

Christmas tree growers battle popularity of plastic

By Lydia Mulvaney, Bloomberg

Millennials have earned a reputation for loving consumer products that are local and artisanal. So why are they buying so many plastic Christmas trees?

That's the question irking Tim O'Connor, the executive director of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board in Littleton, Colo. To help capture more buyers, growers are positioning themselves as analogs to the local and organic food movement. Real trees have all the things younger adults are drawn to, he said, touting authenticity, benefits to the environment and support for regional economies.

They've got their work cut out for them. While almost 95 million U.S. households will display a Christmas tree this season, only 19 percent of those are expected to be real, according to a survey conducted by Nielsen for the American Christmas Tree Association released last week. While some houses display both types of trees, most will be putting up artificial trees, usually made from plastic and coming from factories sometimes located across the globe.

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