

Michigan Christmas Tree Association Tree Contest

Rules and Procedures

All growers are encouraged to enter and compete in the MCTA Christmas tree contest for the opportunity to present a tree to Michigan's Governor, and will have the option to represent Michigan in the National Christmas Tree Association Christmas tree contest. National winners have the privilege of presenting a Christmas tree to the President and his/her family for display in the White House or Christmas trees for the Vice President's residence.

To be eligible to compete in the contests, contestants must be members of the Michigan Christmas Tree Association. You do not need to be a member of the NCTA to participate in the MCTA contest. However, the top four voted trees will have the option to represent Michigan in the National Christmas Tree Association tree contest. You must be a current NCTA member at the time of the state competition to be eligible for the national contest.

General Requirements for Entries

- Growers may enter up to TWO trees in two different categories.
- Trees may entered in the following categories:
 - Fir (including Douglas fir)
 - Spruce
 - Pine
- Eligible trees shall:
 - Be commercially cultivated.
 - Be no less than 6 feet nor more than 8 feet in heights measured from the butt to the tip of the leader.
 - Have handle no less than 6 inches and no longer than 12 inches measured along the trunk from the butt to the bottom of the first branch(es).
 - Not be artificially color treated.
 - Not have branches or limbs that are wired, tied or inserted in any fashion within the tree.

Any tree failing to comply with these requirements will be disqualified by the contest committee prior to judging.

Entry Procedures

- Official judging will be done by a panel of qualified judges as approved by the MCTA Board of Directors to follow USDA Guidelines.
- Each entrant is solely responsible for delivering contest tree(s) to the designated contest area.
- All trees should be presented to the check-in officials prior to the end of the specified set-up period. In the event a backlog of trees prevents a tree from being measured in a timely manner, the entrant may be granted additional set-up time. Trees not in place and ready for judging on time will be disqualified.
- Check-in of all contest trees shall be conducted by a member of the MCTA along with additional support team members.
- At check-in, tree stands must be removed. Trees will be measured for height and handle length. Entrants must lay down their tree for the handle to be measured. Height will be measured from the bottom of the butt to the tip of the leader using a sizing pole.

- All adjustments and/or cuts to meet contest sizing requirements shall be made prior to placement in stand. All decisions of the check-in committee are final.
- Trees will be drilled for placement in stands by the check-in committee. Entrants are allowed to assist in this process for their own tree(s).
- Upon approval, each entry will be marked as measured and approved with an anonymous tag before allowed into the setup area.
- Each tree will have a sealed envelope securely attached to the tree containing a card with the grower's name, address and telephone number. Each envelope will have the species of tree marked on the outside of this envelope.
- At the close of the set-up time, all contestants and helpers must leave the contest area.
- All trees will remain as originally placed at the start of the contest during the judging and voting process.

Judging Procedures

- A panel of three pre-selected judges will assess and judge the first phase of the contest based on predetermined requirements from a score sheet.
- Completed score sheets for each tree shall be totaled to determine first, second and third places in each category.

Popular Vote Procedures

- The top four total point trees will be eligible for the popular vote, regardless of species.
- Trees eligible for the vote will have a ballot box placed in front for votes. No trees will be marked with place ribbons.
- Each farm will receive two votes.
- The Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion will be selected by a total of the popular vote.

Contest Awards and Recognition

- Trees will be awarded their appropriate place ribbons at the end of the voting day.
- Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion trees will be required to provide trees to the Governor's residence. Grand Champion will provide in the year of the contest with Reserve providing the following year.
- Grand Champion tree winner will receive a free registration for the following MCTA winter meeting.
- The four trees that earn the highest number of points will have the option to represent Michigan in the next National Christmas Tree Association Christmas Tree contest. If any of the top four are unable or ineligible to compete at the national, the option moves to the grower with the next highest point total until the four representative positions are filled. Members must be in good and current standing with the NCTA to be eligible to participate in the National contest.