



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Stacy Henninger, Communications Dir.
717-238-9765, communications@christmastrees.org

Crystal Spring Tree Farm II Chosen to Provide White House Christmas Tree

October 28, 2010 (Harrisburg, PA) – Christopher Botek, owner of Crystal Spring Tree Farm II in Lehighton, Pa. and Pennsylvania Christmas Tree Growers Association (PCTGA) member, became Grand Champion of the National Christmas Tree Contest this summer at the National Christmas Tree Association's (NCTA) Annual Convention & Trade Show. The convention was held in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Botek entered a Colorado blue spruce from his farm as the prize-winning conifer. As a Grand Champion Christmas Tree grower, Chris will present the official White House Christmas Tree to First Lady Michelle Obama for the 2010 Christmas season.

Trees in the contest competed in five species categories: True Fir, Douglas-fir, Spruce, Pine and Other. Convention attendees voted to select the first, second and third-place winners in each category. Then a panel of consumer judges chose the Grand Champion and Reserve Champion trees. These winners were announced at the Awards Banquet held Friday, Aug. 13.

"Since an American farmer gets to provide the Christmas Tree for the White House, it strengthens the fact that farm-grown trees are such an important tradition in our country," says NCTA President Richard Moore, a Christmas Tree grower from Groton, N.Y. "There is nothing better for our industry than to showcase our farm crop in the most famous house in America."

Botek's champion pedigree is a proverbial pine cone that didn't fall far from the tree, as his parents Francis and Margaret Botek were Grand Champions in 2006 and presented the White House Christmas Tree to Laura Bush. "It's definitely a source of family pride now that I have won the contest too," said Botek. "I was very proud of my parents in 2006 and I'm sure they're ecstatic for me. It's such an honor for us tree farmers."

White House staff will travel to Botek's Pennsylvania farm this fall to select the tree to be displayed in the Blue Room, serving as the centerpiece of the holiday decorations. All of the contest trees, including the winners, were between 6 and 8 feet tall, and following the convention were chipped into mulch and recycled. The Blue Room tree will be much bigger, 18 ½ feet tall to be exact. The selected tree will be harvested and presented to the First Lady once the Christmas season is upon us.

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The PA Christmas Tree Growers Association (PCTGA) represents over 250 growers of Pennsylvania Christmas trees. PCTGA 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. To find a Christmas tree grower near you, visit our Website at www.christmastrees.org.