

# GREAT LAKES


CHRISTMASTREE VIRTUAL MEETING



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<https://tinyurl.com/VirtualSummerMeeting>



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then scroll thru all  
22 pages for more  
information on the  
Virtual Meeting  
& Trade Show,  
July 30-31, 2020**





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A quarantine walk with my family.

## GREETINGS!

While parts of the US slowly reopen and daily life begins to find a new normal, we have been moving forward full speed with plans for a very exciting 2020 Virtual meeting. Although meeting in person is always best, our members' health and well-being is top priority. We are looking forward to coming together remotely and appreciate our members' commitment and flexibility! We are also grateful to Michigan State University, whom we have partnered with to create a virtual event that will provide timely educational content and networking opportunities for our attendees and vendors.

To help share the event details, we have created this **VIRTUAL SUMMER MEETING AND TRADE SHOW** *electronic issue of the* **GREAT LAKES CHRISTMAS TREE JOURNAL!** Our e-issue highlights the meeting/webinar content along with registration information. It also includes a special Vendor Trade Show section to help you connect with suppliers.

Mother nature has certainly shown that she does not slow down just because people do! As your beautiful trees and business keep growing, we feel more than ever that there is a need to stay connected. Sharing information and learning together through continuing education is ever more important. We are looking forward to exploring this new way of connecting and learning with you!

Be well and be safe!

*Amy Start, Editor  
Great Lakes Christmas Tree Journal*

# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

Thank you to the  
Great Lakes Christmas Tree Journal state partners for participating in the  
**VIRTUAL MEETING** and **TRADE SHOW**

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- Massachusetts Christmas Tree Association
- Michigan Christmas Tree Association
- Minnesota Christmas Tree Association
- Christmas Tree Farmers Association of New York
- Ohio Christmas Tree Association
- Christmas Tree Farmers of Ontario
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*By registering for the webinar, you are helping your state association as a portion of your registration fee will be shared with your association.*



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# CHRISTMASTREE WEBINAR SERIES JULY 30-31

Join us for a two-day **GREAT LAKES CHRISTMAS TREE VIRTUAL MEETING AND TRADE SHOW**, featuring a live webinar series where industry specialists will cover topics from taxes and marketing to shearing and pest management. Leading experts from Michigan State University Extension will highlight the latest in Christmas tree production and farm management. As COVID-19 continues to change 'business as usual', Christmas tree farms will also need to adapt this holiday season. Find out how others will be preparing their farm in light of these changes. The Great Lakes Christmas Tree Virtual Meeting and Trade Show is a must attend event for today's Christmas tree grower! The webinar program will be live July 30 and 31, 2020, from 8:45 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. EST. Participants will have the option to tune in to the live webinar or stream the recording on-demand afterwards. Pesticide credits and CEU are available in some states.

Register Now! Click the Link Below!  
<https://tinyurl.com/VirtualSummerMeeting>

## Registration Information

When you click to register you will be directed to a page from Michigan State University, where you will be asked a few questions. Then from there you will be forwarded to Event Brite for payment. The registration fee for the **webinar series is \$100** (plus a small credit card processing fee).

If you have questions about the webinar series or registration, please contact Amy Start at [info@mcta.org](mailto:info@mcta.org) or call 800-589-8733

# CHRISTMASTREE WEBINAR SERIES AGENDA

TIME	THURSDAY, JULY 30	FRIDAY, JULY 31
8:45	NCTA — Tim O'Connor	CTPB — Marsha Gray
9:00	Bridget Behe — Adapting tree shopping for a safer holiday	Andrew Bosserman — Top tax tips for tree farms
10:00	Rich Cowles — Targeting insect and mite control	John Stone — Sprayer calibration for Christmas tree growers
11:00	Chal Landgren & Judy Kowalski — Improving transplant survival	John Tillman — Shearing theory and practice
12:00	Choose and Cut Round Table	Wholesale Round Table



# CHRISTMASTREE WEBINAR SERIES COORDINATORS

Thank you to Michigan State University for coordinating the educational content for our webinar series.

Their support is greatly appreciated!

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Extension

A very special thank you to Dr. Bert Cregg and Heidi Lindberg for helping coordinate the webinar series. Bert and Heidi will also be joining us during the webinar series coordinating the schedule along with assisting in the Q&A portion of the meeting.



