

Enjoy More
2020 price list out now!
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01635 254485



# What's inside?

# 4. AND THE TEAM

Learn what Jadecliff have been working on during the coronavirus crisis

# 6. STRINGING MACHINE

Say hello to a plastic-free stringing machine this year.

## 7. TABLE TOP TREES, THE LATEST TREND

Are smaller trees taking the Christmas Tree industry by storm, or is it another passing fad?

# HOW TO FIND AND WORK WITH SUPER SUPPLIERS

An in-depth look at how to approach your supply chain, focused on dealing with your suppliers

# 15. OF GROWING A PERFECT CHRISTMAS TREE

An update on the latest research being performed to influence Christmas trees of the future.

# Coming Soon

## A TRADITION OF NEW IDEAS YOUR CUSTOMERS WILL LOVE

#### WREATHS ON A NEW LEVEL

Be the first to see Jadecliff's 2020 wreath lineup

#### **NEW PALLET RECOVERY SCHEME**

With our continued focus on sustainability, we are in the process of developing our own pallet recovery scheme. Going forward, we will endeavour to collect all pallets and uprights for repair, re-use and up-cycling. We very much appreciate your support in optimising the use and re-use of our timber pallets.

#### 2020 PRICELIST

We are in the process of finalising our price list for 2020, keep an eye on our communication channels to be notified when we have released this year's pricelist!





# Columnists

# 5 DISPLAYING TREES, BY PIP BENSLEY

We've broken down the costs and revenue associated with running Santa's grotto at your retail sites.

# PREPARING BIG TREES FOR BIGGER CUSTOMERS, BY MARTIN MCKENZIE

Martin Mckenzie breaks down the process of preparing and supplying big trees to important clients

### A little bit about Jadecliff

#### Expert knowledge in a growing business

Jadecliff has grown out of the family-run business established in 1984 by Sadie Lynes – exchair and current committee member of the British Christmas Tree Growers Association – to provide top-quality Christmas trees to the trade. With more than 30 years' experience in providing consistently high quality and reliability, we have established an excellent reputation over all our brands for expert knowledge with both our customers and our suppliers.

The Jadecliff Group has now developed to include wholesale tree supplies, our import business in a range of elegant candles, and the Christmas experience at Marldon Farm, which is rapidly becoming a renowned tourist attraction in its own right – the one-stop shop where Christmas really starts.

#### The best of Europe's trees

Many of our Christmas trees are grown here in the UK, but we also import selected stock from the best Europe has to offer. Our buyers are constantly looking for outstanding trees in Scandinavia, Germany, Denmark and other growth markets in Europe to give our customers the best quality at the best possible prices, delivering exceptional value for money year on year.

We take a direct personal interest in each tree farm, so we can promise proper treatment of every single tree. Our highly experienced knowledge of the markets, combined with the skill and dedication of our growers, assures customers that only fresh, top-quality trees are supplied by Jadecliff.

#### You're in good hands with Jadecliff

Thoroughly professional buyers select our stock and monitor its condition. Our quality-inspection system checks all trees as they arrive in our yard. Attention to detail ensures their careful loading on pallets, and arranges prompt delivery to preserve perfect condition. You know you're in good hands when you buy from us.

Our staff delight in bringing you their ever-developing wealth of tree-handling experience, together with an undying dedication to excellent customer service.



# We pride ourselves on supplying the highest quality service and Christmas Trees

After a wet start to the year, the weather has eased up and we have been busy working hard throughout our numerous plantations, focusing on both pruning and fertilising our Christmas trees. This has been a very challenging year for us as growers, as we allowed our team of pruners to return home to be with their families whilst travel was still unrestricted during the coronavirus pandemic.

We hope this finds you all safe and well in these strange times and our best wishes go out to everybody who has been impacted by the current coronavirus pandemic.

At Jadecliff, we are still as busy as ever given the time of year looking after the trees across our plantations whilst adhering to the government's guidelines on health and safety and social distancing measures to ensure that our workforce is looked after.

Our office staff are continuing to work from home meaning you'll still be able to contact us via our phone number and emails are still being accessed and dealt with as usual.

We've had some fantastic feedback about last season's trees, with customers noting that both the quality and freshness of trees were We've outstanding. been working hard over the past few months to ensure that we continue this standard of quality through to this year and the years to come.

