



**Virginia Green Industry Council**

For Immediate Use

Contact: Virginia Green Industry

540-382-0943

Electronic Version:

[www.viriniagreen.org](http://www.viriniagreen.org)

## **CARE OF HOLIDAY GREENS**

Fresh-cut greens are a traditional ingredient during the holiday season for their inherent beauty, fragrance, texture and color variation. Fresh trees, wreaths, swags and roping are used both in the home and outside during a six week period. Cut boughs are frequently laid around the home to accent food tables, mantels, and special interior decorations. Lin Diacont, President of the Virginia Green Industry Council warns however that many greens are neglected and overlooked. Actually their general care and handling requirements are the same as for other fresh cut flowers and foliage. When treated properly their beauty can be prolonged, Diacont says.

According to Diacont, water and temperature are the key factors affecting the quality of holiday greens. Holiday greens differ in their natural ability to retain leaves or needles. Fir, pine, cedar and juniper hold their needles well. Spruce and hemlock drop needles easily, especially if they do not have a water source. Holly and boxwood hold needles but lose water easily, causing a dulling of their glossy leaf surface.

All holiday greens except for mistletoe will benefit from traditional conditioning techniques:

1. Recut stems before using in arrangements;
2. Use floral preservatives;
3. Use an anti-transparent on the leaf or needle surface;
4. Add additional water, preferably with preservatives to the cut stem ends when possible;
5. Keep greens away from heat source and the sun;
6. Increase humidity by misting the greens;
7. Store the arrangement in a cool place at night;
8. Replace greens that have dried out or are dropping needles.

Working with fresh greens can be exciting and fun. The challenge is to keep the greens fresh looking and fragrant. Giving special attention to the care and handling of this product throughout the season will help prolong your enjoyment of this traditional symbol of holiday decorating.

The Virginia Green Industry Council is the voice of the horticulture industry in the Commonwealth and is dedicated to enhancing the beauty of the state's environment, the well-being of our citizens, improving our state's economy, and improving the health and wellness for everyone in Virginia. The Council is made up of providers of horticultural products and services. The Council works to provide public and industry education, environmental guidelines and other information that will keep Virginia green and growing. For

more information, visit [www.viriniagreen.org](http://www.viriniagreen.org). 540-382-0943 FAX: 540-382-2716  
E-mail: [info@viriniagreen.org](mailto:info@viriniagreen.org)

#####