with the Georgia Christmas Tree Association one year in Georgia and the next year in Florida.

This idea has some support from both Florida and Georgia, but also opposition. Those in North Georgia would probably not travel to Florida for a meeting, and many in Florida would not travel out of state. Sue Kossuth makes a good argument that we do not raise the same trees as are grown in Northern Georgia, and that our growing problems are special to Florida. Are we primarily in the business of growing trees or selling trees in Florida? Many growers import as many northern trees as they grow in Florida. These questions have become very complex, and we are interested in your thoughts. Each of you. As President of the Florida Christmas Tree Association, I'm willing to drive the

truck, but I need your directions on which path to travel.
Michael Songer, FCTA President

CAMACHOS DELIVER TREES TO CAPITOL



Agriculture Commissioner Bronson, Sigrid and Franco Camacho, Governor Crist

We're happy to tell you our experience about donating Christmas trees to the capitol. The governor's office asked for five trees, one for every department. We considered it would be a good advertisement, since we are in Tallahassee.

The first day we delivered the trees was an experience with all the securities. The next day was the presentation. We did not expect the welcome! All the reporters, many cameras and interviews. We had a very good response, because our farm and the Christmas Tree Association was talked about on radio, we were on TV, and in the Tallahassee Democrat.

This year we have a new governor and we would like to repeat all of this again and donate Christmas trees to the Capitol.

Franco and Sigrid Camacho

See next page for important
SCTC meeting announcement!

If you have downloaded this newsletter from the website, please email Michael Songer at songerma@hotmail.com to confirm receipt.

MAY MEETING IN GEORGIA

The Southern Christmas Tree Conference (A new group) is meeting May 22 - 25, 2011, at the Calvin Center near Hampton, GA. The Calvin center is about 30 miles south of the Atlanta International Airport off Hwy 19 & 41. From I-75, Exit 218, take Hwy 20 west to Hwy 81, continue west on Hwy 81 until you come to Hwy 19 & 41, cross 19 & 41 and continue west on Hwy 81 approximately 4 miles to the Presbyterian Calvin Center. There are several motels near Exit 218 of I-75.

For more information refer to: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/feop/Christmas-tree/index.html>
This website includes the Agenda, Workshops, Location and Motel references, and how to register. The registration fees are \$115 Single, or \$165 per couple in addition to the hotel. These are higher than the FCTA fees but include four days, several meals, and vendor exhibits. Since the FCTA spring meeting is cancelled, we encourage members to attend this conference as an alternative.

Tommy Wagoner, www.fraserknoll.com, one of our Vendor Advertisers, is planning to attend the Southern Christmas Tree Conference in Hampton. You can check his catalog on his website and email or phone to place an order to be picked up at the conference. I'm checking with other vendors.

Florida Christmas Tree Association Officers and Board

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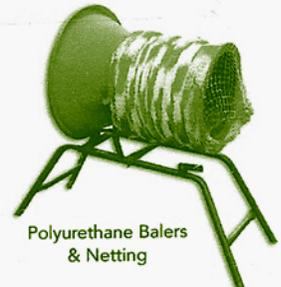
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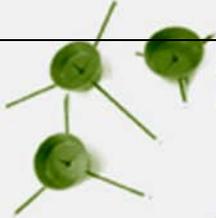
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Photos from the Banquet at the Fall 2010 Meeting Hosted by Debbie and Tony Harris



FOR SALE BY MEMBER

Items for sale or trade:

1. 23 inch "Elkin" netter (sold by Wagoner's Fraser Knoll Farm) with stand. Like new, cost \$410 plus freight, will sell for \$300 or trade for a 26" netter, 18" netter, or electric shaker.
2. 23 inch "Kirk" netter, cost \$280 ±. Will sell for \$200.
3. 20±, 6 pin re-bar display (tree) frames, cost \$45 each, sell for \$25 each or trade.

Contact David Bird 941-780-0799 Box 110333, Bradenton, FL 34211

If you have items for sale, send your information to Michael or Linda Songer

Tipmoth Control Treatment for Virginia Pines to Consider

Dennis Hazel, Ph.D., Extension Specialist, NC State University

First, I am sending this note to southern Christmas tree grower associations after getting numerous requests for more details after mentioning a potential tip moth control method at the growers association meeting in Georgia in September. I promised several growers follow-up information and I thought I would offer it to all of the associations that may have members growing Virginia pine.

