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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended knowledge</th>
<th>My current level</th>
<th>My target level</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Season Preparations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be familiar with the terms used in wreath, garland, or centerpiece making in Maine.</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<td>Know how to determine the readiness of greenery harvest.</td>
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<td>Know the regulations regarding the legal harvest and transportation of conifer tips on private properties and public lands in Maine.</td>
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<td>Know how to identify landowners who may have potential sites for tip or plant harvest.</td>
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<td>Be familiar with reliable supply sources for wreath and garland making hardware, natural decorations, pre-made decoration accessories, packaging, boxes, and marketing-related items.</td>
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<td>Be familiar with all frame sizes for wreaths and their projected popularity for the coming season.</td>
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### Pests
- Recognize the insect and disease problems that affect needle retention on fabricated products.  
- Understand the various needlecast diseases of balsam fir and the fungi that cause them.  
- Be able to detect the various needlecast diseases on boughs of balsam firs again.

### Harvest
- 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.  
- Be able to detect the presence of Balsam Gall Midge on harvested boughs tips (to reject these boughs tips).  
- Know how and when to safely and efficiently tip appropriate trees in harvesting greenery.  
- Know how to safely use loppers, pole pruners, and hand shears for harvesting tips.  
- Know how to store tips to retain quality and freshness.

### Fabrication & Design
- Know how to safely handle wire for wreath or garland fabrication making protecting hands, arms, face, and eyes from possible injury.  
- Know how to efficiently and safely construct make a wreath or garland by hand.  
- Know how to efficiently and safely construct make a wreath or garland by machine.  
- Know how to design centerpieces of various sizes and designs.  
- Know how to add value to the items you fabricate.

### Packing & Shipping
- Know how to properly pack items so as not to mold while in shipment.  
- Know the regulations for shipping greenery in state, out-of-state, and out-of-country via the US Postal Service or other shipping service.

### Business
- Be able to survey potential customers for their projected needs of wreaths, garlands, or centerpieces.  
- Be able to calculate the selling price of each unit for breakeven as well as the selling price for a targeted profit.  
- Be able to keep and use production records for your enterprise.  
- Be able to keep and use financial records related to your enterprise.  
- Know how to effectively market your wreath, garland, or centerpiece products.  
- Know the regulations for hiring employees for your enterprise.  
- Be familiar with local and national associations for which wreath, garland or centerpiece makers might benefit.  
- Be familiar with trades shows and other venues at which wreath, garland, or centerpiece makers might benefit by participating.
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/