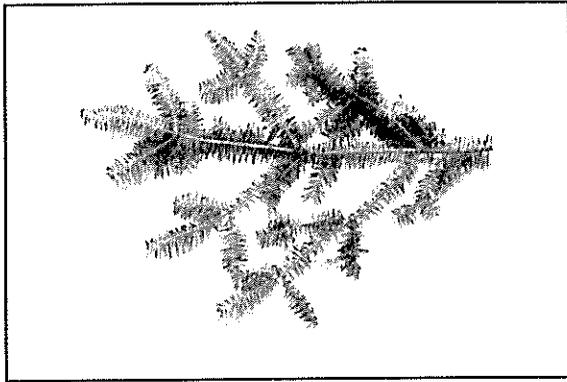


## Bough Sizes

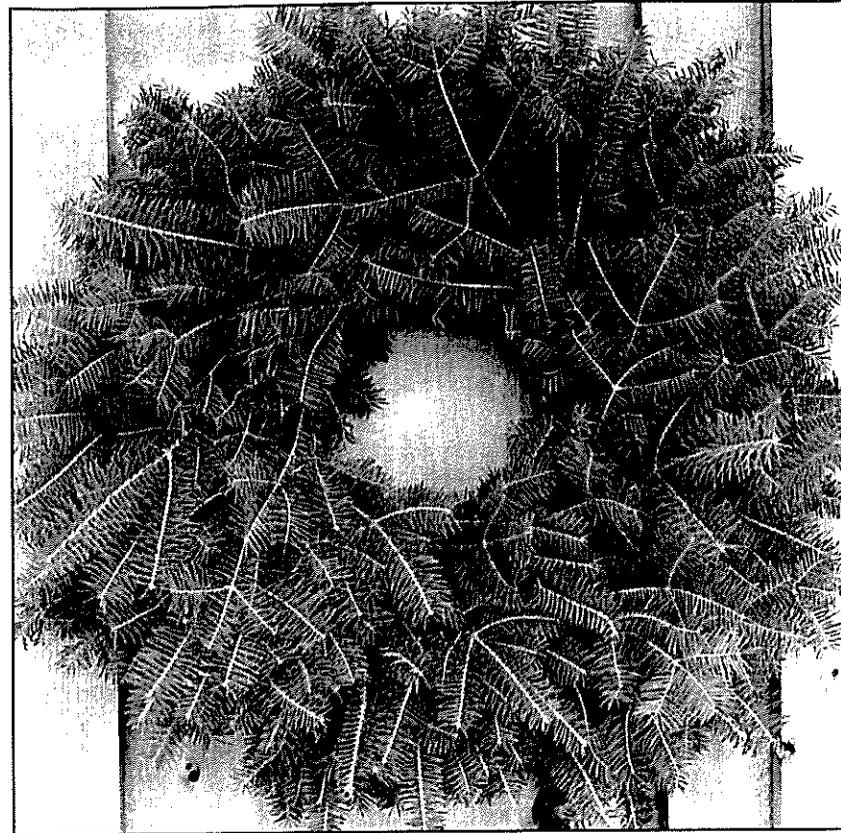
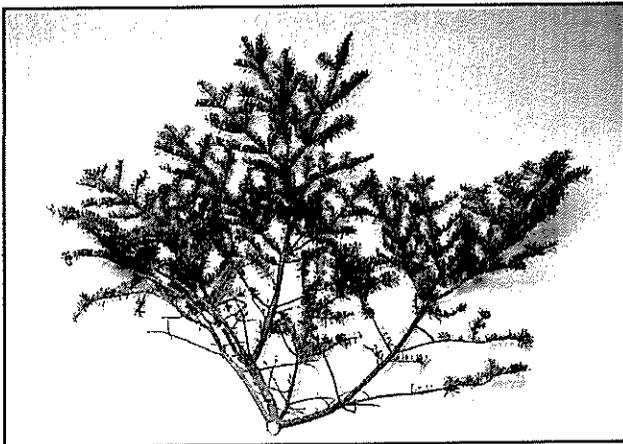
### Right



18" to 30" in length

Bough buyers will pay more for shorter boughs because there is less waste of time and resource when manufacturing into wreaths.

### Wrong



## Doing It Right

Get a permit, written consent or bill of sale!

