



REAL TREE Fast Facts

- Trees grow from the top. Each spring new growth (height) is added from terminal buds that are located in the topmost parts of the tree.
- Evergreen trees are not really EVER green. The needles of coniferous trees don't stay on forever. As the needles become older, they drop off the tree to make room for new needles!
- Today, 98% (98 of every 100) of the trees grown for the holidays are grown on farms.
- One acre of Real Trees on a farm makes enough oxygen for 18 people.
- The Christmas tree for the White House has to be exactly 18 1/2 feet tall and look great with the decorations chosen by the First Lady.

In October or November, the Head Usher of the White House visits the farm of the National Christmas Tree Association's Grand Champion grower for the year to select the perfect tree.

- Holiday trees were once used by Chimney Sweeps to clean the soot out of dirty chimneys!
- Real Trees help filter dust and smog from the air AND they help stop erosion by holding soil in place!
- REAL TREE growers consider trees to be adults when they produce viable seeds.

For some species, a 6-year-old tree can be considered an adult. For others, it takes much longer - maybe over 20 years.

- Growers get REAL TREE seeds by harvesting closed cones. After being removed from the tree, the cones are put into a huge dryer. Drying causes the cones to open and the seeds to spill out.

After REAL TREE seeds are harvested, they are tested. They are placed in a large vat of water. Those that float are sterile and are not able to grow. Those that sink are sold to be planted.

- Like many scientific names, the word *conifer* comes from the Latin words *conus* (cone) and *ferre* (to bear). The word literally means cone bearing.



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- The original name for the Noble fir (*Abies nobilis*) had to be changed when it was discovered that another tree had been given the same name.
- The Fraser fir was named for John Fraser (1750-1811). Fraser was a Scottish botanist who explored the southern Appalachian Mountains late in the 18th century.
- Conifer needles need just the right amount of sunlight for the tree to produce food. The triangle shape of the tree is an adaptation that allows more needles to "see" the sun.
- As a tree grows older and taller, less sunlight reaches the needles on the lower part of the tree. When this happens, the lower areas shed their needles - and eventually - their branches.
- Moose, Whitetail deer, chickadees, squirrels, nutcrackers, and porcupines all use the Balsam fir (its needles or seeds) for food.
- Ecology, the study of the relationships and interactions between organisms and their environment, is also called *bionomics*.
- 34 to 36 million REAL TREES are produced each year.
- The top 5 producers of REAL TREES are Oregon, Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, California, and North Carolina.
- The study of soil science is called Pedology.
- It takes 500 years or more to make one inch of soil.
- Some scientists suggest that Fraser fir trees and Balsam fir trees were once a single species. It is believed that over the years the two species evolved into one.
- The White pine appears to be more sensitive to pollutants such as ozone, fluorides, and sulfur dioxide than other species.