



# Kentucky Tree Farm Committee Newsletter

## *Why You Should Become a Certified Tree Farmer*

*by Robert Volk, Chair, Kentucky Tree Farm Committee*

Not too long ago, when a potential tree farmer asked, “What’s in it for me? What do I get in return for becoming a tree farmer?,” the usual response was three things: pride, profit, and pleasure. Pride in knowing that your forest is managed in a sustainable manner with the assistance of professional foresters and pride in sharing your knowledge with friends and neighbors. Profit by virtue of your increased visibility in the timber market and access to foresters who can assist you with a timber sale. Pleasure in the total enjoyment of your forest — the clean water, the wildlife, and the outdoor recreational opportunities. That was when the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) was a “recognition” venue for forestland owners who demonstrate proper forest management with the multiple-use concept.

But today that response goes much further. Recently, the ATFS evolved into the third recognized forest certification scheme in the United States, complete with global recognition of the Program for the En-

dorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) systems. Now a certified tree farm has access to global timber markets, not just the local mills. A certified tree farm qualifies for membership in carbon credit trading aggregates and can realize profits simply by growing trees. A certified tree farm meets the criteria for consideration in biomass projects that are designed to reduce the country’s dependence on foreign oil.

If you are lucky enough to be a forestland owner, isn’t it time you gave careful consideration to having your forestland certified? Kentucky is truly blessed with an excellent state Division of Forestry that employs most of the qualified inspectors in the commonwealth. Other qualified inspectors include private consulting foresters and those employed by the forest industry. If you’re interested in having your forestland certified, the first step is developing a management plan. Once the plan is established, the next step is adherence to the standards and principles of the American Forest Foundation. These are verified by the qualified inspector. Please visit the Kentucky Tree Farm Web site ([www.kytreefarm.org](http://www.kytreefarm.org)) and take that first step.

## *Kentucky Tree Farm Committee Goes to Washington!*

The 16<sup>th</sup> National Tree Farmer Convention was held September 2009 in Washington, D.C. and Kentucky had a strong contingency. In addition to attending the educational sessions Kentucky Tree Farm Committee members met with Kentucky Congressman John Yarmuth (back row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) to discuss Tree Farm issues and legislation on behalf of Kentucky Tree Farmers. They also met with Ben Chandler and Geoff Davis and had visits to McConnell and Bunning’s offices.



## *Kentucky Tree Farm Committee Announces Awards Finalists*

The Kentucky Tree Farm Committee is pleased to announce the finalists for the 2009 Tree Farmer of the Year and Logger of the Year contest conducted annually. The winners will be announced in March at the 2010 Kentucky Forest Industries Association Annual Meeting in Bowling Green. The finalists include the following:

**Tree Farmer of the Year Finalists:**

- Frank Hicks — Greenup County
- Felix Taylor — Jackson County
- The Abbey of Gethsemani — Nelson County

**Logger of the Year Finalists:**

- Iamur Wright — Carroll County
- Eddie Butler — Lewis County
- Ryan Drake — Muhlenberg County





## Kentucky Division of Forestry Director Receives 2009 National Association of State Foresters Sustained Excellence Award

by Lynn Brammer, Kentucky Division of Forestry

Leah MacSwords, the director of the Kentucky Division of Forestry, recently received the Sustained Excellence Award at the 86<sup>th</sup> Annual National Association of State Foresters. The award was presented by Bob Simpson of the American Forest Foundation. This annual award honors state foresters who have been strong advocates and supporters for the American Tree Farm System®.

“I am honored to receive this recognition from the American Tree Farm System, and I’m very proud of the work we do in Kentucky to support our tree farmers,” MacSwords said. MacSwords’ commitment to sustaining the Tree Farm program provides the foundation for a sustained forest for present and future generations of forest landowners and their families. MacSwords has served as the director of the Kentucky Division of Forestry for the past eight years. Throughout her tenure, she has been a strong and adamant supporter of the Ken-



tucky Tree Farm program, maintaining support for the program through her division that handles more than 95 percent of the state’s Tree Farm reinspections.

MacSwords is deeply involved with Tree Farm committee leadership and participates in its meetings on a regular basis. Simpson said, “Without Leah, her leadership and her commitment to the Tree Farm program, we wouldn’t be the largest and one of the most valued landowner groups in the country.”

The Tree Farm program is part of the daily functions of the state Division of Forestry, due to MacSwords’ leadership of, and belief in, the program.

MacSwords is past head of the Southern State Foresters group and past president of the National Association of State Foresters where she continues to promote the Tree Farm program to her colleagues throughout the United States.

## Kentucky Tree Farm News Bulletin

by Pam Snyder, Kentucky Division of Forestry & Co-Chair Kentucky Tree Farm Committee

Come one, come all...Kentucky woodland owners! There is exciting national news to share about the American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) and the U.S. Forest Service. The two programs have recently signed a memorandum of understanding that formally recognizes each program’s forest management plan types (Tree Farm Plan and Forest Stewardship Plan). This is extremely significant. It allows for both programs to be more effective and to better coordinate forest management efforts for Kentucky landowners who are enrolled as a “certified” Tree Farmer or “recognized” as part of the Kentucky Forest Stewardship program.

The Kentucky Tree Farm Committee (KTFC) is sponsored by the Kentucky Forest Industries Association, and this committee oversees the Kentucky Tree Farm (KTF) program in the state. The committee is made up of a host of volunteers (industry, consultant, and state agency foresters; landowners; education specialists; and Cooperative Extension personnel). The Kentucky Division of Forestry administers the Kentucky Forest Stewardship Program and typically writes approximately 1,000 forest stewardship plans annually. The division has been a longtime partner of the KTFC and the KTF program.

The KTFC has been accepting forest stewardship plans over the past decade along with Tree Farm plans and continues to have a model program that is constantly looking for benefits for Kentucky woodland owners. It takes the coordination and effort of the Kentucky’s Tree Farm volunteers and dedicated woodland owners to make the program successful. This announcement raises the profile of the ATFS on a national level and will enhance the benefits to current and future Tree Farmers!

## About Us!

The Kentucky Tree Farm Committee is the state affiliate of the ATFS, which is a national program that promotes the sustainable management of forests through education and outreach to private forest landowners. Founded in 1941, ATFS has 24 million certified acres of privately owned forestland and 91,000 family forest landowners who are committed to excellence in forest stewardship. In Kentucky there are nearly 800 Tree Farmers representing more than 200,000 acres. You can learn more about the Tree Farm program in Kentucky by visiting [www.kytreefarm.org](http://www.kytreefarm.org) or calling 502.695.3979.

