

MCTA

2015 Winter Meeting

Thursday, March 5

Friday, March 6

Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort

6800 Soaring Eagle Blvd.
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858



We will be hosting this event in a new location and on a **Thursday/Friday**, rather than our former Friday/Saturday pattern. Also, **registration fees are "all-inclusive."** Full registration includes a **banquet ticket** and Friday **breakfast and lunch**. Thursday registration includes a banquet ticket and Friday registration includes breakfast and lunch.

Early Bird Registration: Register by February 27 and save \$10 per registrant!

Hotel Reservations: Hotel accommodations are available at the **Soaring Eagle Casino Resort**. Single or Double occupancy rate: \$119.00 plus tax – call 877-232-4532 and mention Michigan Christmas Tree Association for this rate. You can also reserve your room on-line at www.soaringeaglecasino.com by choosing "Book Room" and using group code: MCTA030515. Please reserve by **February 12, 2015**. For those wishing to make reservations at the **Soaring Eagle Waterpark** (located about 1 mile from Soaring Eagle Resort), call the reservation number above and they will extend the same group rate. Great option for families!

Thursday Banquet Menu: *Grilled Chicken Breast with Fontina Mornay & Caramelized Onions or North Atlantic Salmon Persille with Tomato Blushed Hollandaise*

Friday Lunch Menu: *Peppercorn Crusted Roast Beef Sandwich with Aged Cheddar Cheese or Grilled Vegetable Wrap with Fresh Mozzarella & sun Dried Tomato Aioli*

Schedule

Thursday, March 5

1:30 **Registration**

2:00 **Bud Selection for Leader Development in Fraser Fir** - Tom Trechter, Mathisen Tree Farm - The way a grower sets the leader and corrects problems in a tree will determine the

tree's quality come harvest. He will share his results and observations on trials he has conducted over several years looking at bud selection and making corrections to leaders in Fraser fir.

2:45 **Break with Vendors**

3:15 **Spruce Decline – What We Know** – Dennis Fulbright, MSU - Spruce decline has been an emerging disease of spruce in landscapes, nurseries and Christmas tree fields throughout Michigan which has significantly impacted growers. Dr. Fulbright will discuss results from the current research efforts at MSU.

4:00 **Christmas Tree Retail Survey Results** – Brett Crosby – In the 2014 Christmas tree sales season, Brett Crosby expanded his consumer survey to include a number of choose & cut and retail outlets in Michigan. Hear what your customers say about real Christmas trees and their purchase experience!

4:30 **Reception with Exhibitors**

6:30 **Banquet – Checkoff Update with Rex Korson and Chris Maciborski**

Friday, March 6

7:00 – 9:00 **Buffet Breakfast with Exhibitors**

9:00 **Managing Scale Pests** - Cliff Sadof, Purdue University - Cliff Sadof will discuss the latest approaches to managing scale insects using both biological and chemical control. He will review factors that are known to promote scale problems on coniferous plants. He will discuss the differences in the biology of soft scales like Stripe pine scale, and armored scales like pine needle scale and how these differences impact the management of these two pests.

9:00 **Success with Add- On Sales** – Wendy & George Richardson will present their experiences with what add-on sale items work well at their Christmas tree farm. Wreaths and greens; gifts; specialty food items and more...what is the right mix for your farm?

9:45 **What you need to Know....A Farm Labor and Transportation Update** – Craig Anderson, Michigan Farm Bureau – Craig will cover a number of regulatory issues related to labor and transportation. Transportation issues include MAP-21 exceptions, implementation

of the new implement of husbandry definition and DOT numbers versus marking requirements. Labor topics include; H-2A, labor compliance made easy and when are you “not a farm?”

10:30 **Break with Exhibitors**

11:15 **Michigan Fresh: Tools for Consumer Education**- Kendra Wills & Erin Lizotte, MSU Extension –present a new set of consumer targeted resources utilizing smartphone technology. QR codes connect consumers to short informational videos on tree care, recycling, and species selection. They can be used as marketing and educational materials for consumers in the wholesale or retail markets. We will also discuss the potential development of a tree tag template that integrates QR code technology to support Michigan’s industry.

11:40 **MCTA Annual Meeting**

12:00 **Lunch**

1:00 – 2:30 **Section Meetings**

Choose and Cut Session - Agritourism – George & Wendy Richardson of Richardson’s Farm in Illinois will present an overview of their Christmas tree farm and agritourism destination that welcomes 65,000 guests each year for their corn maze alone! Also, enjoy a little show and tell from two of Michigan’s own Christmas tree farms: Ed and Diana Carpenter of Peacock Road Tree Farm and Merle and Caroline Anderson of Anderson’s Twin Lakes Tree Farm. Finally, your creative idea could be worth MONEY! Be prepared to share an idea or two with your fellow growers.

Wholesale Session – Wholesale growers will get more detailed information on labor issues, such as H2A, from Craig Anderson. Mike Bryan with MDARD will provide updates on the Balsam Woolly Adelgid quarantine and a new on-line Christmas tree inspection request process. Wholesale growers will have the opportunity to address industry issues in an informal setting.