# Increasing sales through display



Written by Pip Bensley

"Foresting" your trees is the

fastest growing trend in display

amongst innovative garden centres

At Jadecliff, our trees are shown in either Cinco stands or Quick Stands so that customers can simply walk among them to choose their tree. No more staff tied up holding trees for customers to compare and that awful phrase "I think I liked the first one we saw best, can you find it again".



quicker prompts a decision because other customers are browsing the same trees and so people need to buy before someone recognises their tree as the best one too. These stands makes keeping the trees topped up really quick and easy and gives an opportunity to up sell to a quick stand too when they see how easy this kind of stand is to use.

It also recreates the feel of cutting a tree in a plantation without the inconvenience of traipsing round a field. Experience is key these days - John Lewis are investing hugely into instore experience centres where purchases are enhanced by knowledge and information shared by special staff. Without doubt the run up to Christmas is all about building memories and establishing traditions.

Let your "forest" become one of your customers' Christmas traditions, along with hot chocolate and cake in the café afterwards.



Cinco 8 Advantage
Sold in outers of 12
£9.75/ea

Cinco 10 Classic
Sold in outers of 8
£15.95/ea

Cinco 12 Express
Sold in outers of 6
£23.95/ea

# Your new sustainable

# Chistmas tree stringing machine



In our continued effort to reduce the negative impact packaging can have on the environment, we are delighted to be able to offer you an exciting new product that will allow you to drastically reduce the amount of singleuse plastic netting required to package your Christmas tree so your customer can take it home.

The tree baler with a 45cm Ø funnel packs your Christmas tree quickly and easily, using eco-friendly jute twine. It can be operated by a single person and runs on a 220V electric engine.

Please contact Sadie directly for more information on the Infinity Stringer.

#### **Egedal Infinity Stringer**

Preorder before the end of July: £2250 1500m twine (approx. 130 trees): £14.99

PREORDER YOURS NOW, WHILE STOCK LASTS

### Tabletop Trees: A true way to sustainability

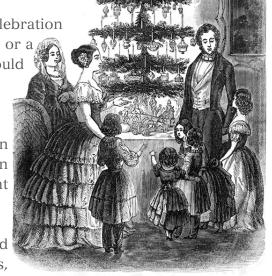
I like Christmas trees, I like real, Christmas trees. I like their piney smell and their blue waxiness and the way they feel in your hand. I like the way you have to look after them for three or four weeks, and I like the way they make the whole Christmas experience seem a little special, also in this year of the Covid-19 pandemic, feeling special is one of the best medicines one could ever receive.

The whole Christmas thing is a balancing act between jubilant celebration and excessive feasting, and I would think if you lived in the Palace or a Mansion, the need to find a tree tall enough to fill the inner void would be frustrating.

Or maybe not.

The Christmas tree is generally viewed as a German invention that caught on in the 1840s when Queen Victoria and her German husband, Prince Albert, gathered their family around a resplendent tree.

Readers saw a six-foot fir tree, decked out in ornaments that would be familiar to us today, as well as the little candles, the wax tapers, that illuminated trees before the age of electricity and string lights.



THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

### Flexibility that's second to none

Even this regal tree was not as splendid as the ones we take for granted from Jadecliff today. Our trees, which are farmed in upland fields, develop into handsome, bushy pyramids through summertime trimming. The very finest trees of the Dickensian age were scrawnier, but the more interesting point about Queen Victoria's festive conifer is that it was *shown sitting on a table*.





#### The growing process

With larger trees, we use a cage on a telehandler to prune around the top of the trees. The remainder of the tree can be pruned from the ground.

Once the tree is over 4 metres, leader control tends to be unnecessary. Bird damaged tops will produce new buds, resulting in new leaders which can then be singled out after the growing season.

Insect problems are likely to be an issue, therefore regular monitoring of these trees becomes essential, particularly for woolly adelgids on Nordmann firs! As with all Christmas trees, individual all round spraying is equally as important.

However, growing the trees is only half of the battle. The harvesting process requires just as much attention and care!

contact jadecliff and ask about our big trees Phone us on: **01635 254485** 

#### The harvesting process

1

#### TREE IS CUT

The tree is cut 2 days before the netting process

3

#### 6FT STICK ATTACHED

A 6ft stick is attached to the top of the tree to protect the leader pre-netting

5

#### ATTACH ROPES

As the tree is netted, 2 or 3 ropes are tied around the netting and branches

7

#### TRANSPORTED TO THE YARD

The tree is then transported to storage until shipping.

