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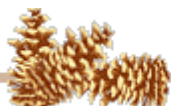
Greetings,

The American Tree Farm System has been working for several years to become certified as managing forests in a sustainable manner. In the last ten years or so there has been more of a push by lumber buyers to buy products that come from certified forests. As the largest private forest landowner program in the United States, the American Tree Farm System recognized that to open up these markets for certified wood for Tree Farms would be an important step.

Last fall the American Tree Farm System was accredited by the PEFC (Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) as having standards that meet the criteria for sustainability. This was a first step. To be certified a third party assessment must take place.

This third party assessment is now taking place. New Mexico was selected as one of three western states to have our program evaluated. On June 10-11 a forest auditor from Price Waterhouse Coopers visited fifteen of our New Mexico Tree Farms to assess if they were meeting the Tree Farm standards that have been approved by PEFC. There are a few things we need to work on but we were able to show that we are meeting the standards so within a short time all Tree Farms will be certified sources for sustainably harvested wood products.

This is good news. Although in New Mexico selling wood products from Tree Farms is not a major activity there are other benefits to being certified. It is kind of like the good housekeeping seal of approval. People like to think that our forest lands are being managed properly and this third party certification will help convince people that Tree Farms are being managed well. For additional information on PEFC visit their website at www.pefc.org.



HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT TREES?

Where and when did our familiar trees first grow in the United States? The first record comes from the Potomac Valley, in Arundel County, Maryland. There a remarkable forest was growing 95 million years ago. That was only 5 million years after the sycamores in Greenland.

What are wilderness areas? Reservations of the National Forests set aside to remain in a primitive state. No roads or provision for motorized vehicles; no timber cutting except for protection from fire; no permits for motels, stores, resorts, summer homes, organization camps, hunting or fishing lodges; no airplane landings on land or water and no motorboats (except for policing and emergencies); no modification except by order of the Secretary of Agriculture when it is clearly in the public interest to sacrifice wilderness values. "Public interest" in terms of water power development is today the greatest threat to the sanctity of wilderness areas.

Is there any home tree that can be grown from coast-to-coast? Yes, the trembling aspen. No other tree grows naturally from Maine to California. This tree, a form of poplar, can be easily identified, for its leaves flutter in the slightest breeze.

What is the right time of year to tap for maple sugar? About the middle of March. The snow may still be deep in the northern woods. When cold nights are followed by warm day's pressure is set up in the wood and sap begins to flow.

What is the greatest single cause of commercial losses by disease in forest stands? Heart rot caused by fungi is the chief destroyer of valuable standing timber. Infected trees may sometimes be detected by cankers of fruiting bodies which appear on the outside.

Are leaf veins nerves? In botanical language they are called nerves, but in the sense that they carry vital fluids of the tree body, they are analogous to veins and arteries of an animal body.

Platt, Rutherford 1992. 1001 Questions Answered About Trees. Dover Books. 318pp.

