

**CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD**  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**For the Years Ended July 31, 2018 and 2017**

# CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Christmas Tree Promotion Board  
Howell, Michigan

### Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Christmas Tree Promotion Board (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statements of assets, liabilities, and net assets – modified cash basis as of July 31, 2018 and 2017, and the related statements of revenue and expenses – modified cash basis and cash flows – modified cash basis for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting described in Note 2; this includes determining that the modified cash basis of accounting is an acceptable basis for the preparation of the financial statements in the circumstances. Management is also responsible for the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Christmas Tree Promotion Board as of July 31, 2018 and 2017, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the for the years then ended in accordance with the basis of accounting as described in Note 2.

## **Other Matters**

### **Basis of Accounting**

We draw attention to Note 2 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

### **Other Information**

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the financial statements as a whole. The schedule of revenue and expenditures – actual compared to budget, schedule of expenditures – actual compared to budget, and schedule of cash receipts and disbursements, which are the responsibility of management, are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and, except for that portion marked "unaudited," was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements. That information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the financial statements or to the financial statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, that information is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the financial statements as a whole. The information marked "unaudited" has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion or provide any assurance on it.

### **Other Reporting Required by *Government Auditing Standards***

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued our report dated February 25, 2019, on our consideration of Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. That report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

### **Other Reporting Required by the United States Department of Agriculture**

In connection with our audits of the years ended July 31, 2018 and 2017, nothing came to our attention, insofar as it relates to financial and accounting matters, that causes us to believe that the Christmas Tree Promotion Board:

- Failed to comply with laws and regulations and U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service ("USDA AMS") Guidelines for AMS Oversight of Commodity Research and Promotion Programs applicable to the Board;
- Failed to comply with Section 1214.47(b) of the Christmas Tree Promotion, Research and Information Order, relating to the use of assessment funds for the purpose of influencing legislation or governmental action or policy;
- Expended assessment funds for purposes other than those authorized by the Commodity Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996 and the Christmas Tree Promotion, Research and Information Order;

- Expended or obligated assessment funds on any projects prior to the fiscal year in which those funds were authorized to be expended by the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's approved Budget and Marketing Plan;
- Did not adhere to the original or amended Budget and Marketing Plan for the years ended July 31, 2018 and 2017;
- Did not obtain a written contract or agreement with any person or entity providing goods or services to the Christmas Tree Promotion Board;
- Failed to comply with USDA AMS Directive 2210.2, relating to the limitations on the types of investments which may be purchased by the Christmas Tree Promotion Board and the insurance or collateral that must be obtained for all of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's deposits and investments;
- Failed to comply with disclosure requirements for lease commitments (when applicable);
- Failed to comply with standards established relating to contracts and USDA approval letters (if necessary); or
- Failed to comply with the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's by-laws or any other policy of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board, specifically as they relate to all financial matters, including time and attendance, and travel.

However, our audit was not directed primarily toward obtaining knowledge of such noncompliance.

*Propp Christenson Caniglia LLP*

February 25, 2019  
Roseville, California

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

STATEMENTS OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS  
July 31, 2018 and 2017

	ASSETS	
	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Current assets:		
Operating cash	\$ 1,182,575	\$ 863,779
Cash reserve	-	<u>354,635</u>
Total assets	<u>\$ 1,182,575</u>	<u>\$ 1,218,414</u>

	LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Current liabilities:		
Accrued expenses	\$ 72,203	\$ 35,212
Unrestricted net assets:		
Designated by the Board for cash reserves	-	354,635
Undesignated	<u>1,110,372</u>	<u>828,567</u>
Total unrestricted net assets	<u>1,110,372</u>	<u>1,183,202</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u>\$ 1,182,575</u>	<u>\$ 1,218,414</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part  
of these financial statements.

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

STATEMENTS OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES - MODIFIED CASH BASIS

For the Years Ended July 31, 2018 and 2017

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Revenue:		
Assessments	\$ 1,587,560	\$ 1,817,050
Interest income	<u>2,336</u>	<u>-</u>
Total revenue	<u>1,589,896</u>	<u>1,817,050</u>
Expenses:		
Promotion committee	913,516	1,439,394
Research committee	237,180	75,567
Industry relations committee	59,616	57,577
Special projects	20,127	-
Professional services	172,120	173,496
Board meetings	37,533	19,196
General and administrative	39,252	40,700
USDA fees	<u>183,382</u>	<u>34,354</u>
Total expenses	<u>1,662,726</u>	<u>1,840,284</u>
Change in unrestricted net assets	(72,830)	(23,234)
Unrestricted net assets, beginning of year	<u>1,183,202</u>	<u>1,206,436</u>
Unrestricted net assets, end of year	<u>\$ 1,110,372</u>	<u>\$ 1,183,202</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part  
of these financial statements.

