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Brian Sterbenz
Iowa State University

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CHRISTMAS TREE PLANTATION

This is the first article about Christmas tree production by the Forestry Club here at Iowa State University. On the 9th of December, 1985, the club entered into an agreement with the Forestry Department and the Physical Plant for approximately 4 acres of land on which to grow the trees. This tract of land is located approximately one and one half miles northwest of campus near the Reactor Woods.



This was done to eventually provide the Forestry Club with trees for their annual Christmas tree sale during the Christmas season. The plantation will also provide an area for demonstration and education purposes. According to the contracts signed between the department and the club, the department will help pay for costs of operation for five years, which is about 500 dollars. In return for this, if the club decides to remain in the tree growing business, they will pay for all operating costs and offer a 500 dollar scholarship for an incoming freshman who is interested in forestry.

The 4 acre plantation is split into six 3/4 acre sections. Each one of these sections will be cut every year. The area that we are working with is an over grown apple orchard. The new section to be planted must be cleared, usually done in the fall. Then in the winter the branches are chipped and used for mulch around the young trees. In the spring roughly 900 new seedlings are planted. This number allows for planting of the labor involved with the clearing, chipping and planting is done by volunteers from the club.

This year we will be on our third planting of seedlings. The ones that were planted two years ago are showing good signs of productive growth. With any luck they should be ready for sale in 4-5 years. When the Christmas season rolls around think of the club and stop by for a tree.

Brian Sterbenz
Plantation Chairman

