



Hosted by Dutchman Tree Farms

All exhibitors, educational sessions,
and tours will take place at

Northern Pines Nursery

2458 S. Green Rd. • Lake City, Michigan 49651

FULL SCHEDULE

THURSDAY • JULY 24

- 10:00 am–7:00 pm Vendor Set-up
- 1:00 pm–4:30 pm **New Grower Session at Northern Pines Nursery**
- 2:00 pm 9-hole Golf Outing – Evergreen Resort –
pay at the course
- 5:30–6:30 pm Happy Hour at Evergreen Resort
- TBD Association Board Meetings

FRIDAY • JULY 25

- 7:30–9:00 am Tree and Wreath Contest Check-in
- 8:00–9:00 am Registration and Exhibitors Open – Coffee
and Donuts
- 9:00 am Welcome to Dutchman Tree Farms /
Northern Pines Nursery
- 9:00 am–11:45 pm **Rotating Tour Groups** (join the tour
of the colored sticker on your badge)
and **Auxiliary Sessions**

Track 1: Field Tour of Dutchman Tree Farms

Track 2: Northern Pines Nursery/Greenhouse

Track 3: Getty Tree Farms

Track 4a: Dutchman Main Location/Wholesale
or you can choose

Track 4b: Choose & Cut Track: Creating a Memorable
On-Farm Experience

AUXILIARY TRACKS

- 9:00–10:00 am **Alice Waterous, A Waterous Floral Cons. LLC – Greenery Demonstrations and Ways to Save:** Join Alice as she demonstrates options for your retail offerings of Christmas centerpieces, wreaths, and swags. Ways to save on materials and labor for higher profits.
- 10:00–10:30 am **Deb Eroh, Pursell Manufacturing Corp – Dazzling Decor: Snow-Kissed Wreaths & Garlands:** Ready to bring your Christmas decorations to life? Learn how to use artificial snow to add a beautiful, realistic touch to your wreaths and garlands.
- 10:30–11:30 am **Alice Waterous of A Waterous Floral Cons. LLC – Alice's Trade Fair Favorites: Practical Uses & Ideas** – More tips and tricks from Alice, as she shares ways to use things she loves from the trade fair vendors.
- 12 pm–2:00 pm Lunch and Vendor time
- 1:00 pm Equipment Demonstrations
- 1:00 pm National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA) and Legislative Updates
- 1:00–4:00 pm Tree Contest Voting
- 2:00–4:30 pm **Rotating Tour Groups** (join the tour of the colored sticker on your badge) and **Auxiliary Sessions**

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Schedule is subject to change.

SCHEDULE continued...

2:00–5:00 pm

Kevin Chastagner and Lauren Hearit, Hope College - Marketing Short Course for Choose and Cut Farms: An intensive, 3-hour workshop that provides growers with a deep dive into the practice of marketing. Growers will leave this short course with: 1) a better understanding of the basic principles of marketing (including the customer journey, segmentation, targeting, and positioning, the 4Ps, and digital marketing); 2) the constraints growers face in marketing Christmas trees in a seasonal industry; and 3) with practical tools to more effectively communicate about choose-and-cut operations. The session will be a mix of lecture and hands-on application of lecture material to individual choose-and-cut operations.

4:30–5:30 pm

Vendor time/Happy hour

6:00 pm

BBQ Dinner, Hall of Fame Awards, Tree and Wreath Contest Winners Announced, followed by a Rodeo.

10:30 am–12 pm

Mistie Martin, Dutchman Tree Farms – Hands-On Holiday Centerpieces: Join us for a fun and festive hands-on session where you'll roll up your sleeves and create your own holiday centerpiece! Each participant will be provided with a pot, fresh greenery, nippers, and a variety of decorative accents to personalize their arrangement. Led by Mistie Martin, known for her resourcefulness, creativity, and beautifully merchandised offerings at Dutchman's Choose & Cut. This session will inspire you to bring similar experiences and retail-ready products to your own farm. Whether you're looking to add value to your retail space, host workshops, or simply gain ideas to elevate your decor sales, you'll leave with a finished product and plenty of inspiration. *Note: Please bring your own pruning shears.*

12:00–2:00 pm

Lunch and Vendor time

1:00 pm

Equipment Demonstrations

1:00 pm

Real Christmas Tree Board (RCTB) and Trees for Troops Update

2:00–4:30 pm

Rotating Tour Groups (join the tour of the colored sticker on your badge). **If you missed a tour due to an auxiliary program or another tour, please feel free to join the tour of your choice.**

SATURDAY • JULY 26

8:00–9:00 am

Exhibits Open – Coffee and Donuts

9:00–11:45 am

Rotating Tour Groups (join the tour of the colored sticker on your badge) and **Auxiliary Sessions**

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AUXILIARY TRACKS

9:00–10:00 am

Jessica Korson, Korson's Tree Farms – Increase Farm Revenue with Branded Merchandise: Explore the potential of unique branded merchandise as an additional revenue stream for your tree farm. From outsourcing your merchandise to making it in-house, we will weigh the benefits and challenges associated with producing and selling farm-specific products. We will finish up the session with you making some hot new swag items!

10:00–10:30 am

Beth VanDrie, Manager, Arlene Resource Management – Overcoming Labor Challenge: Explores practical solutions to the growing agricultural labor shortage, with a focus on the H-2A visa program. This presentation provides a step-by-step overview of petitioning for H-2A visas, including timelines, costs, and compliance tips, followed by a collaborative roundtable discussion to share real-world experiences.

