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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Declares Friday, November 24, 2017 as “Green Friday”

Declaration Made to Recognize Massachusetts’ Christmas Tree Farms and Nurseries

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BOSTON — The Baker-Polito Administration has declared Friday, November 24, 2017 as “Green Friday” to encourage people across the Commonwealth to visit their local farms and nurseries for Christmas trees, holiday plants, and holiday decorating needs. To celebrate “Green Friday,” Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton and Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) Commissioner John Lebeaux will participate in a Christmas tree cutting ceremony at Riverwind Tree Farm in Lancaster, which grows both native and exotic fir tree varieties.

“After Massachusetts residents enjoy their Thanksgiving and begin preparing for the winter holiday season, we encourage everyone to support the hundreds of family-operated Christmas tree farms and nurseries that contribute to our economy every year,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.**

“Our administration is pleased to support the Christmas tree growers and nurseries across the Commonwealth that provide residents with fresh trees and holiday plants, while creating local jobs and community camaraderie,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.**

Christmas tree season in Massachusetts provides hundreds of seasonal jobs at nearly 400 Christmas tree farms on approximately 3,000 acres of land from Cape Cod to the Berkshires. The sale of Massachusetts-grown Christmas trees contributes approximately \$1.4 million to the Commonwealth’s economy each year. Christmas tree farms, which are often sited on soils that cannot support other crops, stabilize soil, which helps prevent erosion and protect water supplies. When chipped, the trees can be used as a renewable source of energy to be burned as fuel, used as mulch, or composted.

“Buying a fresh-cut tree from a local farm is the most environmentally friendly Christmas tree choice, as fresh trees are biodegradable, preserve open space and help reduce our carbon footprint,” **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton.** “The ‘Green Friday’ tree cutting ceremony is an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the benefits of purchasing Massachusetts-grown trees, and the hard work put in all year long by our Christmas tree growers.”

“As part of the largest agricultural sector in Massachusetts, Christmas tree farms and nurseries remain a vital component of the state’s agricultural industry as a whole,” **said MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux.** “Many Christmas tree farms and nurseries also offer farm made wreaths, holiday plants such as poinsettias and craft activities for children to provide residents with a truly fun holiday experience.”

“Whether you’re picking up a pre-cut tree or cutting your own with your family, buying a Massachusetts Christmas tree this season is a great way to celebrate the holidays and put money back into our local economy,” **said State Representative Harold Naughton, Jr. (D-Clinton).** “Also, when it comes to carbon sequestration, Massachusetts Christmas trees actively make our environment greener and give us all a tangible way we can combat climate change on the local level. I applaud the folks of Riverwind for being recognized on Green Friday, I thank the Baker-Polito Administration for this honor, and I’m grateful to

Riverwind and the other Christmas tree farmers across the Commonwealth for their hard work and for brightening the holiday season.”

“We started growing Christmas trees in 1997, and offer traditional as well as exotic firs to our community,” **said Jerry Wareck, co-owner of Riverwind Tree Farm.** “Choosing and cutting a Christmas tree is a family event and being a part of this is very rewarding to us. People love the experience and we try hard to provide an environment that makes a visit to our farm even more memorable: hot chocolate and hot cider, cookies, ornaments hand crafted in our area, wreaths made with fresh cuttings from our trees, an antique sleigh for picture taking, and personal attention for everyone. We look forward to seeing the same families every year and to meeting new ones.”

Riverwind Tree Farm will donate the tree that EEA Secretary Beaton and MDAR Commissioner ceremoniously cut down to United Way of Central Massachusetts, which will give the tree to a local family in need.

Visit DAR’s [farm finder](#) to find information on Massachusetts Christmas tree farms, farmers’ markets and roadside farm stands.

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