Bert Cregg, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of  
Horticulture and Forestry at  
Michigan State University  
cregg@msu.edu



Heidi Lindberg, MS  
Greenhouse and Nursery  
Extension Educator  
Michigan State University Extension  
wollaeg@msu.edu

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We are all hopeful things will get back to normal soon. Until then, from our family to your family, stay safe and healthy. We wish you a successful holiday season!

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# CHRISTMASTREEWEBINAR SERIES

## TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

### **Adapting Tree Shopping for a Safer Holiday**

*Dr. Bridget Behe, Professor of Horticultural Marketing,  
Michigan State University*

Consumer concerns over COVID-19, executive orders, and common sense have changed how people shop. The annual Christmas tree purchase will likely be different, too. Bridget will discuss changes you should implement (adapted from the National Retail Federation) and promote via social media to help your customers prepare for the new and safer reality this Christmas.

### **The Top 5 Ways for Christmas Tree Growers to Save Tax Dollars**

*Andrew Bosserman, Certified Public Accountant*

Many Christmas tree growers do not take full advantage of the tax code, which often results in hundreds or thousands of dollars in lost tax savings. Andrew will discuss the top 5 ways Christmas tree growers can save tax dollars, including making a capital gain election, selecting the best business entity, and using the right bookkeeping system.

### **Insecticides and Miticides: Matching the Product to the Need**

*Dr. Richard Cowles, Scientist, Valley Laboratory of the  
Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station*

A few insecticides and miticides have proven to be essential for Christmas tree pest management. Matching these products and how they are applied to specific pest problems can improve biological and chemical control and minimize the effort and expense of pest management on your farm.

### **Christmas Tree Promotion Board Update**

*Marsha Gray, Executive Director, Christmas Tree  
Promotion Board*

Marsha Gray will cover the latest news and updates for the Christmas Tree Promotion Board.

### **Ready, Set, GROW – Getting Seedlings Off to a Fast Start!**

*Chal Landgren, Christmas Tree Specialist and Professor,  
Oregon State University*

*Judy Kowalski, Biological Science Technician 3, North  
Willamette Research and Extension Center/Oregon State  
University*

The summer droughts over the past few years have resulted in high Christmas tree seedling mortality in the Pacific Northwest. Few farms have irrigation, so we investigated a number of treatments to aid in seedling establishment (shade, mulch, anti-transpirants, water absorbing polymers, and various root dips) to assess if we could improve seedling survival without hauling water to fields.

### **Update from the National Christmas Tree Association**

*Timothy L. O'Connor, Executive Director of the National  
Christmas Tree Association*

Tim O'Connor will share the latest NCTA news, particularly the potential impact of COVID-19 on the 2020 season.

### **Pesticide Application, Sprayer Calibration, and Optimizing Sprayer Use**

*John Stone, Academic Specialist MSU Pesticide Safety  
Education Program Coordinator and Instructor, MSU  
Institute of Agricultural Technology*

Pesticide application to Christmas Trees is made with several types of equipment. We will review the calibration of the backpack powered mist blower and traditional manual pump, air blast, hand gun and flat fan boom to know what their output is. We will also look at some ways to determine spray patterns and optimizing sprayer use.

# CHRISTMAS TREE WEBINAR SERIES

## TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

### **'One Size Fits All (or Not)' Understanding How Trees Respond to Different Cultural Practices**

John Tillman, A lifetime Christmas Tree farmer and owner of Tillman Christmas Trees, LLC in Elma, Washington. John has provided Contract Cultural Specialist services to growers throughout Western Washington for over 35 years.

Understanding how trees respond to different cultural practices is key to maximizing a crop's salability. From the shearing swing to trimming leaders, small trees to large trees, this discussion will focus on developing high quality Christmas trees.

### **Choose and Cut Grower Round Table**

Christian Nicholson, Hidden Pond Christmas Tree Farm, Mendham, NJ

Tony Stefani, Hillside Christmas Tree Farm, Manchester, MI

The choose and cut round table session will be an open forum group discussion with Q&A covering current issues effecting choose and cut farms.

Topics of discussion –

- Concession and Santa: In regards to COVID-19
- Payment Options: Credit Cards, Cash, or On-Site ATM
- Setting up Displays for Success

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# CHRISTMASTREEWEBINAR SERIES

## TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

### Wholesale Grower Round Table

*Scott Powell is the Nursery Manager for Dutchman Tree Farms*

The Wholesale round table session will be an open forum group discussion with Q&A covering current issues effecting wholesale growers.

