

An Ashe County Fraser fir will grace the Blue Room of the White House, marking the 14th time a North Carolina tree has been in residence.

For Rusty and Beau Estes, owners of Peak Farms, it was the third Christmas tree they have sent to the White House and the third time being crowned the National Christmas Tree Association Grand Champions.

The 19.5 foot tall tree was cut Nov. 17, before being loaded into a N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services tractor trailer and transported to the Ashe County Courthouse for a special send-off that featured remarks by state and local officials, a pony-pulled carriage escort and cake.

“We take great pride in our Christmas tree industry in North Carolina,” said Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler. “I don’t have to tell you how important this industry is here in the mountains and across the state.

“I am never surprised when a North Carolina tree is selected for the White House because I believe the prettiest trees come from right here in our state,” Troxler added.

The Estes previously provided trees in 2008 and 2012, as well as a Fraser fir for the Vice President’s Residence in 2018.

Rusty Estes has been involved in the Christmas tree industry since 1979, starting with only 200 trees in the ground and a retail lot in Lenoir. Rusty began growing Christmas trees while working as a golf course superintendent in Avery County. Rusty owned a Christmas tree retail lot for 15 years before selling it and moving to Ashe County, with his wife Ann and two children, Beau and Katirie. They have three grandchildren, Athena, Colin, and Riley.

Beau graduated from N.C. State University in 2002 and in 2003 began his full-time career in Christmas trees. He married Amanda Korevec, who is currently a teacher at Blue Ridge Elementary School. They have sons, Colin and Riley Estes.