

FROM FARM TO FIR



Consider a real tree this holiday season to **support Illinois farmers and the environment!**

Farmers take care of Christmas trees from seeds or seedlings (young trees that have already sprouted), and care for them for anywhere from 4 to 15 years until they are harvested, with the average being 7 years.

Christmas tree farms **span across all 50 states**, with over **15,000** Christmas tree farms **in the US**. There are **more than 300** Christmas tree farms in Illinois.

Christmas trees **absorb CO2** from the air and **produce fresh oxygen** as long as they are growing, which is vital to having clean air. Live Christmas trees also have a much **lower carbon footprint** than artificial trees!



CARING FOR A LIVING TREE



Like any other houseplant, Christmas trees require care and a bit of a green thumb to thrive in your home this holiday season. **Follow these steps** to get the most enjoyment out of your family's Christmas tree.

1. When you decide to bring a Christmas tree inside, make sure to make a **fresh one-inch cut** at the base of the tree to allow for better water absorption. If you cut it down yourself from an Illinois Christmas tree farm and bring it directly indoors, you can skip adding another cut.
2. Place the tree in a **sturdy stand** that holds at least 1 gallon of water. The entire time a Christmas tree is inside, it is important to make sure the base remains **submerged in water**, up to a few inches. Check the water **every day** to ensure it is full enough and that no pets have been sneaking a drink! Other ingredients like sugar or aspirin are **not necessary** to add. Research shows that **water alone keeps a tree fresh**.
3. Ensure that all Christmas tree **lights have no worn electrical cords** and **always** unplug the lights at night. Miniature lights are **recommended for live trees** as they produce less heat and therefore reduce the drying effect on the tree.
4. **Keep a close eye on your tree** and remove it from the house before it dries out. This will prevent any fire hazards and save the floors from being covered in pine needles. Fresh cut trees can **last up to 5 weeks**, if they are properly cared for. **Plan accordingly** when purchasing a tree to make sure you have it for the time you want.
5. **Recycle your tree** after the holidays! Many communities will use them for mulch or wood chips. You can also place it in your own backyard to decompose and add nutrients to the soil, or as a home for birds and a place for them to gather branches.