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4:30 pm

Program Concludes

Addresses for Events:

Rodeo and Dinner Event:

5268 North Dickerson Rd, Manton, MI 49663

Evergreen Resort and Golf Course:

7880 Mackinaw Trl, Cadillac, MI 49601

All farm tours and sessions will start at Northern Pines Nursery

– this includes lunches and exhibitors:

2458 S Green Rd, Lake City, Michigan 49651



DUTCHMAN
TREE FARMS



MICHIGAN
CHRISTMAS TREE ASSOCIATION

TOURS & SESSIONS

July 24 - New Grower Program

For those new to the industry, the Day 1 New Grower Track is an excellent starting point to learn the basics of Christmas tree farming. This specialized program for those new to the industry can experience a full afternoon of sessions led by industry leaders, designed to cover fundamental practices, including Site Preparation, Tree Planting, and Dealing with Weeds, offering practical advice for creating a thriving farm. Participants will also gain insight into Retail How-To's and Building your brand and marketing strategies for engaging customers and building a successful business. The program concludes with Nutrient Management and a discussion on Pest Control, giving attendees a comprehensive understanding of tree health and care. This track is an invaluable resource for anyone starting their journey in Christmas tree farming.

July 25 and July 26 Tours - Sessions

Attendees will be placed in groups. Each group has two tour rotations per day, one morning/one afternoon. Over the two days, each attendee would have the opportunity to see all tour stops.

Track 1: Field Tour of Dutchman Tree Farms

Gain valuable insights into irrigation management and pest control while touring the fields of Dutchman Tree Farms. The team at Dutchman Tree Farms will take you on a guided field tour that features presentations by Michigan State University and North Carolina State University experts. Dr. Younsuk Dong will be presenting on irrigation management and systems. Dr. Deb McCullough will provide an update on insect activity and pest-related issues. Finally, Dr. Justin Whitehill from North Carolina State University will discuss current and future tree improvement efforts with A GIFT SEED project.

Track 2: Northern Pines Nursery/Greenhouse

For those interested in greenhouse and nursery management, the Northern Pines Nursery tour is not to be missed. Our sophisticated nursery systems ensure we grow high-quality stock that meets the demands of the modern market. Scott Powell will guide attendees through the nursery and greenhouse, explaining everything from seedling care to transplanting. Dr. Bert Cregg will cover topics such as Nutrient Management and Planting Stock Quality. Additionally, Jim Rockis will share his expertise on tree genetics, highlighting advancements that help growers produce resilient, high-quality trees. This track is perfect for growers looking to deepen their knowledge of growing practices and investing in strong planting stock.

Track 3: Getty Tree Farm

We're also excited to include our neighbors and friends at Getty Tree Farms. Visitors to Getty Tree Farms will tour two distinct areas showcasing a variety of growing practices. At the Home Farm, participants will learn about the farm's history while viewing mature Fraser and Korean X Balsam trees. At the next field, the focus shifts to Fralsam, Concolor, and white pine trees, with discussions on seed

sourcing, deer fencing, and the appearance of Fraser trees. Dr. Gary Chastagner from Washington State University will discuss post-harvest techniques to improve quality of trees. Dr. Erin Hill from Michigan State University will discuss how to identify weed species in the field. This track offers a fantastic opportunity to see a range of approaches and innovations in action, all while connecting with fellow growers in the region.

For Track 4, attendees will need to choose between 4a and 4b options.

Track 4a: Dutchman Main Location/Wholesale

For large-scale growers, our production and distribution track will offer a behind-the-scenes look at the logistics of high-volume tree farming. At Dutchman Tree Farms, efficiency is key, and our loading yard and palletizing operations are designed to ship large quantities of trees while maintaining top-notch quality. Visitors will see our pot-in-pot production system, which optimizes water usage and soil temperature management. We'll also demonstrate how we use drone technology for inventory and operations management, ensuring accurate counts and streamlined processes. Whether you're looking to scale up your operation or refine your logistics, this track offers invaluable insights.

Track 4b: Choose & Cut Track: Creating a Memorable On-Farm Experience

This session offers a comprehensive look at the operations and customer experience at Dutchman Choose & Cut. Through a series of informative stations, attendees will explore core retail offerings including pre-cut trees, table-top trees, potted trees, and holiday décor. A guided wagon ride through the farm will highlight various tree varieties and provide insight into field management practices and customer engagement strategies. Participants will also experience the festive elements that define a successful on-farm experience, including visits with Santa, a coffee shop setup, and themed merchandise areas. To further illustrate the importance of creating a family-friendly environment, the session will feature children's activities such as a bounce house, petting zoo, pony rides, cookie decorating, a zip line, and a slide. These attractions demonstrate how thoughtful additions can contribute to a welcoming and immersive atmosphere. This track is designed to provide practical inspiration and proven ideas for enhancing the customer experience and improving profitability within Choose & Cut operations.

Auxiliary Program

Join us for a comprehensive two-day auxiliary program dedicated to the ins and outs of running a successful Christmas tree farm. We'll cover essential topics including cutting-edge marketing strategies, innovative ways to create and sell farm merchandise, practical greenery demonstrations that highlight cost-saving techniques, a fun hands-on session for centerpiece decorating, and more. Don't miss this opportunity to grow your farm's potential!