

# Redrock Farm News

October 2002

As the fall foliage brightened on our hillsides we were reminded that it's time for the annual newsletter. As announced in 2001, this is our last year on the farm. Eldest son Rich and wife Steph will take over after this season and we'll move to our new log home on a nearby hilltop. Rich usually takes leave from the Navy to help with tree cutting and shipping and many of you have talked with him when phoning your order. He'll be on hand again this season — if there's no war over Iraq.

**Redrock trees are winners** A Redrock tree was awarded Best of Show at our local Tunbridge World's Fair. We had Best of Show in 2001 too. Another Redrock tree was named 2002 Vermont Champion at the Eastern State Exposition — New England's fair — in West Springfield, Massachusetts. We must be doing something right.

**Weather.** Consecutive mornings of freezing weather (18° and 24° F) in mid May damaged buds on some of our balsam firs that had started growth — early bud break. That caused uneven growth and put a few trees in the category "less than perfect." But most trees remain a USDA premium grade, which allows only one major defect in an otherwise perfect tree. If your tree goes against the wall, or in a corner, a defect (if any) will not show. If you need a "center of the room tree" please specify and we'll be sure to find you one.

**Balsam boughs.** We continued adding some balsam fir boughs (about a pound) to orders in 2001 and we'll do it again this season. If you would like more boughs, we can send you a separate box of boughs (about 5 pounds) at a nominal \$4.00 charge plus shipping. Please call us about that.

**Shipping choice.** Federal Express Ground Home Delivery will again be our delivery agent. We had a few problems with FedEx in 2002 but most were handled quickly by our local account executive. Home Delivery will be available throughout the US this year.

**Shipping dates.** Shipping of wreaths will start November 11. Tree shipping will start November 18 for customers who want their tree Thanksgiving weekend. Early shipment is required because Federal Express doesn't deliver Thursday-Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend. Shipping to addresses in the northeastern US is generally 2 work days. Shipments to the western US require 5 work days.

We can arrange to ship by United Parcel Service Ground but it will cost \$1.60 to \$ 3.50 more than FedEx Ground. Please fill in "Please ship by UPS" to your order if you wish us to ship by them.

**Balsam vs Fraser firs** Queries continue to come in about the Fraser fir. We grow them but do not ship them because they lack the aroma of the balsam fir and their branches don't fold easily into the tree box. The Fraser fir commands a higher price than a balsam fir mainly because of post-cutting needle retention. We recommend our balsam firs but look for a Fraser fir if you want to keep your tree in the house until Valentine's Day.

**Wreaths** Balsam fir wreaths for 2002 will again be offered with a choice of ribbon color (waterproof red velvet or plaids). We're offering a \$2 discount for wreaths ordered for shipment the same date as a tree. An order for six wreaths or more to the same address will be shipped bulk at considerable savings, which we pass along to you.

**Mail, phone or internet** We love getting orders on the enclosed order form, especially with a check included. But we'll happily take your order by phone (888-383-8714 toll free) or e-mail.

We send our sincere best wishes for the 2002 Holiday Season,

Walt Rockwood & Jean Peterson