9

#### LOAD ORDER

Trees that are taller than 4m are always put on the top of a load to avoid damage

2

#### PUT INTO A FUNNEL

The tree is then put through a 90 cm funnel

4

#### **NETTING**

The tree is then pulled through the netter by a tele-handler

6

#### TRIM THE BUTT

If the butt of the tree needs trimming, it is done after netting

8

#### RESTED

Tree is laid on pallets or bears until it's ready to load, keeping it clean and aired

10

#### WRAPPED WITH SHEETING

A tree at the top of the load would be partly wrapped to avoid wind damage

# WHAT OUR **CUSTOMERS SAY**

Always guaranteed top quality with these guys, the trees are stonking! We buy mainly Nordman Fir but we have dabbled in Norway Spruce,

Noble fir, Blue Spruce and Frasier Fir too. Trees are always full, and their foliage is lush and healthy with very little needle drop Working with Jadecliff is easy, our

orders are placed in advance and delivery slots are booked so we know when we can expect them on our sites. The trees are packed efficiently and transported safely

Mistletoe is another product that we source from Jadecliff, big chunky heads that are loaded with mistletoe are delivered to our centres where

> we bunch them up to sell

"Without a doubt - All in all, can't Fault the best Christmas tree grower!"

Jadecliff. Great customer service and great quality Christmas trees. Looking forward to

working with them again this year!

- Kat Hunt, Outdoor Plants Manager. Stewarts Garden Centres



# JOIN OUR HUNDREDS OF HAPPY CUSTOMERS TODAY

Call us and see how we can help today

01635 254485

# How to find and work with Super Suppliers



Suppliers such as Jadecliff are essential to almost every business. Without raw materials to make what you sell, or manufacturers to provide what you re-sell; you will have a tough time growing. There are also many supplies and services your business consumes as part of general overhead, ranging from paper clips to internet access.

Suppliers and vendors - the terms are used interchangeably here - can do much more than

merely supply you with the materials and services you need to do business. They can also be important sources of information, helping you evaluate the potential of new products, track competitors' actions and identify promising opportunities. Vendors can turn into partners, helping you cut costs, improve product designs and even fund new marketing efforts. If you don't make selecting good suppliers and vendors a part of your growth plan, you're likely to regret it.

### Evaluating your suppliers / vendors

Suppliers can be divided into four general categories. They are:

1. Manufacturers.

Most retailers buy through company salespeople or independent representatives who handle the wares of several different companies. Prices from these sources are usually lowest unless the retailer's location makes

shipping freight costly.

#### 2. Distributors.

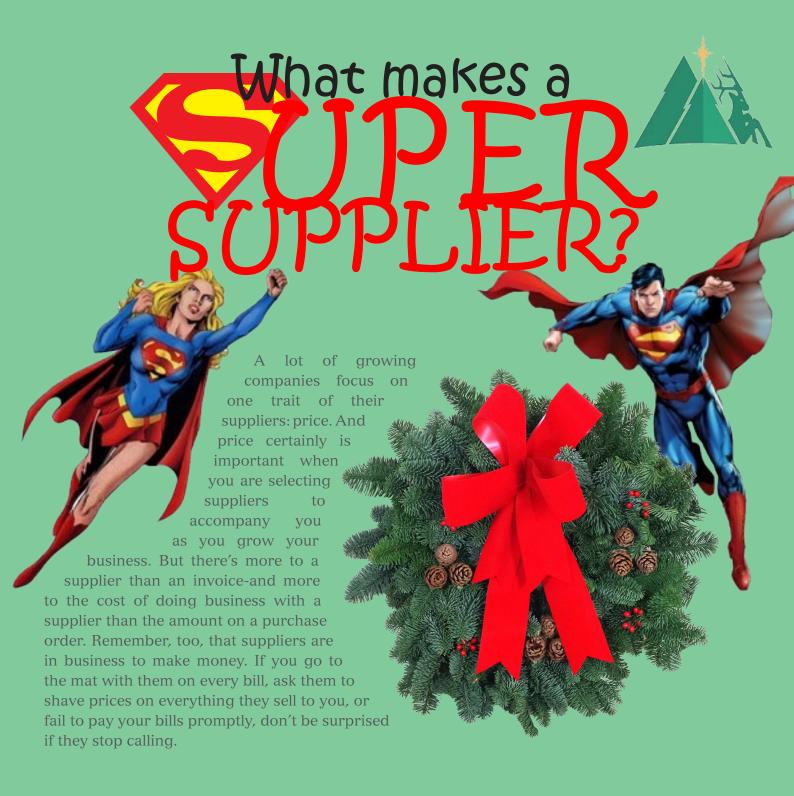
Also known as wholesalers, brokers or jobbers, distributors buy in quantity from several manufacturers and warehouse the goods for sale to retailers. Although their prices are higher than a manufacturer's, they can supply retailers with small orders from a variety of manufacturers. (Some manufacturers refuse to fill small orders.) A lower freight bill and quick delivery time from a nearby distributor often compensates for the higher peritem cost.

