



As Required by New Farm Bill, USDA to Allow Christmas Tree Research and Promotion Program to Move Forward

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WASHINGTON, April 4, 2014 -- As directed by Congress in the Agricultural Act of 2014, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is allowing the research and promotion program for fresh cut Christmas trees to move forward. The Christmas tree marketing program, like other similar agriculture marketing programs (such as “Got Milk?” and “Beef, It’s What’s for Dinner”), was created at the request of the industry’s farmers and will be funded by the industry—no taxpayer funds will be used and no tax revenue will be collected. Programs such as this allow producers within a particular agriculture sector to come together to fund research and jointly market their products.

USDA is now seeking nominations for the Christmas Tree Promotion Board under the newly established Christmas Tree Promotion, Research and Information Order. USDA will mail an informational packet to all known Christmas tree producers and importers in order to solicit nominees for the initial board. The 12-member board will consist of 11 Christmas tree producers—five from the Western region of the United States, two from the Central region, four from the Eastern region—and one importer member. Initial board members’ terms of office of two, three and four years will be assigned by USDA in order to stagger future terms of office. Each member’s term will begin when the Secretary approves the nominations.

In order to serve on the board, producers and importers must have domestically produced (cut and sold for the holiday market) or imported 500 or more Christmas trees during the most recent crop year. The Christmas Tree Promotion Board will meet periodically to establish and review marketing and research activities that encourage market growth and benefit the industry. The national program is industry-funded and supports the national marketing and promotion of fresh cut Christmas trees. USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) oversees board activities.

USDA encourages board membership that reflects the diversity of the individuals served by the programs. All eligible women, minorities and persons with disabilities are invited to seek nomination for a seat on the Christmas Tree Promotion Board by the June 16, 2014, deadline.

For more information about this program, contact Patricia Petrella, USDA Marketing Specialist, by phone (202) 720-9915 or e-mail patricia.petrella@ams.usda.gov.

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