Several years ago at a North Carolina forest landowners summit, BASF representatives did a presentation on chemicals for forest management. They mentioned a study they were doing with a paper company in eastern North Carolina where they had achieved tip moth control for the first two growing seasons with a single post-planting application of one of their products. The product, PTM, is fipronil labeled for soil injection for cinara aphids and Nantucket tip moth control on trees (see label at <http://www.cdms.net/LDat/ld8BS002.pdf>).

The BASF reps applied PTM on two Virginia pine plots on North Carolina Christmas tree farms and a third farmer applied PTM on his own. None of the plots were large enough for statistical validation, but control did seem largely achieved with a single application despite applying the chemical later than recommended (just after planting). The chemical can be applied by any soil-injection applicator. At the time of the small trial here in North Carolina, the BASF reps used a trigger-activated syringe with a volume-of-application dial borrowed from the medical industry. The syringe had an aluminum tube that could be inserted into the ground at an angle six or so inches from the newly planted tree until the tube “bumps” in to the taproot (see photo). The tube is then pulled back out an inch or two to create a void near the taproot and the trigger is pulled.

Since the small trial here, BASF has reduced the number of technical support reps and they have recommended Red River Specialties, Inc. for both PTM and a new more robust applicator. As a public employee, I cannot specifically recommend one company or product over another, but for those of you who may be interested in trying PTM, I am including contact information for RRSI below. You may be able to get both the chemical and an applicator elsewhere. We are currently treating just-planted trees on a large farm in Georgia and will evaluate success the next several years, but for those of you who may want to try this on your own, you can contact the Red River folks. The treatment should be applied just after planting to allow the chemical to be taken up by the trees before adults lay eggs.

I will talk about the treatment at the Southern Christmas Tree Conference in Hampton Georgia in May. I hope to see many of you there and hope your associations have earlier forwarded that information to you. In case not, you can go to the conference web site at:
<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/nreos/forest/feop/Christmas-tree/index.html>

Thanks!

Dennis Hazel, Extension Specialist
NC State University

919 515-5573, dennis_hazel@ncsu.edu



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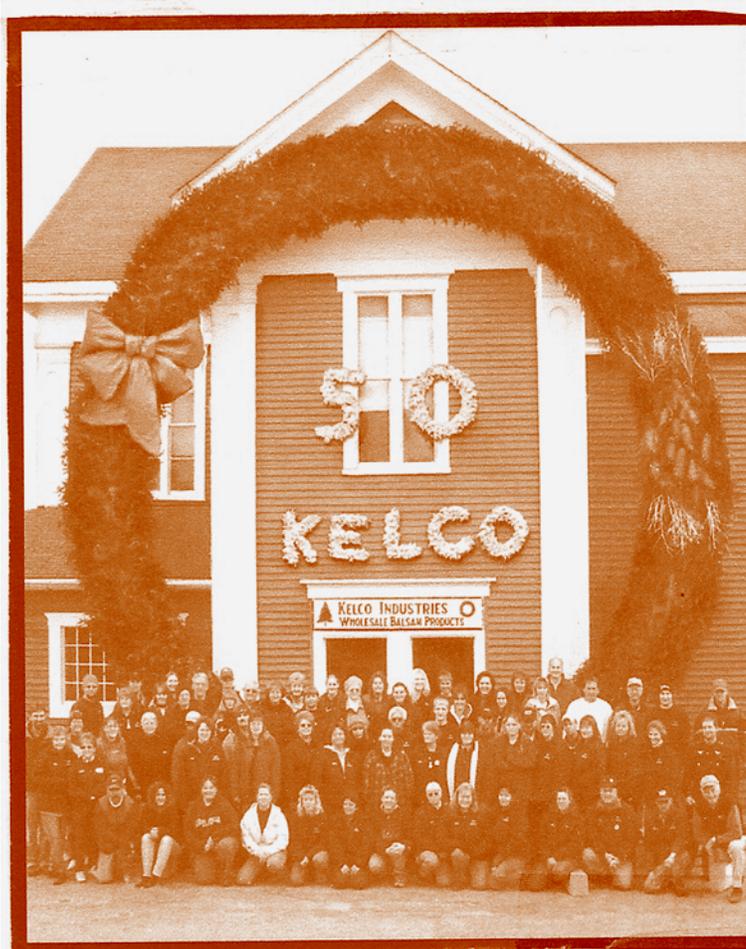
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FALL MEETING:

I've discussed with the Camanchos if they were interested in holding the Fall Meeting. They have a conflict with the Fall Meeting for 2011, but would consider the Fall Meeting of 2012.

