



# Kentucky Tree Farm Committee Newsletter

## *What is Tree Farming?*

The term “tree farming” was first used in the 1940’s to introduce the public to sustainable forestry terminology they could easily understand. Farming implies continual stewardship and production of goods year after year. By linking the term “farming” with trees, foresters could communicate the concept of sustainable production of forest products over time. From the beginning, Tree Farms were viewed as more than pine plantations or Christmas tree farms. Even the first Tree Farms certified into the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) were varied in nature and contained many different habitats and stages of forest regeneration, from seedlings to mature timber. To this date, biodiversity remains a critical component of a Certified Tree Farm. To join and remain in ATFS, Tree Farmers must pledge to maintain their land for clean water and healthy watersheds, abundant wildlife, and recreation - as well as wood.

Since 1941, ATFS has educated and recognized the commitment of private family forest landowners in the United States. Currently, ATFS has certified 24 million acres of privately owned forestland and over 90,000 family forest owners who are committed to excellence in forest stewardship, in 46 states. Tree Farmers share a unique commitment to protect wildlife habitat and watersheds, to conserve soil and to provide recreation for their communities while producing wood for America. **About the Tree Farm sign:** Water, Wildlife, Recreation, and Wood. The four sides of the Tree Farm sign tell the story of sustainable forestry: a thriving forestland that has clean water, a healthy wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities.



## *Getting Enrolled in the Tree Farm System*

*by Pam Snyder, Kentucky Division of Forestry*

Enrolling in the ATFS is a relatively simple process for landowners. The first step is to have a forest management plan that meets the forest sustainability standards established by the ATFS. Landowners can contact their local Kentucky Division of Forestry forester to get a forest management plan written for their property at no cost. Also, to enroll in the system to become a certified Tree Farmer, landowners can contact a consultant forester or industry forester who is certified as a Tree Farm inspector. In most cases, a consultant forester will charge a small fee to write a qualifying Tree Farm plan on the property.

Landowners have two options to start out in the ATFS before they are qualified as a Certified Tree Farmer.

### *Option 1*

Landowners are placed into a pioneer status and have five years to implement a small portion of their forest stewardship plan or Tree Farm plan. They need to re-contact the inspecting forester to be reevaluated and inspected to be certified as a Tree Farmer. Landowners do not have to wait the entire five years before they are reevaluated.

### *Option 2*

The landowner’s property is inspected by a certified Tree Farm inspector, whether a KDF forester, consultant forester, or industry forester. The inspecting forester uses ATFS performance measures and indicators to make the evaluation and notes whether the landowner is implementing the forest management plan or the Tree Farm plan. The landowner can be certified as a tree farmer right away. It strictly depends on the certifying forester’s knowledge of the property to make sure it meets all ATFS forest sustainability criteria.

A landowner may contact any certified inspecting Tree Farm forester across the state or the Kentucky Tree Farm Committee for further details.

## *About this Newsletter...*

This newsletter is produced by the Kentucky Tree Farm Committee and is supported by the American Tree Farm System 2009 Small Grants Program. Additional newsletters will also be in the 2009 August and December issues of Kentucky Woodlands Magazine.





## Kentucky Tree Farm Committee

The Kentucky Tree Farm Committee administers the Tree Farm program in Kentucky and promotes actions that sustain woodlands, watersheds, and wildlife habitat through the power of private stewardship. Family woodlands certified by the ATFS are recognized by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification and meets current standards qualifying Tree Farms as certified wood. The Tree Farm System operates as an informal partnership encouraging resource management professionals from all disciplines and segments (forest industries, public agencies, private forestry consultants, and forest landowner organizations) to work together and offer expertise to family forest owners. The Kentucky Tree Farm Committee carries out its mission by:

- Certifying and re-inspecting Kentucky Tree Farms as part of the American Tree Farm System.
- Providing Tree Farm certificates and signs to recognize Kentucky Tree Farmers.
- Recognize the Kentucky Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year.
- Recognize the Kentucky Outstanding Logger of the Year.
- Recognize the Kentucky Outstanding Inspector of the Year.
- Sponsor Tree Farm field days and educational programs.
- Undertaking special projects designed to educate Kentucky landowners on proper forest management.

## 2008 Kentucky Outstanding Logger of the Year

*by Pam Snyder, Kentucky Division of Forestry*

Chris Conrad with West Star Logging has been chosen as the Outstanding Logger of the Year by the Kentucky Tree Farm Committee. This award is based on performance on multiple criteria in the areas of Kentucky Master Logger Program, Safety Practices, Annual Production, Crew and Equipment Capacity, Logger Leadership, and Outreach



*Chris Conrad (second from left), his sons Ross & Trevor, and dad William "Bootie" Conrad.*

Activities, to name a few. The committee reviewed applications from across the state and completed on-site inspections of the finalists. West Star Logging has a six-person crew that primarily operates in McLean, Daviess, Christian, Ohio, Hopkins, Muhlenberg, and Henderson counties. Conrad has cultivated an excellent working relationship with landowners by offering pre- and post-harvest meetings to his clientele. His crew practiced sustainable logging and best management practices before they became mandatory under the Kentucky Forest Conservation Act. He is a second-generation logger, a director and member of the Green River Logger's Council, and a member of the Kentucky Forest Industries Association. He promotes logger safety classes and is very proud of his profession and his family's long history in the logging business.

## 2008 Kentucky Tree Farmer of the Year

*by Tad Norris, Kentucky Division of Forestry*

After a statewide canvass, Henry Duncan has been chosen as the 2008 Kentucky Tree Farmer of the Year. Duncan owns and actively manages 150 acres of forestland in Logan County and has done so for the past 39 years. He is a farmer and a lifelong conservationist.



*Henry Duncan*

Duncan's roots run deep in the Mud River-Duncan Hill region just north of Russellville. His great-great grandfather settled in the area in 1803 and opened a tannery. Such operations required a lot of wood, so it is safe to say that Duncan's family has recognized the importance of forestland for over two centuries.

Notable practices completed by Duncan include a 33-acre commercial, improvement harvest, the creation of 5.4 acres of hardwood riparian buffers, and the protection of his forestland from grazing. His farm is always open for educational uses, and he is a member of the Kentucky Water Watch Program and is Vice President of the Kentucky Woodland Owners Association. He is also a certified Forest Steward and past Tom Wallace Farm Forestry Award winner.

Duncan says he "hopes to use this opportunity to let landowners with holdings of all sizes know that they can manage and grow their resource in a sustainable manner while also improving its long-term, economic worth."

## Kentucky Tree Farm Committee Contact Information

*For more information about the Tree Farm program in Kentucky, please visit [www.KyTreeFarm.org](http://www.KyTreeFarm.org), call 502.695.3979, or ask your forester.*

