

Eric Gregory/ Daily Nebraskan

Rich Montgomery checks the tag on a Christmas tree at Pawnee Pines and his son Tanner looks on.

Fresh Christmas tree makes holiday season more 'real'

By Victoria Ayotte
Senior Reporter

Local Christmas tree farmers will gather today through Dec. 11 with 1,200 trees at the State Fairgrounds for a "Christmas Tree Fair," said Neal Jennings, owner of the Jennings Tree Farm.

U-Pick-A-Pine, Pawnee Pines Nursery, Jennings Tree Farm and Pinecrest are going together to sell trees at the fairgrounds to give buyers more convenience, Jennings said. The fair will be held at the Youth Complex.

These cost \$5 a foot, but a real tree will go a long way toward creating a real Christmas, local tree owners said.

Joyce Sheets, co-owner of Pawnee Pines Nursery, said the smell of the tree and "the idea that you're having a real Christmas" are the major attractions in buying a real tree.

Jennings said having a real tree is seen "as being paramount to the whole idea of Christmas."

Real Christmas trees are also a tradition in many homes, and

people like the aroma of the tree, he said.

Sheets said a tree from a farm is fresher than those sold in lots around town. The needles don't fall off as much with a fresh tree, she said.

Trees in lots are sprayed with green coloring to keep their look since they have been dead for a while, she said.

Jennings said that real trees have a few disadvantages: less convenience, more of a mess than artificial trees. Some people are also allergic to real trees, he said.

Jennings and Sheets said sales have been good so far on trees, although the season has just started.

Sheets said that after arriving home with the tree, put it in water, and "it will take care of itself."

Jennings said the tree should be in a cool, shaded area. A small, fresh cutting should be made at the base of the tree before putting it into a stand and adding water.

Some trees use as much as a gallon of water a day, he said, while some use as little as a pint.



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