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS  
For the Years Ended July 31, 2018 and 2017

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>
Cash flows from operating activities:		
Cash received for assessments	\$ 1,587,560	\$ 1,817,050
Cash paid to vendors and employees	(1,625,735)	(1,805,072)
Interest received	2,336	-
	<u>(35,839)</u>	<u>11,978</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities		
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Set aside for reserve funding	-	(181,705)
Release of funds set aside for reserve funding	354,635	-
	<u>354,635</u>	<u>(181,705)</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities		
Net increase (decrease) in cash	318,796	(169,727)
Cash, beginning of year	<u>863,779</u>	<u>1,033,506</u>
Cash, end of year	<u>\$ 1,182,575</u>	<u>\$ 863,779</u>
Reconciliation of change in net assets to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Change in net assets	\$ (72,830)	\$ (23,234)
Adjustments to reconcile change in net assets to net cash provided by (used in) operating activities:		
Change in operating assets and liabilities:		
Accrued expenses	36,991	35,212
	<u>36,991</u>	<u>35,212</u>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>\$ (35,839)</u>	<u>\$ 11,978</u>

The accompanying notes are an integral part  
of these financial statements.

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
July 31, 2018 and 2017

NOTE 1: NATURE OF ORGANIZATION

The Christmas Tree Promotion Board (the "Board") is a national research and promotion program covering domestic and imported Christmas trees that was formed on January 15, 2015. The program is authorized by the Commodity Promotion, Research and Information Act of 1996 (the "Act"). In November 2011, the Christmas Tree Promotion, Research, and Information Order (the "Order") was issued, establishing the Christmas Tree Promotion Board. The effective date of the order, however, was delayed until April 8, 2014. The program is administered by the Agricultural Marketing Service Division ("AMS") of the U.S. Department of Agriculture ("USDA"). The Board is considered an instrumentality of the USDA which conducts administrative oversight of the Board's activities.

The purpose of the Board is to expand the market and uses of fresh-cut Christmas trees. As required by the Act, the Board must conduct an independent evaluation every five years of the effectiveness of the Order and programs conducted by the Board pursuant to the Act.

NOTE 2: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting. This basis of accounting differs from generally accepted accounting principles primarily because the Board recognizes revenues when received rather than when earned, and expenses are generally recognized when cash is paid rather than when the obligation is incurred. Certain expenses may be accrued for significant obligations incurred by the Board that relate to the current fiscal period's operating budget. Subsequent modifications to these obligations are recognized in the period the modification is made. In addition, certain long-term assets may be capitalized and corresponding amortization and depreciation expense recognized when applicable.

Basis of Presentation

The Board presents its financial statements in accordance with Financial Accounting Standards Board Accounting Standards Codification Topic 958, Subtopic 205, *Not-for-Profit Entities – Presentation of Financial Statements* (FASB ASC 958-205). Under FASB ASC 958-205, the Board is required to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to three classes of net assets: unrestricted net assets, temporarily restricted net assets and permanently restricted net assets. No temporarily or permanently restricted net assets existed at July 31, 2018 and 2017.

Operating Cash and Cash Reserves

For purposes of the statement of cash flows, the Board considers all highly liquid investments with an initial maturity of three months or less to be cash equivalents.

In order to comply with the AMS's investment policy, the Board is responsible for investing its funds only in interest-bearing accounts that are risk-free and short-term. During the year ended July 31, 2017, the Board maintained its cash in bank deposit accounts which, at times, may have exceeded federally insured limits. Deposits that exceeded the federally insured limit were collateralized by the financial institution. For the year ended July 31, 2017, management believed that the combined total FDIC coverage of \$250,000 and collateral valued at \$1,198,523 were sufficient to satisfy the AMS requirements. During the year ended July 31, 2018, the Board moved funds to a sweep account, which is fully FDIC insured.

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
July 31, 2018 and 2017

NOTE 2: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)

Operating Cash and Cash Reserves (Continued)

In 2016, the Board established an interest-bearing reserve account with a financial institution that is a member of the Federal Reserve System, and will deposit into such account an amount equal to 10 percent of the assessments collected during the period beginning on the effective date of the Order and ending on the date the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States announces the results of the required referendum. On July 19, 2018, the referendum passed and the reserve account was no longer required.

Subsequent to the fiscal year end, in October 2018, the Board voted to designate funds to establish two reserves: 50% for future research projects and 50% for a general reserve fund.

Investments

The Board is required to follow the AMS investment policy. Accordingly, the Board is authorized to invest in securities consisting of obligations issued or fully insured or guaranteed by the U.S. or any U.S. government agency, including obligations of government-sponsored corporations, and must mature within one year or less from the date of purchase. No investments were held by the Board at July 31, 2018 and 2017.

Assessments

Domestic producers and importers of Christmas trees are assessed based upon the number of trees cut and sold or imported into the United States. Assessments are collected directly by the Board and assessment revenues are recognized when received.

Program Expenses

The Board incurs advertising, promotion, and research expenses in its mission to expand the market and uses of fresh-cut Christmas trees. Program costs are generally expensed when paid. Certain expenses may be accrued for significant obligations incurred by the Board that relate to the current fiscal period's operating budget.