Topics of discussion –

- Upcoming 2020 Harvest Season
- Retailer Conversations
- Processing Changes for 2020 Harvest
- Worker Safety



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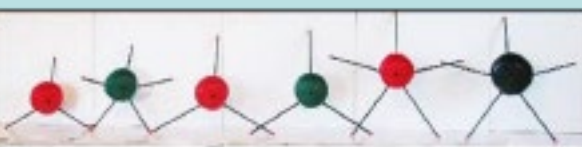
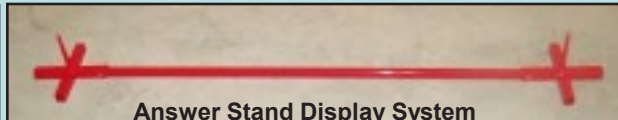
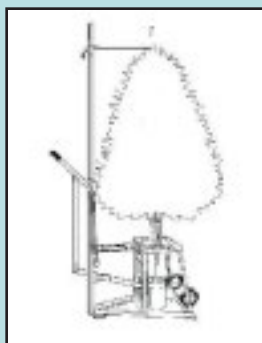
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## PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



### **Dr. Bridget Behe**

Dr. Bridget Behe is currently a Professor of Horticultural Marketing at Michigan State University. She teaches courses on marketing and management for horticulture majors. Bridget has conducted over 100 consumer and market research projects on horticultural products, both edible and ornamental. She has written more than 500 publications in the trade press and peer-reviewed journals. She joined Michigan State's faculty in August, 1997, after serving on the faculty at Auburn University (Alabama) for 8 years.

Bridget earned degrees from Penn State University (Ph.D. Horticulture, B.S. Horticulture, B.S. Agricultural Education) and The Ohio State University (M.S. Horticulture). Each year, she speaks to professionals and industry groups nationally and internationally. She writes articles for trade magazines to share the findings of her consumer research studies. She was co-chair of the AmericanHort (formerly OFA) Garden Center Committee for several years and now serves on their Retail Committee. Dr. Behe has served as chair of a USDA regional project committee where horticulturists and agricultural economists work collaboratively on consumer and economic challenges facing the ornamental horticulture industry. In 2018, she was awarded the American Society for Horticultural Science Undergraduate Educator of the Year. In 2016, she was awarded the Outstanding Extension Specialist in Michigan. In 2018, she was awarded the Outstanding Undergraduate Educator Career Award by the American Society for Horticultural Science. Launched in 2018, Bridget produces a free weekly (10-15 minute) podcast called "Marketing Munchies" available at <http://connect-2-consumer.com>.

Bridget Behe can be contacted at [behe@msu.edu](mailto:behe@msu.edu)



### **Andrew Bosserman**

Andrew Bosserman is a Certified Public Accountant and former IRS agent with an in-depth knowledge of the Christmas Tree industry gained through owning and operating his own Christmas tree farm in Southern Ohio. He is currently attending Wake Forest School of Law to become a tax attorney. Andrew lives in

Winston-Salem, NC with his wife Sallie, where they enjoy hiking, traveling, and making homemade pizza.

Andrew Bosserman can be contacted at:  
[andrew.j.bosserman@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.j.bosserman@gmail.com)



### **Dr. Richard Cowles**

Dr. Cowles has been working for the past 25 years as a scientist at the Valley Laboratory of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, in Windsor. He is best known for his expertise on systemic insecticides, white grub management, and management of insects and mites on small fruits, nurseries, Christmas trees, and forest trees.

Rich Cowles can be reached at: [Richard.Cowles@ct.gov](mailto:Richard.Cowles@ct.gov)



### **Marsha Gray**

Executive Director, Christmas Tree Promotion Board

Marsha Gray was selected as the Executive Director of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board in September of 2018 and has been a part of the management team for the CTPB since its inception in 2015. The CTPB is a Research and Promotion program authorized by USDA and funds Christmas tree

research and promotion. At the CTPB, Marsha works with the board of Christmas tree producers to oversee the annual promotional campaign, research projects, assessment collections and managing day to day board operations.

Gray previously served as the Executive Director of the Michigan Christmas Tree Association for 15 years where she managed the organization's services to its members including educational programming and promotional and marketing opportunities. She also served as the Director of Communications for the National Christmas Tree Association.

