

Industry Pioneer Celebrates 92nd Birthday in the Field

Sam Cartner helped organize the North Carolina Christmas Tree Growers Association (now NCCTA) in 1959. During that time, he assisted in the establishment of one of the first larger Fraser fir tree plantations planted and harvested exclusively as cut Christmas trees. Many have recognized Mr. Sam's contributions.

"Due to Sam's work as the County Agent in Avery County during the 1950s and 60s, he greatly altered the path of agriculture in our county. His efforts of promoting Fraser fir and developing growers associations really made positive impacts upon our farmers. Many if not all of our growers in Avery benefitted from Sam's work and knowledge in Fraser firs. Sam's work allowed many a family to continue farming and send their children and grandchildren to colleges and universities. Mr. Sam Cartner was presented with a top ten people of Avery County award during its first 100 years at our centennial celebration. He is a very special person to Avery County." Jerry Moody, Director of Cooperative Extension in Avery County

"Because of Sam's dedicated effort and others like him, Fraser fir has gone from an unrecognized tree contributing less than 1% of the Real Christmas Tree market in 1957 to more than 25%." – *American Christmas Tree Journal*, July 2006

"Dad started the Fraser Fir industry in North Carolina. He convinced the farmers to make the switch from road crops to Christmas trees. There were five growers in the Blue Ridge when he started; now we must have a thousand." – David Cartner, *NC Lawyer Magazine*, November/December 2006

Right: Mr. Sam demonstrating how to top trees. Below left: Mr. Sam teaching his granddaughters to top trees. Right: Sam and Waightstill Avery. Photos by Cartner Christmas Tree Farm 🌲

