

Central Wisconsin Evergreens, Inc.

In 1951, Fred Latzig Sr. started selling wild cut balsam Christmas trees. Over the years the business grew and he enlisted the help of two of his sons, Steve and Fred Jr., and son in-law Villas Mohrland, and created Badger Evergreen Farms.

The tree business developed into a thriving family business through the 70's and 80's. During this time, the business started digging B & B nursery stock in addition to the Christmas trees. Around 1987, the family business split with each family member pursuing their own business venture. Fred Latzig Jr. started Central Wisconsin Evergreens, Inc.

Fred Jr. has been around trees most of his life. With his vast knowledge and know-how, his tree business has continued to grow. This is a challenging business which depends on mother nature and continuous planning to ensure that in-demand, quality



Dean Lemke and Fred Latzig Jr. welcome you to Central Wisconsin Evergreens for the summer farm tour.

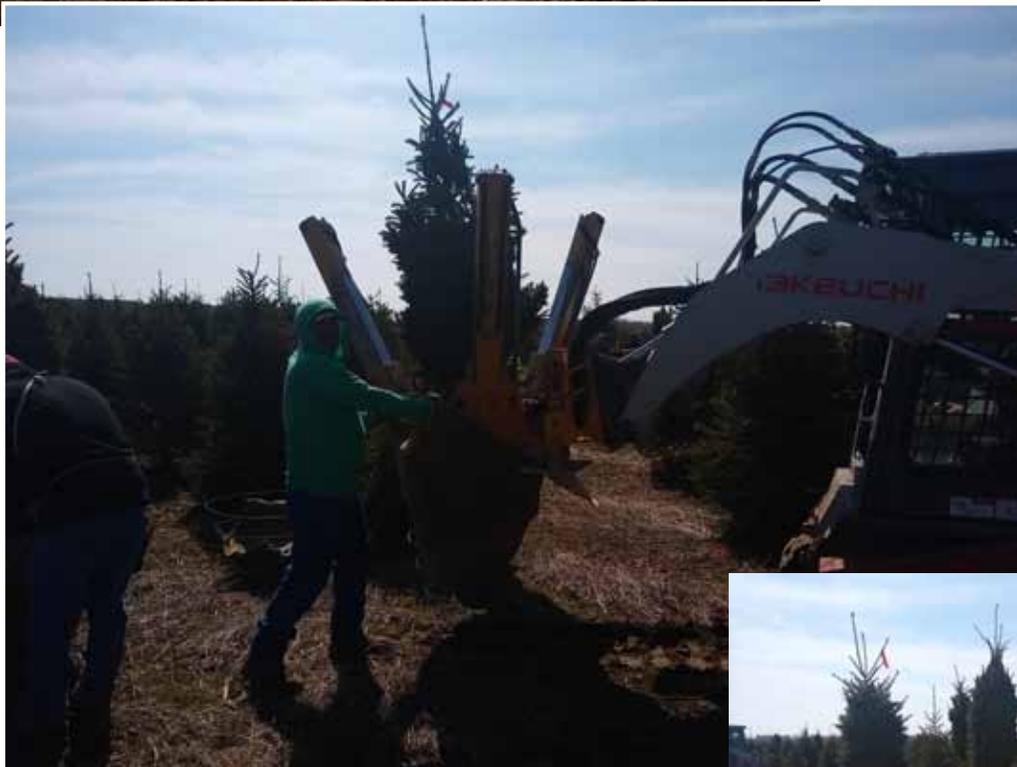


Join us in Merrill

Continued from page 7

products are available.

Currently we have 9 local employees (including Fred who is semi-retired) and an additional 10 H-2A workers. This is the sixth year we have had the same 10 H-2A workers. This program has been beneficial to our company; the workers are very reliable, eager to learn and productive. They are housed on site and we provide a weekly trip to the bank and the grocery store. We highly recommend this program.



In the spring and fall harvest, our work schedule is Monday through Saturday with an occasional Sunday. During the summer we work Monday through Friday with the exception of rain days.

We plant approximately 60,000 trees per year on 1,000 acres. Most acreage is owned but we do rent a small percentage of land. We buy our seedlings from multiple sources, about 45,000 are fir for Christmas trees and 15,000 are spruce for B & B. In a typical year, we harvest 40,000 Christmas trees and dig approximately 8,000 B & B. All sales are wholesale.

In the spring, one employee starts with application of chemicals for grass control and then is responsible for spraying and mowing all season. For the past several years we have used ManKar sprayers while mowing during the summer.

Once we are done with our spring B & B and planting our seedlings, we move on to fertilizing. We have AgSource Laboratories do GPS soil sampling in

most of our fields to determine what fertilizer we need and where we need it. An AgSource representative will speak at the convention on Friday explaining how this is done. They can sample the fields by grid, soil type, or management zones. Soil cores are pulled at sample

Continued on page 9

Continued from page 8

points throughout the field and recorded using DGPS technology, which allows them to measure the variability of the nutrients within the field. This sampling has shown us that there are a lot of variances across a single field. In a perfect world, all we need to do is add nitrogen to our trees (but not

everything is perfect). We apply nitrogen with backpacks by hand making sure we are hitting the trees that need it according to the sampling.

Between loads of fertilizer and wet days, we pick cones from Fraser firs. In some years, this takes well over 40 hours with 10 workers.



Shearing and land preparation usually starts mid-June. We have purchased a Seppi stump grinder but we still need to remove culled trees and brush before grinding the remaining stumps. We do not have all the answers, but still have questions on which way is best to work up the fields for replanting. Shearing is spread out until Christmas tree harvest.

Continued on page 10



Top: While hauling out the balled tree, they got stuck in a wet sinkhole last spring. Bottom: This attachment is used to level the ground and fill in the holes.



You'll find Bob Zajackowski in the shop fixing the equipment.

Continued from page 9

Fall B & B digging starts in early August, depending on weather. We must sometimes water the trees before we dig in the fall. This is on a much smaller scale than spring B & B.



Christmas tree harvest begins in late October. We tag the trees ahead of time to get our best estimate of sizes in the field. All trees are sized to height on the baler (see photo).

Continued on page 11



Rain, sleet, mud and snow...Wisconsin weather dishes it out. At left is a double shaker being used on Scotch pine.



Continued from page 10

Trees are hauled into the yard by dump truck and then sorted. The majority of trees are shipped in enclosed van trailers, but some are on open deck drop trailers. Shipping is pretty much wrapped up by Thanksgiving and our H-2A workers go back home until April of the following year.



We look forward to hosting the summer convention farm tour. We will show you what is working well and what we are continually trying to improve on.

We hope to see you in Merrill for the summer convention!



"We've got plenty of room yet," says Connor.

A close-up photograph of a Christmas tree covered in a thick layer of snow. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with more trees and a cloudy sky.

Increase profits with AgSource Laboratories!

With AgSource Laboratories' Plant Tissue Analysis, potential nutritional problems can be detected before deficiency symptoms are even visible. By combining Soil **and** Plant Tissue Analysis, and using them routinely, you can design a custom fertility program to reduce poor quality trees and **increase** your profits.

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The logo for AgSource Laboratories, featuring the word "AgSource" in a large, bold, sans-serif font, with "LABORATORIES" in a smaller font below it. Above the text is a stylized graphic of three curved lines representing a field or a tree canopy.

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