With more than 25 years of trade association management experience, including leadership roles with the Michigan Retailers Association, Michigan Floral Association and the Michigan Maple Syrup Association, Marsha has a unique perspective on membership organizations.

Marsha Gray can be contacted at: [Mjgray1@charter.net](mailto:Mjgray1@charter.net)

# CHRISTMASTREEWEBINAR SERIES

## PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



### Judy Kowalski

Biological Science Technician 3, North Willamette Research and Extension Center/Oregon State University

A.A.S Ornamental Horticulture, Clackamas Community College, Oregon City, Oregon. 1994

Judy has been a biological science technician in the statewide Christmas tree program located at the North

Willamette Research and Extension Center since 2008. She has almost 20 years of experience working with a variety of crops including berries, ornamental nursery plants as well as Christmas trees. She assists with educational events and all aspects of research projects at the NWREC and at grower cooperator sites as well.

Judy Kowalski can be contacted at:

[Judy.Kowalski@oregonstate.edu](mailto:Judy.Kowalski@oregonstate.edu)



### Chal Landgren

Christmas Tree Specialist and Professor, Oregon State University

Academic Degrees/Programs/  
Institution: B.S Forestry (Forest Management), University of California, Berkeley—1975; M.S. Forest Science, Utah State University—1977; MBA, Portland State University- 1989.

Current Subject/Program Areas of Focus: Christmas Tree Management

Primary Audience(s) Served: Christmas Tree Growers, Managers, and Contractors, Extension Agents.

Key Program Deliverables: Variety of education programming and demonstrations. Current research projects include foliar fertilization trials, genetic improvement and testing of noble fir, Douglas-fir and Nordmann/Turkish fir, various insect control projects, Sustainability Certification.

Chal Landgren can be contacted at:

[chal.landgren@oregonstate.edu](mailto:chal.landgren@oregonstate.edu)



### Christian Nicholson

Christian Nicholson is the owner of Hidden Pond Christmas tree farm in Mendham NJ, just a 49-minute drive from Manhattan. His farm is a fifty-acre operation which sells exclusively retail choose and cut trees, handmade wreaths, and pre-cut trees as well. Christian started his farm in 1999.

He is the current President of the NJ Christmas tree Growers association, a

post he has held for over nine years.

His farm had been featured on Good Morning America, Fox News, Inside Edition, CBS news and countless other major printed publications. Country Living Magazine ranked his farm as one of the top 20 Christmas tree farms in America in 2019. A story about cutting your own Christmas Tree on a real farm used Hidden Pond tree farm for the national broadcast of the lighting of the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree in 2019.

He is a former NJ Grand Champion tree grower and the current and back to back NJ Grand Champion wreath maker.

Christian Nicholson can be reached at: [cnicho6345@aol.com](mailto:cnicho6345@aol.com)



### Timothy L. O'Connor

Executive Director of the National Christmas Tree Association

Tim is the Executive Director of the National Christmas Tree Association. His career spans 25 years of innovative leadership as the CEO of industry trade associations and marketing organizations. He was the initial CEO of Avocados from Mexico. Before being recruited by AFM he served as

President and CEO of the United States Potato Board for 14 years. Prior to being recruited by the USPB he was Executive Vice President/CEO of the Illinois Beef Association for 12 years where he was part of the teams that launched the BEEF. It's What's for Dinner® campaign and opened the Japanese market for US beef exports. Tim received a B.S. in agriculture from Western Illinois University; a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Illinois; and has completed the Harvard Graduate School of Business Competition and Strategy program. He has worked in food and agricultural associations, marketing and business consulting for more than 30 years.

Tim O'Connor can be contacted at: [tim@realchristmastrees.org](mailto:tim@realchristmastrees.org)



# CHRISTMASTREEWEBINAR SERIES

## PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES



### Scott Powell

Scott Powell is the Nursery Manager for Dutchman Tree Farms, and with a committed team, oversees the bareroot nursery and the wreaths and greens program. Dutchman's Northern Pines Nursery is a bareroot seedling and transplant nursery digging over 3 million plants each spring and the wreath division producing over 500,000 wreaths annually. Scott returned to

farming in 2011 after leaving teaching at the college level. Scott is presently President of Michigan Christmas Tree Association and the Michigan Seedling Grower's Association and serves as the state representative to National Christmas Tree Association.

