

# WHERE OREGON GROWS ITS CHRISTMAS CHEER

A LOOK AT THE STATE'S TREE GROWING HEARTLAND

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## OREGON'S CHRISTMAS TREE INDUSTRY BY THE NUMBERS:



**318** Licensed Christmas tree growers in Oregon.<sup>i</sup>



**17** Number of Oregon counties where licensed growers operate.



**~50%** Share of all licensed growers located in **Clackamas and Marion counties**.



**3.17M** Christmas trees harvested in 2023.



**\$118M** Estimated gross sales from Christmas tree production.



**599** Average payroll employment in the industry, rising to 1,000+ jobs during peak harvest season.<sup>ii</sup>



**45%** Approximate share of PNW-grown trees shipped to California, the industry's largest market.<sup>iii</sup>

Oregon's Christmas tree industry is one of the state's most charming economic stories. According to the Oregon Department of Agriculture, **318 growers hold active Christmas tree licenses**, reflecting the scale of an industry that shapes rural life, seasonal employment, and holiday traditions across the country.

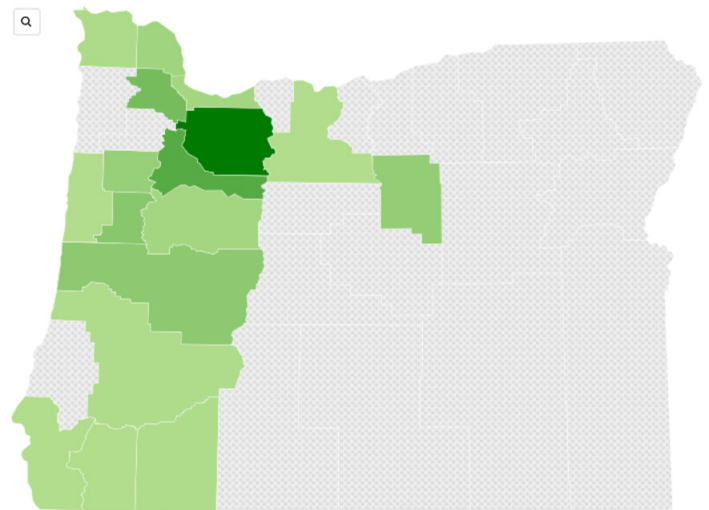
These growers aren't spread across all of Oregon's 36 counties — they're concentrated in just **17 counties statewide**. And even within that group, a few regions stand out as the true heart of Oregon's holiday-tree production. **Clackamas County leads the state by a wide margin**, followed by **Marion County**, and together these two counties account for **roughly half of all licensed growers in Oregon**.

Several other counties also play an important supporting role. **Washington, Polk, and Lane** each host clusters of licensed growers, while smaller operations appear in places like **Yamhill, Linn, Douglas, Curry, and Jackson**. Many Eastern and Southern Oregon counties show no licensed growers at all, underscoring how tightly the industry is clustered in the Willamette Valley and nearby foothills — areas with the ideal mix of climate, soil quality, and elevation for growing top-tier Noble and Douglas firs.

### Where Oregon Grows Its Christmas Cheer

Each shaded county represents part of the landscape where Oregon's licensed Christmas tree growers operate. *Darker green reflects a higher number of licensed growers*, highlighting the regions that play the biggest role in bringing holiday cheer to households across the country — with **Clackamas** leading the state, followed by **Marion**.

Number of growers 1  106



Source: Oregon Department of Agriculture

# FROM NOBLE TO NORDMANN: HOW OREGON'S TREE MIX HAS EVOLVED

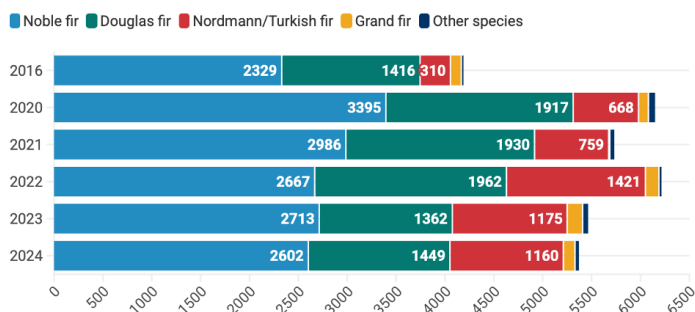
Christmas trees are a long-term crop. In Oregon, it takes seven to ten years for a tree to grow from seedling to market size. Douglas firs mature on the shorter end of that range, while Noble, Nordmann, and Turkish firs typically require closer to a decade. Because of this long growth cycle, today's planting decisions shape the mix of trees Oregon will harvest nearly a decade from now.

Data from the Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association shows that the composition of Oregon's crop has shifted in meaningful ways. While Noble and Douglas firs remain the backbone of production, growers have increasingly diversified into other species.

## Christmas Trees Planted, by Variety and Year Planted — Oregon: 2016, 2020-2024

(in thousands)

Noble firs have consistently been the most popular Christmas tree variety planted in Oregon, followed by Douglas firs, with other species like Grand firs and Nordmann firs making up a smaller share.



Source: United States Department of Agriculture • Other species include Pine, Fraser Fir, and Balsam Fir.

**Noble fir** continues to dominate statewide production, ranging from 2.6 to 3.4 million trees between 2016 and 2024. Its strong branches, elegant shape, and excellent needle retention keep it a preferred choice among buyers.

**Douglas fir**, once the signature tree of the Pacific Northwest, has seen a more pronounced decline. After peaking at nearly **1.9 million trees** in 2020, production fell to roughly **1.36–1.45 million** in 2023–2024 — a drop of more than half a million trees in just a few years. Growers have increasingly turned to species with stronger needle retention and better durability during long-distance shipping, factors that have become more important as demand grows in warmer parts of the country.

One of the most notable changes is the rise of **Nordmann** and **Turkish firs**. Production increased from just **310,000** trees in 2016 to well over **1.1 million** in the early 2020s. These species have gained popularity in part because of their strong needle retention and suitability for long-distance shipping.

**Grand fir** and **other species** make up smaller portions of the crop, fluctuating from year to year as growers respond to demand and growing conditions.

From the foothills of Clackamas County to the valleys of Marion and the pockets of growers scattered across the state, Oregon continues to grow the trees — and the traditions — that bring holiday cheer to millions of families each year.<sup>iv</sup>

<sup>i</sup> Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association. (2023). Christmas Tree Industry Survey Results. <https://www.pnwcta.org/assets/surveys/xmas2023.pdf>

<sup>ii</sup> Oregon Employment Department. (2023). Oregon Christmas Trees Create Jobs During the Holiday Season. <https://www.qualityinfo.org/-/oregon-christmas-trees-create-jobs-during-the-holiday-season>

<sup>iii</sup> Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association. <https://www.pnwcta.org/about-us>

<sup>iv</sup> Oregon State University. (2023). Developing quality Christmas trees in the Pacific Northwest. <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pnw-684-developing-quality-christmas-trees-pacific-northwest-0>