Lobbying Expenses

The Board is prohibited from using assessment funds in activities influencing legislation, governmental action or policy, other than recommending to the Secretary amendments to the Order. Accordingly, the Board incurred no lobbying expenses.

Income Taxes

The Board is considered an instrumentality of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As such, the Office of Chief Counsel of the Internal Revenue Service has ruled that organizations such as the Board are not subject to federal income taxation and are generally exempt from other forms of taxation such as state income taxes, personal and real property taxes, and sales taxes.

Estimates

The presentation of financial statements in conformity with the modified cash basis of accounting requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Subsequent Events

Events and transactions have been evaluated for potential recognition or disclosure through February 25, 2019, the date that the financial statements were available to be issued.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

SCHEDULE OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES  
 ACTUAL COMPARED TO BUDGET  
 For the Year Ended July 31, 2018

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget (Unaudited)</u>	<u>Actual Over (Under) Budget</u>
Revenue:			
Assessments	\$ 1,587,560	\$ 1,650,000	\$ (62,440)
Interest income	2,336	-	2,336
	<u>1,589,896</u>	<u>1,650,000</u>	<u>(60,104)</u>
Expenditures:			
Promotion committee	913,516	950,000	(36,484)
Research committee	237,180	213,375	23,805
Industry relations committee	59,616	100,000	(40,384)
Special projects	20,127	5,000	15,127
Professional services	172,120	177,000	(4,880)
Board meetings	37,533	45,000	(7,467)
General and administrative	39,252	72,000	(32,748)
USDA fees	183,382	191,988	(8,606)
	<u>1,662,726</u>	<u>1,754,363</u>	<u>(91,637)</u>
Excess (deficit) of revenue over expenditures	<u>\$ (72,830)</u>	<u>\$ (104,363)</u>	<u>\$ 31,533</u>

See independent auditor's report.

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES  
 ACTUAL COMPARED TO BUDGET  
 For the Year Ended July 31, 2018

	Actual	Budget (Unaudited)	Actual Over (Under) Budget
	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
Promotion committee	\$ 913,516	\$ 950,000	\$ (36,484)
Research committee	237,180	213,375	23,805
Industry relations committee	59,616	100,000	(40,384)
Professional services:			
Executive director fees	100,500	100,500	-
Executive director expenses	49,500	49,500	-
Other	22,120	27,000	(4,880)
	<u>172,120</u>	<u>177,000</u>	<u>(4,880)</u>
Total professional services			
Special projects	20,127	5,000	15,127
Board meetings	37,533	45,000	(7,467)
General and administrative:			
Audit fees	11,157	15,000	(3,843)
Bank fees	5,535	7,500	(1,965)
Insurance	1,309	1,500	(191)
Office expenses	3,579	3,000	579
Interest expense	-	10,000	(10,000)
Miscellaneous	56	5,000	(4,944)
Other miscellaneous service cost	17,616	30,000	(12,384)
	<u>39,252</u>	<u>72,000</u>	<u>(32,748)</u>
Total general and administrative			
USDA fees	183,382	191,988	(8,606)
	<u>183,382</u>	<u>191,988</u>	<u>(8,606)</u>
Total expenditures	<u>\$ 1,662,726</u>	<u>\$ 1,754,363</u>	<u>\$ (91,637)</u>

See independent auditor's report.

CHRISTMAS TREE PROMOTION BOARD

SCHEDULE OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

For the Year Ended July 31, 2018

Receipts:	
Assessments	\$ 1,587,560
Interest income	2,336
Release of funds set aside for reserve funding	<u>354,635</u>
Total receipts	<u>1,944,531</u>
Disbursements:	
Promotion committee	913,516
Research committee	200,189
Industry relations committee	59,616
Special projects	20,127
Professional services	172,120
Board meetings	37,533
General and administrative	39,252
USDA fees	<u>183,382</u>
Total disbursements	<u>1,625,735</u>
Excess of receipts over disbursements	318,796
Cash, beginning of year	<u>863,779</u>
Cash, end of year	<u><u>\$ 1,182,575</u></u>

See independent auditor's report.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER  
FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS  
BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH *GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS*

To the Christmas Tree Promotion Board  
Howell, Michigan

We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, the financial statements of Christmas Tree Promotion Board (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of assets, liabilities, and net assets – modified cash basis as of July 31, 2018, and the related statements of revenue and expenses – modified cash basis and cash flows – modified cash basis for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements, and have issued our report thereon dated February 25, 2019.

### **Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

In planning and performing our audit of the financial statements, we considered the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control over financial reporting (internal control) to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control.

*A deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, misstatements on a timely basis. *A material weakness* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.

Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

### **Compliance and Other Matters**

As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

**Purpose of this Report**

The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* in considering the Christmas Tree Promotion Board's internal control and compliance. Accordingly, this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

*Propp Christenson Caniglia LLP*

February 25, 2019  
Roseville, California