

Before listening to this podcast, I had no idea there were auctions held to sell Christmas trees. I thought that families went to tree farms, walked around, and picked their perfect tree like the Griswolds in *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*. I also did not know about the standard \$10 per foot rule. I drastically overestimated the price for a large Christmas tree, so much that I assumed the \$150 offer from the beginning of the podcast was a bargain! However, very few people wanted to pay that much. Without many sales, by the end of the day, there was a surplus of trees. Nick Fountain and Robert Smith had to cut down prices so they could sell what was left, all of which were lower than the original \$150 amount. This was like a supply and demand model we would see in class. Customers aren't willing to pay above a certain amount, suppliers need to sell their items, so prices come down. What would not be similar to an in-class model is what Fountain and Smith did before they left the auction. After buying their pile at \$55 per tree, there were seven trees that could not fit into the truck bed. They ultimately had to sell those trees for \$50 each, resulting in a \$35 loss. This was a venture they did for the podcast, but in reality, suppliers would not want to sell products below their costs. Another difference from class is the bidding process. If individuals are competing to buy a pile of trees, someone may have to go above what they originally planned to pay in order to win the auction. In a free market, customers usually do not pay more than their willingness-to-pay. Although, this past season for Christmas trees, demand was higher so the farmers were able to make some extra money.