#### 3.Independant craftspeople

Exclusive distribution of unique creations is frequently offered by independent craftspeople who sell through reps or at trade shows.

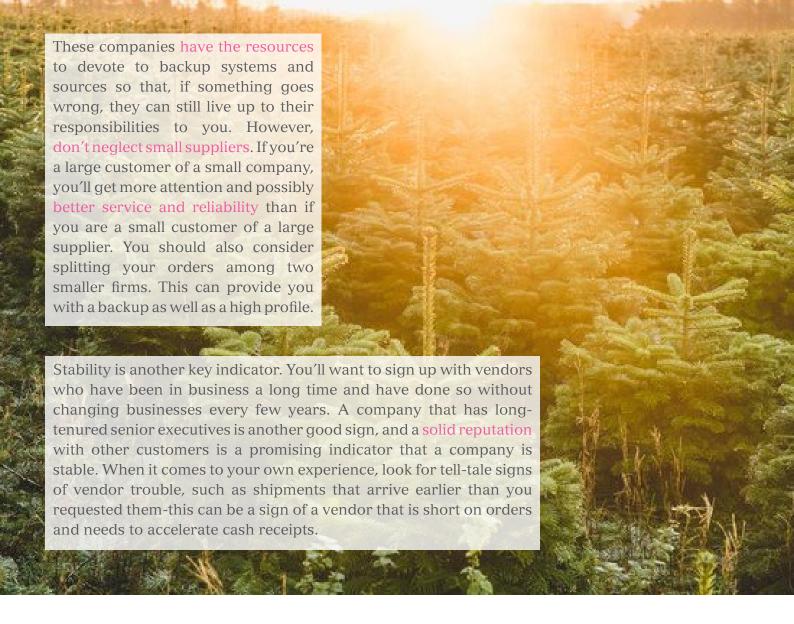
#### 4. Import sources.

Many retailers buy foreign goods from a domestic importer, who operates much like a domestic wholesaler. Or, depending on your familiarity with overseas sources, you may want to travel abroad to buy goods.



"After price, reliability is probably the key factor to look for"

Good suppliers will ship the right number of items, as promised, on time so that they arrive in good shape. Sometimes you can get the best reliability from a large supplier.



# Don't forget location!

Merchandise ordered from a distant supplier can take a long time to get to you and generate added freight charges quickly. Find out how long a shipment will take to arrive at your loading dock.

If you are likely to need something fast, a distant supplier could present a real problem. Also, determine supplier freight policies before you order. If you order a certain quantity, for instance, you may get free shipping. You may be able to combine two or more orders into one and save on freight. Even better, find a comparable supplier closer to home to preserve cost savings and ordering flexibility.

Finally, there's a grab bag of traits that could generally be termed competency. You'll want suppliers who can offer the latest, most advanced products and services. They'll need to have well-trained employees to sell and service their goods. They should be able to offer you a variety of attractive financial terms on purchases. And they should have a realistic attitude toward you, their customer, so that they're willing and eager to work with you to grow both your businesses.

# Changing your supplier relationships

You may not need to find new suppliers to get a new deal. You can usually get discounts, obtain improved service and receive other features you need by making a request of your current suppliers although it may not be as simple as merely asking. Here are some of the options and negotiating strategies for turning mediocre suppliers into top-shelf ones.



#### GETTING DISCOUNTS.

If you walk into a department store and purchase a pair of shoes, you'll pay the same price any other shopper would. But business-to-business commerce is more complicated. Businesses that sell to other businesses commonly have a whole range of quoted charges, offering discounts of 50 percent or more depending on the quantity purchased, the terms, the length of the relationship, and other considerations. You may be able to comfortably conform to some of these requirements, qualifying you for a lower price. To find out, ask about discounts and what is necessary to earn them. You may be able to get anything from an interest-free loan in the form of trade credit to a substantial discount for paying early.

