

Welcome to the Christmas Tree Industry,

We're glad to hear that you're interested in getting started with Christmas trees! The Council has a plethora of knowledge and resources for any inquires throughout the time of building your business and working with your trees!

The Christmas Tree Council Nova Scotia (CTCNS) is the umbrella organization, or coordinating body, for the three regionally-based Christmas tree grower associations in Nova Scotia.

We **highly recommend** joining one of the associations as they are full of experienced producers that have great networking opportunities, are able to give great advice, and have regular field days and meetings presenting on useful topics.

The Associations:

- Lunenburg County Christmas Tree Producers' Association (LCCTPA) serving the South Shore of Nova Scotia
- Cobequid Christmas Tree Producers' Association (CCTPA) serving central Nova Scotia area of the province
- Northeastern Christmas Tree Association (NeCTA) serving Northeastern Nova Scotia.
- *Producers from Cape Breton are hoping to develop a group.*

Contacts for each association can be found here: Partner Association – CTCNS.com



Initial In-Person Services for New Entrants

The CTCNS Research Team offers New Entrants a site visit upon first contact with the Team to confirm that the site is a good prospective Christmas tree lot. During this visit, we provide:

- Soil Sampling
- Site Evaluation
- Physical copies of resources or direction to online resources, upon request.

Contact any member of our Research Team to set up a site visit during Spring, Summer, or Fall.



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Initial Online Services for Any Christmas Tree Producer of Any Expertise.

There is a huge range of CTCNS/producer aid material to view. It all comes in various forms and there are continually new developing materials every month released on our website, emailed, or mailed out. Resources on specific topics can be requested at anytime.

- **Nova Scotia Christmas Tree Journal** – A quarterly journal with articles from the community. Printed journals are included with association membership. See <https://ctcns.com/association/journal/>
- **2021 Atlantic Canada Christmas Tree Growers' Manual, Third Edition**– Available for free for association members and for purchase (\$50+hst). A 2021 'how to grow Christmas trees in NS' development in collaboration with Dept. of Ag, Dalhousie, Nova Scotian Producers, and more.
- **New Entrant Kit** – Our website full of resources about business, production, best management practices, research, collaboration, safety, personal development, and much more. <https://ctcns.com/association/new-entrants-kit/>
- **Christmas Tree Forum** - CTCNS developed an online conference platform known as the Christmas Tree Forum (Previously known as the Balsam Fir Forum). The platform has speaker sessions from the industry's top technical specialists around the world and covers every aspect of the industry. <https://www.christmastreeforum.com/>
- **Certificate in/Introduction to Christmas Tree Grading Course** - This course is designed to provide an overview of the United States Christmas Tree Grading System, encouraging a standardized grade across Christmas Tree Farms. Hosted online and in-person (upon request), growers that completed the exam portion of the course received a Certificate from CTCNS. For more information or to register, reach out to resource@ctcns.com.
- **2021 Lunchbreak Series w/ Christmas Tree Specialist Jay Woodworth:** Topics include Mental Health, Weed Identification, Herbicide Recommendations, Soil Survey Summary, Safe Loading Practices, Marketing, Starting Small Scale Seedling Nurseries, and more. Sessions take place via the Zoom application during the last week of each month. Sessions are available on media.ctcns.com, [CTCNS YouTube](#), [Real Trees](#), [Real Talk podcast](#) on your favourite streaming platform. To receive log-in details for the sessions, please reach out to Gillian at resource@ctcns.com.



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Our Platforms

We have many other platforms, social media, and websites as well. All are full of resources, media, and general knowledge about the Christmas Tree industry in Nova Scotia.

- ctcns.com – Resources for Growers. Factsheets, research articles, links to other useful webpages, Management Resources, New Entrant Kit, wholesale directory, buy & sell page, smarttree.ctcns.com, brand & sales support, etc.
- iloverealtrees.com – Resources for the public on where they can find a real Christmas tree, news and events, u-cut directory, contests, and photo gallery.
- christmastreeforum.com – Education about industry topics from professionals across the globe. Topics include Taking Care of Business, Fertility, Integrated pest Management, Succession Planning, and much more! This platform hosts the Certificate in Christmas Tree Grading course.
- media.ctcns.com - The CTCNS Media page hosts all the CTCNS media in one spot! The Lunchbreak Series, Real Trees, Real Talk Podcast, Industry Research Videos, a huge gallery of photos, a meet the team page, and all the ongoing projects can be found here!
- **Facebook** – Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia
- **Instagram** - @christmastreecouncilnovascotia
- **Twitter** - @iloverealtrees
- **LinkedIn** - Christmas Tree Council of Nova Scotia
- **YouTube** – Christmas Tree Council NS
- **Spotify** – Real Trees, Real Talk – Why Nova Scotia Loves Real Christmas Trees

Literature

There are a couple of starter books that we recommend. Their links are below in case you're interested. Keep in mind these will be heavily based on production in the US but they do have very good sections on getting started and business planning. I usually have copies of these on hand, among other resources, if you wanted to borrow them.

- **[Growing Christmas Trees – Select the Right Species, Raise the Best Trees, Market for the Holidays, Patrick White and Lewis Hill](#)**
- **[Christmas Trees for Pleasure and Profit, Fourth Edition, Robert D. Wray](#)**



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Preliminary Land Characteristics

If you're currently looking for land or have land, here are a few tips on site selection for Balsam Fir or Christmas tree lot, which you can find more information on in a Lunchbreak session.

- Avoid frost pockets. These are usually in low-lying locations with tall or thick stands on their lower sides.
- Aim for a flat site. It's easier to manage and harvest trees when they aren't on heavy slopes.
- Try to get eastern or northern exposure. Trees on south-facing slopes are prone to frost damage and western slopes are prone to wind damage.
- Look for a site with good drainage. Conifers are resilient but they don't like to have wet feet. You'll have far more success if your site is well-drained.
- You want deep, moist soils with high organic matter content; they'll hold the moisture and nutrients better. Avoid heavy clay soils.

Websites for New Farmers in Nova Scotia

- Nova Scotia New Farmer: <https://nsnewfarmer.ca/>
- Guide for Beginning Farmers in Nova Scotia – Think Farm: <https://novascotia.ca/thinkfarm/documents/Beginning-Farmers-Guide.pdf>
- Nova Scotia New Farmers: <https://nsyoungfarmers.ca/>
- Perennia Food & Agriculture: <https://www.perennia.ca/>
- Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture: <https://nsfa-fane.ca/>
- Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture – Farm Registration: <https://nsfa-fane.ca/members/farm-registration/>
- NSFA Meet Your Farmer: <https://meetyourfarmer.ca/>
- Environmental Guide for Nova Scotia Farmers – Nova Scotia Environmental Farm Plan: https://nsefp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Env-Guide-for-NS-Farms-v2020_11.pdf



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We're here to help! These resources should get you started but if you have additional questions, don't hesitate to reach out again. Although we don't have formal training sessions that teach everything from planting to sales, we might be able to connect you with an industry veteran in your area if that would be of interest.

All the best,

The CTCNS Team



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