

## MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR FRESH-CUT CHRISTMAS TREE

Despite the many desirable features of natural Christmas trees, there are some things one must guard against through proper care: excessive drying of the tree, the loss of needles with its increased fire hazard and the deterioration in appearance and appeal.

A freshly-cut Christmas tree contains almost as much water as it does when growing in the field but, after cutting, water continues to evaporate from the needles and the stem. Naturally, drying and subsequent needle loss is hastened once the tree is brought inside the house, for home heating and accompanying low humidity accelerate moisture loss.

To assist in restoring the internal moisture content of Christmas trees, a thin disc of wood (1/2" to 1" thick) should be cut from the base of the stem. This removes the natural resin which has clogged the water conducting tissues and the tree is, once again, free to absorb large quantities of water. As a result Christmas tree stands should contain a reservoir which holds at least a litre of water and should be kept filled at all times.

Summing up, homeowners can best maintain the freshness of cut trees by observing the following rules:

1. Re-cut the tree stump just before placing it indoors. Plant World will do this for you.
2. Mount the tree in a stand with a large water reservoir.
3. Keep the reservoir full of water. Watch the uptake of water especially for the first few days.
4. Locate the tree away from heating outlets if possible.
5. Use a liquid Christmas tree preservative, anti desiccant added to the water. These preserving products help the tree to conduct water, retain freshness and prolong its longevity.