



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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December 2002



WEST 13th STORE

2707 West 13th St. N.
Wichita, KS 67203
316-942-1443

EAST STORE

6225 E. Shadybrook
(21st @ Woodlawn)
Wichita, KS 67203
316-687-5451

RIDGE ROAD STORE

802 N. Ridge Rd.
Wichita, KS 67212
316-943-0494

LANDSCAPE DESIGN & INSTALLATION NIGHTSCAPING

316-943-6886

CORPORATE OFFICE

316-942-3751

TOLL-FREE NUMBER

888-542-8463

EMAIL

askus@johnsonsgarden.com

WEB PAGE

www.johnsonsgarden.com

Offering You the Ultimate Christmas- Tree-Buying Experience

Pat Handley, Johnson's Ridge Store Manager, Kansas Certified Nurseryman

If it's Christmas Eve, it must be time to bundle up the wife and kids, load up the jalopy, race down to a temporary "snow fence Christmas tree lot" stuck in the corner of an enormous and crowded mall parking lot, brave the December 24th elements just to pick over the last dry remains of whatever "B" grade trees they may have left before it's closing time for the year and they fold up shop and head back to wherever it is that snow fences go for the spring! Or may I suggest an alternative?

Here at Johnson's our annual assortment of cut and "living" Christmas trees is in and ready for sale. Our selection and supply is excellent this year, as it is every year, and our three convenient, well lit and friendly stores are in the same easy-to-find locations they were last year, and will be again next year, unlike many of our "snow fence" competitors! Our knowledgeable staff of nursery personnel can help you select the perfect variety of tree for your individual needs and taste. They will make a fresh cut on each cut tree to help it draw moisture properly and will also net and load your tree for you. In order to prolong the life and needle retention of the tree, each and every one of our cut trees have been sprayed with Wilt-Pruf, an anti-desiccant, which helps retain moisture to prolong the life and beauty of your tree. With the great needle retention of our trees, it's possible to get that tree up and decorated around Thanksgiving, and still have a beautiful green tree to "Trecycle" after the holidays. If you choose to purchase a "living Christmas tree" the staff can also help you with your selection, and then provide care and planting instructions, to insure your tree's success for many years to come.

Any description of quality cut Christmas trees begins for me with the **Fraser Fir**, the "Cadillac of Christmas Trees," in my opinion. The dark emerald color and silvery underside of the needles, held on thick, heavy branches make this tree very attractive and very sturdy as well, an important consideration if you plan to hang a lot of ornaments and lights on your tree. A lot of trees out there won't stand up to the weight of ten or twenty years of collected and cherished ornaments, but the Fraser is one that's up to the task. Add this to the great, fresh evergreen scent that fills a room with a Fraser tree in it, along with the superior needle retention of this outstanding tree, and it has to top my personal list for a cut tree for every Christmas.

If fragrance in a tree is one of your top criteria, you might want to consider trying a **Balsam Fir**. This handsome tree features soft, dark green foliage and sturdy branching as well, but it is the fragrance of a Balsam tree that just says "Christmas tree" to many of our customers, and makes it a mainstay in many local homes. Mix in the scent of gingerbread cookies baking in the oven, and you'll melt the hearts and raise the holiday spirits of even the "Scroogiest" of Scrooges.

If old-time Christmas charm is your desire, you might want to consider a **Douglas Fir** for your holiday tree. The Douglas features an open, airy appearance with short

needles borne on gracefully sweeping branches and is a somewhat lighter green than most trees. Some folks call this a "Charlie Brown"-type tree owing to its distinctively slender profile, but for others it brings back warm, nostalgic visions of days gone by, with families cutting a live tree from nearby woods to set by the hearth. I think the Douglas is a very romantic little tree!

Blue Spruces are not just for your yard anymore, but also for your living room! A cut Blue Spruce features stout, blue-green needles borne on stiff, sturdy branches with good needle retention. The appearance is slightly different than the traditional Christmas tree look, but it lends itself well to a woodsy, outdoor themed tree. Bring the mountains of Colorado to your home for the season!

Of course, Johnson's will again be carrying the two standard cut Christmas trees, the Scotch and White Pine. **Scotch Pines** feature sharp, green 3" needles and a beautiful, conical shape, while the **White Pine** features 4" blue-green needles that are wispy and soft to the touch. The Scotch will hold up to just about any ornaments, but the White is best as a sparsely decorated tree, owing to its delicate branches.

Just a word here from an ecology standpoint. Some customers have asked if using a cut Christmas tree is harmful to the environment, and wonder if using a fresh tree is the speeding up the "deforestation" of our dwindling natural wilderness areas. Not so. Christmas trees are a farm crop, just like corn or wheat. They have been planted specifically to be grown and harvested for sale, and they are followed by more crops of trees when they are cut down. During the years they take to grow to the proper size, they are in fact a benefit to the environment. After Christmas when your tree is ready to be thrown out, take it to a "Treecycle" site to be ground up for use as mulch, saving it from taking up space in the landfill. So, purchasing a cut Christmas tree is a win-win all the way around, however you look at it.