

News Column for Use Week of 11/18/19
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Choosing and Caring for Your Christmas Tree

I know we are still a few weeks away from selecting Christmas trees, but I wanted to give you some helpful tips and tricks to pick out the best, longest lasting tree before you start looking.

When choosing an already cut Christmas tree there are a few things you should check to make sure the tree isn't too far gone, before purchasing the tree. If the needles on the tree are a dull, grayish-green color or feel stiff and brittle you should not purchase that tree. The needles are telling you the tree has been cut for a while and has lost too much moisture. If the needles pull off the tree easily that is also a sign of too much moisture lost. You want to find a tree that is green and the needles hold strong when you try and pull them off. The needles on a freshly cut tree should ooze a little if you break them apart.

Once you have brought your tree home, you want to recut the trunk. Make a new cut about one inch above the original cut. Making this fresh cut will open up any clogged water-conducting tissues. Once you have made the cut, place the trunk immediately in warm water. This will make sure the tree is taking up water right away – to be nice and green throughout the season.

When deciding on where to place your tree, you want to place it in the coolest spot as possible. I know it can be hard to find the perfect place, that isn't in the middle of the room, but you want to keep it away from as much heat as possible. Avoid places near a fireplace, wood-burning stove, heat duct, and the television set. The heat put off from places like these will cause excess water loss from your tree, causing it to die quicker. To make sure your tree stays healthy you will want to make sure the water reservoir for your tree stays filled. If the reservoir loses enough water to expose the bottom of the trunk you will have to recut the trunk again to expose new tissue.

I hope these tips and tricks will help you keep your Christmas tree green and healthy for the holidays. If you have any questions feel free to stop by or contact me in the in the Washington Office by calling 785-325-2121 or emailing khatesohl@ksu.edu.