Permits are required for harvesting balsam boughs from public lands in Minnesota. Permits can be obtained from Forestry offices located in Chippewa and Superior National Forests, tribal headquarters on reservation lands, DNR- Forestry and county land management offices.

State law requires a permit, written consent or bill of sale to be carried whenever cutting, removing or transporting boughs whether such land be publicly or privately owned.

## Balsam Bough Harvesting: Doing It Right For the Future

For promoting, through management,  
our Balsam Forest Resource in the  
State of Minnesota.

This brochure is a cooperative effort of numerous balsam bough cutters, bough buyers, the Minnesota wreath manufacturers, tribal councils, county agencies, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Minnesota DNR.

## Introduction

The State of Minnesota is a leader in the Christmas wreath and greens industry. This is a credit not only to our balsam resource, but more importantly to those that are supplying the boughs and products with their hard work and commitment to quality. It has taken generations of effort to build this industry which now directly and indirectly employs thousands of people in Minnesota. However, in order to continue to be a leader, those of us involved in the industry need to take a careful look at how we manage our balsam resource. Through proper management, the industry will be able to continue to grow and be a source of income this year, next year, and for the future generations.

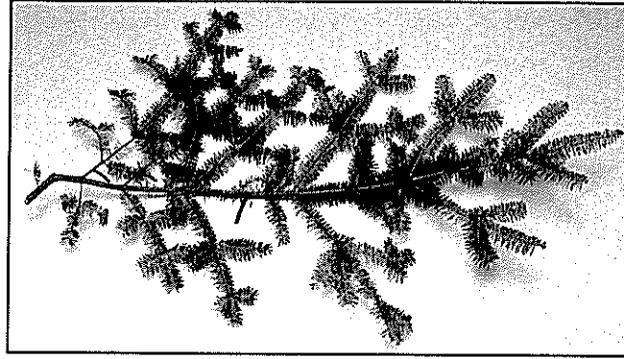
This brochure is specifically designed for those who harvest balsam boughs in Minnesota. The harvesting of boughs provides a supplementary income for many families. We need to keep these opportunities available to you. Proper harvesting techniques will guarantee a long-term sustained yield of boughs for everyone.

## Characteristics of Balsam Fir

Balsam fir is a short-lived, cold climate tree of the northern lake states. It requires abundant soil moisture and humid atmosphere. In wetlands it grows in pure stands or in association with black spruce, cedar, and tamarack. On higher ground it is typically found in the understory of pine, aspen and birch stands. While mature balsam fir is used primarily for pulp and saw timber, the young trees are used for Christmas trees. The flat, dense, dark green needles are well suited for wreaths and holiday decorations.

Most balsam boughs are harvested from early October to early December. Boughs retain their needles the best if harvested after the second hard frost.

## Harvesting the Right Way



When this bough is used to make a wreath, only the small branches above the red tape will be used. The rest of the bough, below the red tape, will be discarded as waste. In most cases the wreath maker would be willing to pay more for the better boughs. Proper cutting will allow the remaining branch to grow into a harvestable bough again in five or six years.

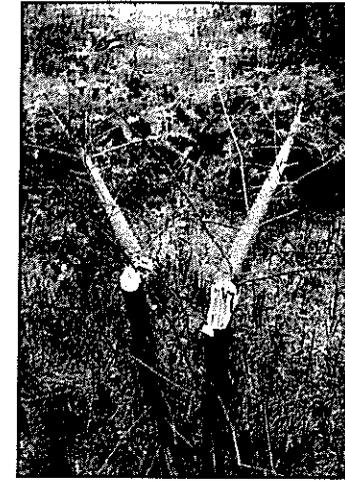
### Proper Harvesting Actions:

- Leave branches on the upper half of the tree for future growth
- Harvested branches should have ends no larger in diameter than a pencil



Branches were removed only from the lower half of this tree leaving the top half of the tree to grow and provide boughs for the future.

## Harvesting the Wrong Way



These trees were cut down and the boughs removed.

Wildlife habitat, future bough cutting and the timber resource are gone forever.

### Improper Harvesting Actions:

- Chopping down trees
- Harvesting from trees less than 5 feet in height
- Cutting more than half the height of tree or higher than you can reach
- Stripping all the branches from the tree
- Cutting branches back to the trunk



Harvesting the entire branch stops any future growth of that branch.