#### IMPROVING SERVICE.

It is the rare businessperson who knows exactly what is happening in all parts of his company at all times or what is going on with all his customers. You probably don't, and you shouldn't assume your suppliers do, either. If you have a service-related problem with a supplier, bring it to someone's attention. If you don't get satisfaction, move up the chain of command until you get what you want or are as high in management as you can get. Odds are, someone will be concerned and possess enough authority to remedy the situation. Only if you ask for better service and don't get it should you sever the relationship.

#### A BETTER RELATIONSHIP.

Not every customer wants to buddy up to suppliers, so the fact that your suppliers aren't offering to work closely with you to improve quality, reduce defects and cut costs doesn't necessarily mean they don't want to. They may be under the impression that you are the reluctant one. So if you want a tighter working relationship with suppliers, let them know. You may also drop a hint that those who don't want to work with you may see some of their orders being diverted to those who are more agreeable. Either way, you'll know whether it's your supplier's reluctance, or their perception of your reluctance, that's getting in the way.

# Making a change

Having fewer vendors is usually better than having many vendors. Reducing the number of vendors that you deal with cuts the administrative costs that comes with working with many. Closer relationships with fewer vendors allow you to work together to control costs. Getting rid of troublesome vendors can quickly increase the efficiency of your purchasing and administrative staffs. So how do you decide when to change vendors?

#### •Unreliability.

When a vendor's shipments start arriving consistently late, incomplete, damaged or otherwise incorrectly, it's time to consider looking for a new one. Every company has problems from time to time, however, so check into the matter before dumping your vendor. Vendors can experience temporary difficulties as a result of implementing a new product line, shipping procedure or training program. If you stick with a vendor through a rugged interval, you may be glad you did. They might be more willing to see you through a future cash flow crunch.

#### Extra-sale costs.

The number at the bottom of the invoice is only the beginning of the cost of dealing with suppliers. You have to lay out money beforehand to draw up specifications, issue request for proposals, evaluate them, check references, and otherwise qualify your suppliers. You have to place the order, negotiate the terms, inspect the goods when they arrive, and deal with any shortages, damage or other errors. Finally, you may have to train workers to use the newly arrived goods or purchase more equipment and material to make use of them. While some of these costs are inevitable, some are traceable to individual suppliers. If too many costs are being tacked onto the sale prices, check out some other suppliers.

# Key areas to consider:

#### • Insularity.

Some suppliers will let you visit their plants, talk to their workers, quiz their managers, obtain and interview references, and even examine their financial statements. These are the kinds of suppliers you should seek out. The more you know about your suppliers, the better you can evaluate whether you should continue to do business with them. If they shut you out, perhaps you should cut them off.

#### •Lack of cost competitiveness.

Sometimes vendors fail to change with their industries. When your vendor's rivals start coming in with bids for comparable goods that are lower than your existing supplier's, you need to investigate. Point out the issue to your existing supplier and ask for an explanation. If you don't like what you hear, it may be time to consider taking some of those offers from competing suppliers.



#### Let's talk Christmas tree shopping

...the family practiced pastime of publicly scrutinising spruces, pines, and firs in search of the ideal yuletide centre piece.

More and more people are becoming better versed at picking the perfect tree. They'll judge on things like colour, size, shape, needle quality, and bushiness. But behind the annual selection of a coniferous house guest—approximately 8 million in the U.K and some 30 million of them a vear in the U.S—is a ton of science.

To Bert Cregg – a professor at Michigan State University - identifying exactly what makes a tree perfect is more than a Christmas tradition, it's a major part of his job.

As a renowned expert on Christmas trees, his work covers two main areas: genetics and culture techniques. "Basically, how can we identify species and seed sources that are going to lead to better Christmas trees, and how can growers manage their farms to produce better trees," he says. The research Cregg and his colleagues are conducting today will likely influence what type of Christmas tree you buy from your local lot a decade from now.

#### Consider Cregg's cold-hardiness experiments...

...one of which he's currently performing inside a chest freezer in the basement of MSU's Plant and Soil Sciences Building. "We collect a bunch of shoots from the trees we want to study, stick them in the freezer, and program it to decrease 3 degrees Celsius every hour," Cregg says. Every 60 minutes, he and his team retrieve some shoots—at minus 3, minus 6, minus 9, minus 12—until the freezer reaches minus 45 degrees Celsius, which is as cold as it goes. Then they incubate the samples.

