



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Trees for Troops® Tops 121,000 Christmas Trees in 2012**

CHESTERFIELD, Missouri (January 3, 2013) – Trees for Troops®, the national program that provides Christmas Trees to armed forces members and their families each Christmas, delivered 18,694 free, farm-grown Christmas Trees in November and December 2012, bringing the total during the eight-year tenure of the program to more than 121,000 trees. FedEx donated the ground and air delivery of the trees to 65 military bases in the U.S. and Middle East, covering every branch of the armed services.

“The giving spirit of the Real Christmas Tree industry, the public and FedEx was once again overwhelming in 2012,” said Nigel Manley, Christmas SPIRIT Foundation chairman. “To bring a joyful, traditional Christmas to more than 18,000 military families and service men and women is truly humbling, and it is the generosity of these donors and volunteers who make Trees for Troops possible.”

Trees for Troops – a program of the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation in conjunction with FedEx, the National Christmas Tree Association and many state and regional Christmas Tree associations – has received thousands of thank-you messages and photos, many of which are posted at [www.TreesForTroops.org](http://www.TreesForTroops.org) and on the organization’s Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/Trees4Troops](http://www.facebook.com/Trees4Troops).

This year's program kicked off Nov. 20 at Dull's Tree Farm in Thorntown, Ind., where more than 50 volunteers helped organize, box and load 300 trees to be shipped overseas. Trees were donated by members of the Indiana Christmas Tree Growers Association and flown to the Middle East by FedEx. Recipients were Camp LSA and Camp Virginia in Kuwait and troops stationed at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan.

Then, members of the National Christmas Tree Association and many state and regional Christmas Tree associations began donating trees by the thousands. This is quite a logistical undertaking and a sacrifice, as these are quality, sellable trees being harvested, donated and collected during the busiest possible time for Christmas Tree growers and retailers.

Consumers supported Trees for Troops by donating funds or by visiting the 32 farm and retail locations across the country that hosted FedEx trailers during Trees for Troops Weekend, which was held Nov. 30-Dec. 2. During Trees for Troops Weekend, consumers were able to purchase and donate trees to be placed on waiting FedEx trailers and delivered to U.S. military bases.

Deliveries to military bases all over the country started in late November and ended in mid-December with a grand total of 18,694 trees. FedEx and its team members generously provide shipping to U.S. military bases through FedEx Express air operations and the FedEx Freight trucking network.

Fundraising to make the 2013 Trees for Troops program possible has already begun. The public is invited to help support Trees for Troops, and each donation will help provide another Christmas Tree as a token of thanks and gratitude for the sacrifices of America's servicemen and women and their families. Donations may be tax deductible. To donate or learn more, visit [www.treesfortroops.org](http://www.treesfortroops.org).

#### **About the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation**

The Christmas SPIRIT Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization that works to recognize and support the true spirit of Christmas for U.S. troops through the **Trees for Troops**® program. The foundation was established in 2005 as the charitable branch of the National Christmas Tree Association and is among fewer than 5 percent of U.S. charities to be awarded the "Best in America" seal of excellence by Independent Charities of America. Trees for Troops was a Top 20 Finalist in the 2012 Joining Forces Campaign, a White House initiative that honors exemplary support organizations for military families. To learn more, visit [www.treesfortroops.org](http://www.treesfortroops.org) or call 636/449-5060.

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