Scott Powell can be contacted at:  
[scott@northernpinesnursery.com](mailto:scott@northernpinesnursery.com)

of Science degree program in Integrated Pest Management with the MSU Department of Entomology in May of 2010 and was appointed Coordinator of the Pesticide Safety Education Program in August 2010.

As Pesticide Safety Education Program coordinator, John works on developing and presenting training programs for new and experienced applicators, and the revision and rewriting of the pesticide applicator certification manuals.

John's interests are the associations among plant communities, insects and microbes to better understand natural systems and their importance to our man-made landscapes and the environment.

John received the Michigan Association of Extension Agents 2018 Outstanding Academic Specialist Award on October 15, 2018.

John Stone can be contacted at: [stonejo2@msu.edu](mailto:stonejo2@msu.edu)



### Tony Stefani

Tony Stefani, Vice President of the Michigan Christmas Tree Association, grew up on Hillside Christmas Tree Farm in Manchester, Michigan. Tony's parents opened Hillside in 1983, and he currently operates the farm with his father as a side business, while also working a full-time job. He plans to carry on the business when his father decides to retire. Tony believes that

having a choose and cut operation is more than just selling a Christmas tree, but providing an atmosphere where families can experience Christmas and create lasting memories together. He is passionate about the Christmas tree industry and helped establish the Great Lakes Christmas Tree Growers Facebook group, where fellow growers can connect and share ideas. The group has grown to nearly 800 members.

Tony Stefani can be contacted at: [tstefani@hotmail.com](mailto:tstefani@hotmail.com)



### John Tillman

A lifetime Christmas Tree farmer and owner of Tillman Christmas Trees, LLC in Elma, Washington, John has been in the Christmas tree industry since 1974, starting as a contract shearer for J. Hofert Company.

John has provided Contract Cultural Specialist services to growers throughout Western Washington for

over 35 years. Acre by acre John has grown his business to what is now Tillman Christmas Trees, LLC in Elma, WA. They currently farm eight different species on approximately 150 acres over seven different farms throughout Western Washington. They do still provide contract cultural services to a few select clients, but most of their business is dedicated to the wholesale Christmas tree industry.

John is a six-time Grand Champion winner of the Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association contest. In 2004, he won the National Christmas Tree competition held in Pennsylvania and had the honor of presenting the official White House Blue Room tree, the tree in the Oval Office and the First Family tree at Camp David.

John Tillman can be contacted at: [tillmantrees@gmail.com](mailto:tillmantrees@gmail.com)



### John Stone

MSU Academic Specialist

MSU Pesticide Safety Education Program Coordinator and Instructor, MSU Institute of Agricultural Technology

John joined the MSU Institute of Agricultural Technology in 2001 as an instructor for the Landscape and Lawn Management program in Grand Rapids and began working with the Pesticide

Safety Education Program in 2005. John completed a Master

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# VIRTUAL TRADE SHOW

Welcome to our Virtual Meeting and Trade Show! Trade shows are a valuable part of our summer meeting festivities. It is where we see new items, test products, and engage with suppliers. Although we are unable to meet in person this year, we understand the importance of these business connections. Therefore, we created this exclusive Vendor Trade Show section to help you stay in touch with your favorite supplier.

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Your support is greatly appreciated, as it helps us continue to provide quality programming. Be sure to check out their ads within this publication and the vendors highlighted in next few pages to see what is newly available. Remember them when you make your next farm purchase.

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# GREAT LAKES

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COUNTRYVIEW NURSERY, INC.  
Specializing in Seedlings and Transplants

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[brian@boschsnursery.com](mailto:brian@boschsnursery.com)

[www.Boschsnursery.com](http://www.Boschsnursery.com)



Andrew Bosserman, CPA

Christmas Tree & Timber Tax

### ANDREW BOSSERMAN

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[www.andrewbosserman.com](http://www.andrewbosserman.com)

[andrew.j.bosserman@gmail.com](mailto:andrew.j.bosserman@gmail.com)



# GREAT LAKES

CHRISTMASTREEVIRTUALMEETING

## VIRTUAL TRADE SHOW

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5471 Sønderød Denmark

**Tlf: +45 70 220 420**

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*Contact: Scott Powell*

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[scott@northernpinesnursery.com](mailto:scott@northernpinesnursery.com)

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Contact: Jerry Peterson, Josh Peterson

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#### **THOMAS BROS. EQUIPMENT SALES INC.**

*Contact: Ed and Connie Thomas*

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