

Plenty of fresh Christmas trees in Apple Hill

By Debbie Arrington, Sacramento Bee

Farm to fork? These farmers specialize in field to floor.

"We're growing something that's sustainable," said Dee Kobervig, president of the El Dorado County Christmas Tree Growers Association. "We're trying to grow something for our (Northern California) Christmas tree market, something that people want."

On Apple Hill, it's looking a lot like Christmas, which is just the way tree farmers like it. This weekend marks the official opening of cut-your-own-tree season as dozens of mom-and-pop farms open their gates to city folks who drive up.

"A lot of people are going back to the basics with family traditions," Kobervig said. "(Looking for a tree) is a fun adventure. You can drink hot chocolate and munch a candy cane. And the trees look fantastic this season."

Mild fall weather helped the firs and pines develop lots of branches and grow lustrous new needles.

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