

## Farmer Skill & Knowledge Checklist: for Wreath, Garland, and Centerpiece-Makers

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This list is designed for wreath, garland, or centerpiece makers in Maine who wish to continually gain knowledge and skills to improve the likelihood of having a more profitable business. The maker can use this list to identify specific skills or knowledge to be gained or improved upon. As a wreath, garland, or centerpiece maker, feel free to customize this list to suit your needs.

**Circle your current and desired (target) competence using this scale:**

- 1=No knowledge/skill
- 2=Some knowledge/skill
- 3=Well-informed/experienced

Recommended knowledge	My current level			My target level		
<b>Pre-Season Preparations</b>						
Be familiar with the terms used in wreath, garland, or centerpiece making in Maine.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to identify the trees and plants that are typically used for wreath, garland, or centerpiece making well in advance of the harvest season.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to determine the readiness of greenery harvest.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know the regulations regarding the legal harvest and transportation of conifer tips on private properties and public lands in Maine.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to identify landowners who may have potential sites for tip or plant harvest.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with reliable supply sources for wreath and garland making hardware, natural decorations, pre-made decoration accessories, packaging, boxes, and marketing-related items.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with all frame sizes for wreaths and their projected popularity for the coming season.	1	2	3	1	2	3

<b>Pests</b>						
Recognize the insect and disease problems that affect needle retention on fabricated products.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understand the various needlecast diseases of balsam fir and the fungi that cause them.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to detect the various needlecast diseases on boughs of balsam firs again.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Harvest</b>						
Be able to distinguish the various conifer trees as well as leaf and berry bearing plants for use in fabricating making wreaths, garlands or centerpieces.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to detect the presence of Balsam Gall Midge on harvested boughs tips (to reject these boughs tips).	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how and when to safely and efficiently tip appropriate trees in harvesting greenery.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to safely use loppers, pole pruners, and hand shears for harvesting tips.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to store tips to retain quality and freshness.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Fabrication &amp; Design</b>						
Know how to safely handle wire for wreath or garland fabrication making protecting hands, arms, face, and eyes from possible injury.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to efficiently and safely construct make a wreath or garland by hand.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to efficiently and safely construct make a wreath or garland by machine.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to design centerpieces of various sizes and designs.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to add value to the items you fabricate.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Packing &amp; Shipping</b>						
Know how to properly pack items so as not to mold while in shipment.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know the regulations for shipping greenery in state, out-of-state, and out-of-country via the US Postal Service or other shipping service.	1	2	3	1	2	3
<b>Business</b>						
Be able to survey potential customers for their projected needs of wreaths, garlands, or centerpieces.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to calculate the selling price of each unit for breakeven as well as the selling price for a targeted profit.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to keep and use production records for your enterprise.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be able to keep and use financial records related to your enterprise.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know how to effectively market your wreath, garland, or centerpiece products.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Know the regulations for hiring employees for your enterprise.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with local and national associations for which wreath, garland or centerpiece makers might benefit.	1	2	3	1	2	3
Be familiar with trades shows and other venues at which wreath, garland, or centerpiece makers might benefit by participating.	1	2	3	1	2	3

**Related Resources:**

Making Balsam Fir Wreaths: <https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/7012e/>

Balsam Fir Tip Harvesting: <https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/7011e/>

Maine Balsam Fir: A Tree of Many Uses: <https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/2541e/>

Growing a Continuous Supply of Balsam Fir Wreath Brush: <https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/7089e/>

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