

Fabulous Ribbon

Terrific Tables

Seasonal Decorations

Peacock Road Family Farm

Christmas Store

Fall Fun on the Farm

School Tours

Weddings

Michigan Wine Tasting (prior to dinner)

Welcome to the Michigan and Mid-America Christmas Tree Associations Summer Meeting

**** Choose Your Own Tour ****

	Barn/Workshop	MSU	Tannenbaum 1	Tannenbaum 2	Tannenbaum 3	Peacock	Demo's	Exhibit Area
Friday								
7:30 - 8:45	Registration and Exhibits							
8:45 - 9:15	Welcome/Overview							
9:15 - 10:30	Soil Health	Bio char/ mycorrhizae	Handling Customers	Pumpkins	Gift Shop Basics		Reducing Coning in Fraser Fir	Fabulous Ribbon
10:45 - 12:00	Agri-Tourism Risk Benefit	Cover crops/soil health	Matching Species to the Site	Shearing True Firs	Tagging and Pricing trees		Jutek Specialty Tractors	Fabulous Ribbon
11:30 - 1:30	Lunch and Exhibitors							
1:30 - 2:45	Tips to Cut Your Tax Bill - 1	Cover crops/soil health	Matching Species to the Site	Handling Customers	Gift Shop Basics	Peacock Farm Tour	Jutek Specialty Tractors	Terrific Tables
3:15 - 4:30	Pest Management	Bio char/ mycorrhizae	Shearing True Firs	Pumpkins	Tagging and Pricing trees		Reducing Coning in Fraser Fir	
5:30	Leave for Peacock Tree Farm Dinner							
6:00 - 9:00	Dinner and Fun Peacock Road Tree Farm							
Saturday								
7:30 - 9:00 am	Registration and Exhibits							
9:00 - 10:15	Tips to Cut Your Tax Bill - 2	Bio char/ mycorrhizae	Shearing True Firs	Handling customers	Gift Shop Basics	Peacock Farm Tour	Jutek Specialty Tractors	Seasonal Decorations
10:45 - 11:30	Pest Managemnt	Cover crops/soil health	Matching Species to the Site	Pumpkins	Tagging and Pricing Trees		Reducing Coning in Fraser Fir	
11:30 - 1:30	Lunch/Exhibits							
1:30 - 3:00	Soil Health	Exotic Conifers	Shearing True Firs	Handling customers	Tagging and Pricing Trees		Demo's	

Tours and Programs

Tannebaum Farms

Handling Customers

Tannenbaum Farms is a rather large choose and cut Christmas tree operation. This session will focus on directing and transporting, with wagon's clientele to areas where available trees are located, extensive display and use of signage, how saws and tree carts are handled, location and operation of a bonfire and concession area, field processing of trees and customer handling of trees, and transport to the check-out area. The location and operation of cashier stations will also be considered.

Matching Species to Site

The sites and soil types present on Tannenbaum Farms are challenging with respect to growing quality Christmas trees. While topographic variations in sites are minimal, variations in soil types are many, matching and planting the "right tree on the right site" is an ongoing objective. The influence of soil drainage, topography, soil type, soil texture, soil pH, and seasonal temperature patterns will be discussed. The influence of these factors at the time of planting will be reviewed.

Shearing True Firs

A primary objective at Tannenbaum Farms is the production of trees of the highest possible quality. We believe shearing techniques are highly significant in meeting this objective. Furthermore, it is a goal to produce the tallest trees in the shortest time possible. To achieve these objectives shearing techniques for smaller trees are different than for larger trees. Other objectives include maintaining a single terminal shoot, the prevention of "horns", and elimination of crossing branches. Shearing to accomplish these objectives will be discussed and demonstrated.

Tagging and Pricing Trees

We believe pricing trees is an individual decision; prices are not determined by industry standards. Over the years, we have tried several different pricing methods, but have settled on tagging and pricing every tree we offer for sale. Other pricing methods will be discussed and the advantages and disadvantages associated with each will be considered. The philosophy followed in tagging, the type of tag used and the method of tag attachment will be reviewed. We DO NOT allow any pre-tagging of trees; the "why nots" will be discussed.

Gift Shop Basics

For the past 20 years, Tannenbaum Farms has operated a small gift shop during the Christmas season. The shop features a unique selection of ornaments and related items appropriate to the Christmas season. A discussion on item sources, display, customer selection, and pricing will be conducted. The annual "Tannenbaum Farms Ornament" will also be highlighted. The gift shop also features Santa Claus as well as a small concession stand and warming area.

