

Sierra tree farmers boasting about this year's crop

By Debbie Arrington, Sacramento Bee

No complaints from these farmers; this should be a Christmas season to remember.

"It's the best crop we've had in years – truly tremendous," said Geri Hyder of Indian Rock Tree Farm in Camino. "The mild weather we had this year made a beautiful crop of trees."

At tree farms dotting the Sierra foothills, evergreens benefited from unusually cool summer temperatures and lots of moisture.

"We had a cold snap at just the right time to set the needles," said Dee Kobervig, president of the El Dorado County Christmas Tree Growers Association. "In our business, weather can make or break it. And this year has been just about perfect."

Tree farms within a two-hour drive of Sacramento expect a flood of shoppers, eager to bring home the perfect tree for their holidays.

"We'll get several thousand people just at our place," said Hyder, who sells cut-your-own and pre-cut trees in 10 varieties. "We've only got four weekends to make our business for the whole year."

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