

## Tree Farms And Lawncare A \$8.5 Billion Industry in N.C.

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A new report shows that the green industry contributes over \$8.5 billion dollars annually to the state's economy. The green industry is comprised of any business devoted to growing and selling trees and flowers including greenhouses, landscapers, sod producers, and, of course, Christmas Trees growers.

The Green Industry Council's Louise Hodges says the industry is a major player in North Carolina's economy. It employs over 150,000 thousand people, and has made use of abandoned tobacco fields. The study was compiled by the North Carolina Dept. of Agriculture and NC State University. In a separate announcement, Gov. Easley said North Carolina is tied with four other states for the nation's lowest state and local business tax rate. That's according to a study by Ernst & Young, one of the world's leading accounting firms. North Carolina's business tax rate is 3.9 percent.