Pumpkins

Tannenbaum Farms has been growing and selling pumpkins for the past 15 years. Pumpkins "sorta fit" in the non-intensive tree care season. In addition to generating some additional income, they also offer the opportunity to produce a crop on areas not suitable for tree production. They also provide a marketing outreach to non-real tree customers to promote the Christmas tree business. Topics to be considered in pumpkin production include site and soil selection, available varieties, cultural practices including fertilization, weed control and irrigation. Displaying and selling considerations will also be discussed.

MSU Tours

Biochar/ mycorrhizae

Biochar is a soil supplement produced from biomass sources. Dr. Jessica Miesel, MSU will discuss her research on the potential use of biochar to improve soil nutrient availability, seedling growth and overall soil health. In addition, Dr. Greg Bonito, MSU will review his current research project on mycorrhizae associations on conifer seedling roots, their role in seedling survival and growth, and the possibility of edible fungal species in existing Christmas tree plantation as a value-added specialty food crop.

Choosing Cover Crops to Improve Soil Health

Cover crops are planted to improve soil quality. They can enhance soils by protecting, improving and providing nutrients,

have many purposes, including; building organic matter, improving soil structure, reducing erosion, increasing soil biota activity, suppressing weeds, and provide habitat for beneficial insects. Participants will be able to look at cover crop trials and visit with the MSU Extension soil health team to discuss the various cover crop options to help you meet your soil goals.

Exotic Conifers

Growers produce exotics to give their customers a greater range of choices when they come to their farm or tree lot. In certain cases, exotics may be better adapted to certain soil conditions, such as high soil pH or wet soils, or more resistance to diseases. This allows growers to produce trees on sites they might not be able to otherwise. Dr. Bert Cregg, MSU will lead a discussion looking at various exotic conifers for Christmas trees and the landscape market.

Barn Workshops

Healthy Soils

Building layers of good practices can help you achieve healthy soils and healthy trees. Brad Morgan, Morgan Composting will discuss compost and its benefits to the soil. Brad Morgan and his father Dale started Morgan Composting in 1996 when they began composting as a solution to manure. Now, the cows have been sold, and just a composting operation remains. The signature core product is called DAIRY DOO®.

Agri-Tourism: Risks vs Reward

Welcoming the public onto your farm can extend your season, generate additional revenue for your business and provide opportunities for growth outside the traditional wholesale markets. More and more, people are interested in visiting farms and connecting with local agriculture in their community. Christmas tree farms are of particular interest! However, agritourism is not without its challenges. Join Janice Benson and Natalie Klackle from the Michigan Agritourism Association to talk about the exciting opportunities in the agritourism industry, and to discuss creative solutions to the challenges operators face.

Tips to Cut Your Tax Bill – Session 1

This session will provide an overview of tax issues facing Christmas tree growers, including: electing capital gain treatment on sales of cut trees, depreciation, implications of the new tax law and recordkeeping best practices. Andrew Bosserman, CPA is a former IRS agent and currently a Senior Tax Associate at Barnes, Dennig & Co. in Cincinnati, OH. He is also the owner of Miami Valley Tree Farm in Cedarville, OH.

Tips to Cut Your Tax Bill – Session 2

A follow-up to session 1 in which a in-depth case study will be presented including example tax forms followed by a Q & A session. Andrew Bosserman, CPA is a former IRS agent and currently a Senior Tax Associate at Barnes, Dennig & Co. in Cincinnati, OH. He is also the owner of Miami Valley Tree Farm in Cedarville, OH.

Pest Management

Dr. Monique Sakalidis and Jill O'Donnell, MSU will discuss current insect and disease problems and management options. Time will be available so bring your pest management question and concerns.

Field Demo's

JUTEK Tractor

JUTEK is a Danish company, specialized in the construction of machinery for the Christmas tree industry. Jørgen Kæhlershøj will demonstrate the Jutek high clearance tractor that is used by several farms in the region. The tractor can be customized to meet various needs and includes a variety of implements including sprayers, row fertilizer, basal pruner, harvester and more.

Reducing Coning in Fraser Fir

Dana Ellison, MSU will review research findings on the use of post-emergent herbicide applications to developing Fraser fir cones to prevent cone development. Based on current studies we have consistently seen a high degree of cone control (80 – 100%) and low rates of damage to trees.