

# tree farmer

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AMERICAN  
FOREST FOUNDATION



AMERICAN  
TREE FARM SYSTEM®

The guide to sustaining America's family forests

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

Prepare for the Lump-sum Timber Sale

Legacy: A Journey of the Heart

National Public Affairs Committee: Who We Are

Develop Recreational Opportunities

Convert to Crabapples for Deer

# FOREST PRODUCTS INDUSTRY:

*Our Partner is Ailing*

## THE AMERICAN TREE FARM SYSTEM®

*Tree Farmer* is the official magazine of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS), a program of the American Forest Foundation. It is published six times a year for private forest landowners and volunteer foresters. Opinions do not necessarily represent those of ATFS.

### MISSION

To promote the growing of renewable forest resources on private lands while protecting environmental benefits and increasing public understanding of all benefits of productive forestry.

*Tree Farmer* magazine is a forest enhancement publication by Tree Farmers for Tree Farmers and all who benefit from their endeavors. *Tree Farmer* espouses the environmental benefits of sustainable production of forest products through responsible forest stewardship on private forestlands. With information, advocacy, and practical advice, the magazine promotes sustainable forest practices for multiple benefits to society.

### STAFF

*Editor-In-Chief*

Bob Simpson

*Editor*

Theresa D'Orsi

*Executive Editor*

Brigitte Johnson, APR

*Design*

TM Design, Inc.

*Printing*

Mercury Publishing Services

*Published by*

The American Forest Foundation

Laurence Wiseman, President

### CONTACT US

**For subscriptions, address changes, and general information**

Tree Farmer Magazine

American Forest Foundation

1111 Nineteenth Street, NW

Suite 780

Washington, D.C. 20036

888.889.4466

info@treefarmssystem.org

www.treefarmssystem.org

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### ADVERTISING DIRECTOR

Jim Führer

Mast High Media

834 SW St. Clair Avenue, Suite 106

Portland, OR 97205

Phone: 503.227-1381

Fax: 503.227.1391

Email: jim@masthighmedia.com

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# tree farmer



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Tree Farmers across the country depend on viable timber markets to help pay for stewardship of our forest. And while global competition and uninformed public are threatening the future of the forest products industry, Tree Farmers have a uniquely beneficial role to play in sustaining that necessary partnership.

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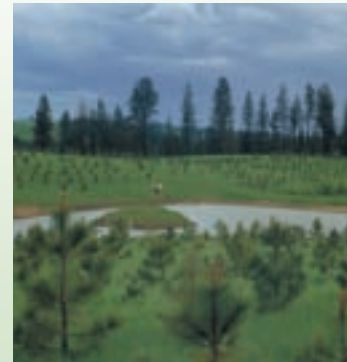
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COVER PHOTO: PURPLE TRILLIUM ALONG A WATERFALL IN EAST CORINTH, VERMONT. PHOTO BY NED THERRIEN.



# How We're Keeping You COMPETITIVE

By **BOB Simpson**

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We all have witnessed the significant changes our forestry community has undergone in the past seven years, many influenced by catalysts outside the realm and scope in which we operate, but we must react. Increasing competition from beyond our borders and the perverse incentive systems created by Wall Street have contributed in a major way to the down-sizing, consolidation and in some cases, the actual relocation overseas of U.S.-based forest products companies. For the U.S. forest industry to remain here, it must be competitive, and to be competitive, it must be able to offer products that the global community is seeking.

These same forces have impacts on our family forest owners as well. For forest owners to survive in today's shrinking global economy they must keep peering toward the future and prepare for the changes it will bring. That's not to say these changes will be bad. If properly approached and planned for in a proactive manner, they can be manipulated to provide tremendous opportunities. Our forests teach us that. We know that you cannot sustain a forest if you only manage by reaction. A forest just won't stay healthy over time if you don't employ prescriptions now that alleviate the future threats of wildfire, ice damage or insect infestation. Your forest management plan is an example of looking into the future and planning for it. It's designed to anticipate change, adjusting the prescriptions as needed.

This is much like what the American Tree Farm System is doing with forest certification. We saw it looming on the horizon as early as 1999 and believed it

was something that was not going to disappear. Both the American Forest Foundation's Board of Trustees and the ATFS National Operating Committee directed that we modify the Tree Farm program to be internationally recognized as a credible certification system so that U.S. family forest owners remain competitive. Presently, I am not aware of a single industrialized nation that has not developed an internationally recognized forest certification system within the past seven years. Had ATFS waited until the last minute, or worse, not even been here, U.S. family forest owners would be years behind other countries. That would mean years of markets eroded or lost completely in the interim.

We believe our planning has paid off, and there are several examples to offer as proof. For instance, in an effort to keep his state globally competitive, Maine's Governor, John Baldacci, created a forest certification initiative to aggressively promote Maine's forest products. Because Tree Farm was there, and had been modified in anticipation of such moves, more than 300,000 acres of family owned Maine forestland are able to benefit from the governor's initiative. The governors of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Indiana are all taking similar steps in order to keep their forest owners and companies competitive. Because ATFS was there,

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*Bob Simpson is Senior Vice President, Forestry Programs, American Forest Foundation.*

JL Darling


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30,000 family forest owners in Wisconsin are accepted as providing certified wood. Companies such as Time Inc., the largest purchaser of paper in the world, and L.L. Bean are demanding certified wood from their suppliers, and they are recognizing ATFS as a credible source. Are our ATFS certified forest owners receiving any extra dollars for their certified wood? Not yet, and probably not anytime soon. But they do have access to markets they would not have had.

I'm sure many of you are thinking to yourself, "I haven't seen any demand for certified wood." We believe in the near future almost all of you will. At this moment, European nations are setting national wood procurement standards. The United Kingdom has just set theirs. This is not an anomaly. Belgium has just released its national procurement standard. Denmark, Germany, France and the Netherlands will do the same in the next six months. These standards include

demand for both certified round wood and pulp. U.S. home and office builders are beginning to seek certified wood. Many U.S. banks are now setting policies demanding certified wood be used in the paper they purchase. Even if you only are selling sawlogs, the chip waste is going to a paper-making facility somewhere.

ATFS has one last hurdle to leap. This year the AFF Board of Trustees and the ATFS National Operating Committee plan to formally apply to the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) for global endorsement. With this, ATFS-certified forests will have access to almost all global markets, assuring your ability to remain competitive. It has taken us seven years to prepare. It has not been easy or inexpensive. But because of the efforts of the entire ATFS network, certified Tree Farmers have a competitive, credible and economic certification system that continues to provide them access to global markets. 

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