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**PENNSYLVANIA CHRISTMAS TREE GROWERS ASSOCIATION PRESENTS THE STATE
AWARD**

HARRISBURG, PA- The Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association (PCTGA) presented the State Award to Rick Bates, Ph.D. and Larry Kuhns, Ph.D. during their annual winter meeting recently held in Grantville, PA.

The State Award is presented to individuals who have contributed substantially to the betterment of the association and industry. Both Bates and Kuhns are researchers and educators who have been involved with PCTGA for many years. They have both dedicated time and energy to the advancement of the industry.

Bates, Assistant Professor of Ornamental Horticulture at Penn State University (PSU), has made it his primary goal of research to enhance the profitability and competitiveness of the nursery and Christmas tree industry in Pennsylvania. He joined the faculty at PSU as an Assistant Professor September 1, 2000 with an extension/research appointment in woody ornamentals. He plans and conducts the annual Christmas Tree Management Short Course at Penn State and disseminates information pertaining to Christmas tree culture and management.

Bates received his Ph.D. in horticulture from Virginia Tech in 1994, and his B.S. and M. S. in horticulture from West Virginia University. He worked as a county extension agent in Hamilton County, Ohio and Botetourt County, Virginia and as an Assistant Professor at Montana State University prior to coming to Penn State. His extension responsibilities include Christmas tree and nursery production. He has also worked closely with PCTGA to develop a research and education program that addresses important Christmas tree production issues in Pennsylvania and one that is responsive to grower needs.

Kuhns came to Penn State in 1977 and served as a Professor of Ornamental Horticulture with an extension/research appointment until 1997. He conducted educational programs for the nursery, landscape, and garden center industries; Christmas tree growers; and street tree managers. In 1998, he changed from extension to a teaching appointment to develop the newly created landscape management option in Penn State's Landscape Contracting major.

Kuhns received his Ph.D. and M.S. in ornamental horticulture from Ohio State University in 1977, and his B.S. in general agriculture from Penn State University. He currently owns and operates a 40 acre Christmas tree farm and nursery, located in State College, PA.

The Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association (PCTGA), with over 300 members, works to promote and develop a community of interest among growers of Christmas trees in Pennsylvania and adjoining states, as well as to raise public awareness about Christmas trees. PCTGA belongs to the National Christmas Tree Association (NCTA), an association with more than 5,100 professionals. Pennsylvania has the largest number of Christmas tree growers of any state and is ranked fourth nationally in Christmas tree production according to USDA. To find a Christmas tree grower near you, and for more information from the Pennsylvania Christmas tree association, visit www.christmastrees.org.

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