The Georgia Christmas Tree Association has invited us to meet with them for a Fall Meeting September 10 & 11, 2011 at the farm of Mike Brumby near Tifton, Ga. Several of us have attended GCTA meetings in the past and they are fun events. Specific details will be provided later. Let us know what you think.

If someone wants to host a FCTA Fall Meeting in Florida the date of Sept 24 & 25 appears to be the best considering the Football Games, but we are open to your suggestions.

We have attached a membership form for 2011. If you have not paid your \$60. please do so promptly. The website exposure is worth the cost of the membership.

Send me your thoughts and ideas. See you at the SCTC in Hampton, GA.

Michael

IMPORTANT DATES 2011:

May 22-25, Southern Christmas Tree Conference, Hampton, GA
www.ces.nesu.edu/nreos/forest/feop/christmas-tree/index.html

Sept. 10-11, Georgia Christmas Tree Meeting, Tifton, GA www.gacta.com

Oct. 18-20, Sunbelt Agricultural EXPO, Moultrie, GA www.sunbeltexpo.com

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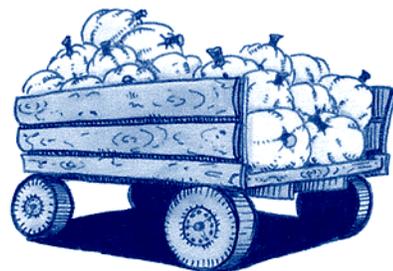


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**Application For Membership for 2011
Florida Christmas Tree Association**

Name _____ Spouse's Name _____

Names you would like on name tags (yours) _____ (spouse) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

FAX _____ E-mail _____ Web Site _____

Farm Name _____ County _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Farm Phone _____

Do you want a free listing in the Christmas Tree Guide and web sites? (Y) (N).
(www.flchristmastrees.com, www.florida-agriculture.com)

If yes, fill out the following information:

All information remains the same as last year. If checked, there is no need to continue.

I have changes on the following lines or this is a new listing.

Brief directions to farm. _____

Dates / Days of Week / Hours of Operation _____

Circle All That Apply: 1. Choose And Cut, 2. Wholesale, 3. Retail Lot, 4. Potted,
5. Gift/Craft Shop, 6. Hay Rides, 7. Petting Farm/Zoo, 8. Wreaths, Tree Types:
Sand Pines, Virginia Pine, Red Cedar, Leyland Cypress, Spruce Pine, Arizona Cypress,
Other _____

Fresh Cut Northern Trees Varieties, _____

Are you a member of the National Christmas Tree Association? (Y) _____ (N) _____

Acres in production _____. Acres planted this year _____.

Associate Membership (retired, not selling trees) \$20. Total enclosed \$ _____

Membership Dues \$60.00. Total Enclosed \$ _____

FCTA cooperates with the National Christmas Tree Association in a program called Trade Industry Partner or T.I.P. FCTA sends \$20 per member to NCTA to support the marketing efforts by the National Association and the Real Tree advertising campaign. The National Association has an internet web site which you may advertise your farm for free, if you submit the information to them. You must complete the National Association form and mail it to their address, to be listed. Their web site is www.realchristmastrees.org. You do not have to be an NCTA member to be listed since FCTA is a T.I.P. state. FCTA also pays \$18 per member each year for the subscription to *Christmas Tree Magazine*.

Please mail in dues by January 1, 2011. This will save the Association postage and time for mailing out reminders. Mail to:

Jack Ewing, Treasurer FCTA
35317 Huff Rd. Eustis, FL 32736

MEMORIES FROM SPRING 2010

Courtesy of John Gregory



TREEmendous News

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