A week later, they inspect the shoots to see which ones have begun to brown—a sign of damage—and at what temperature. The thinking goes that the colder a given

species of tree can get before browning, the more resilient it will be in frigid climates.

And the more resilient a tree is, the more likely it is to endure multiple winters and still come out looking living-room ready. "So, if we're thinking of selecting a new species or seed source, we can screen [that species] rapidly, rather than waiting for that 1-in-20 winter to determine if a tree is hardy enough for a given location," Cregg says.

Hardiness is but one of many coniferous characteristics Cregg studies in pursuit of increasingly perfect Christmas trees.

There's also size and colour, for starters. Farmers see to both by fertilising often; regular mulches keep trees verdant and growing at a rate of roughly one foot per year.

But historically,

growers overdid it. Old guidelines prescribed around 300 pounds of nitrogen fertilizer per acre—way more than the trees needed.

Microbes in the soil would convert the excess nitrogen into nitrate, which would work its way past the tree's roots, deep into the soil, and infiltrate the ground water. Cregg's lab showed that farmers could reduce their fertilizer requirements by two-thirds if they applied it

on a per-tree basis, according to the size, species, and age of their trees.

The result was greener trees, less nitrogen runoff, and more money in farmers' pockets.

There's also things like needle retention—literally, how many needles stay stuck to the branch, and how many rain down on the presents underneath?

Cregg and his colleagues assess this by plucking sprigs from a variety of fir species and displaying them in rows at a horticultural farm on campus. Once a week. a researcher will swing through, give each sprig a gentle tug along its length, and tally how many needles fall off. "We simply go through, give a pull, and we have a rating scale based on how many needles drop," Cregg says. "We can display a Fraser fir for six weeks, and it won't drop any needles. Noble fir, same thing. And that's one reason people in the Northwest like noble firs."



Jadecliff Now July 2020



They bud in the spring and develop through the summer, robbing the trees osources. (From an evolutionary perspective, reproduction comes first, so the trees sink their energy into producing cones.) But the cones don't stick around. Come fall they disintegrate, showering the tree in unsightly fragments. So, in the springtime, growers pick the cones. By hand. It's

not difficult, exactly; if you time it right, a bud the size of your little finger will pop right off, with a twist. But it takes forever: An individual tree can carry hundreds of cones. On a big one you might pluck a thousand. With millions of firs growing across the US, and most of them experiencing some kind of coning, we're talking about billions of cones.

Cregg thinks plant growth regulators, which nerf the cone-promoting hormone in firs, could help curb the problem. For the past few years, he's been working to identify the ideal regulator, and how best to apply it. His latest approach isn't perfect, he says, but it can reduce coning by about half. It also has the desirable side effect of keeping trees nice and dense.

The main hang-up: Applying growth regulators doesn't yet make financial sense. "Biologically it works, but it's not quite to the point of being cost effective" Cregg says.

# Perhaps the most ambitious Christmas tree science...

...happening today is a multi-institutional endeavour called CoFirGE. Short for Collaborative Fir Germplasm Evaluation Project, CoFirGE is a nationwide effort whose goals include identifying new species of fir for Christmas trees.

There are between 30 and 40 species of firs worldwide, a small handful of which are currently grown for the North American Christmas tree market.

Two of today's most popular trees—the Fraser and noble fir—both struggle with a condition called root rot. Caused by the water-mould genus Phytophthora, a tree stricken with it can die in a matter of days. It's currently a huge problem in America's biggest tree-growing states, but in Turkey, fir trees are resistant to root rot. So today, through the CoFirGE project, there are species of Turkish fir growing in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, North Carolina, Washington, and Oregon, to see how adaptable they are to US climates. All things to keep in mind, the next time you find yourself wandering the rows of evergreens at your local seller. Remember: Long before you arrived to judge the local stock on things like colour, shape, and freshness, scientists like Cregg were stashing firs in freezers and pulling at pine needles, all in pursuit of a more perfect Christmas tree. So, what does this mean to us

here in the UK?

Well this is simple - Jadecliff has been growing the now soughtafter Turkish Fir in pots and they are absolutely beautiful. However, numbers are limited so be quick to place your order.

Call us today on 01635 254485