

Ohio



Tree Farm Program



50 Years

Certified Family Forest

Helping Ohio's Family Forest Owners
Become Excellent Woodland Stewards

A vertical photograph of a large, mature tree trunk in a lush green forest. The tree trunk is the central focus, extending from the bottom to the top of the frame. To the left of the tree, a stream flows through the forest, reflecting the surrounding greenery and sky. The water is calm, creating clear reflections of the trees and sky. The forest floor is covered in green grass and small plants. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

The Tree Farm Program 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 forests.



Ohio's Valuable Forests and Woodlands

The forests and woodlands of Ohio are a critically valuable resource, providing benefits and products to their owners, and to Ohio's citizens and visitors. Thirty-one percent of Ohio is forested (7.8 million acres), with the greatest proportion in southern and southeastern Ohio. These forests and woodlands provide a wide variety of benefits including:

- **Wildlife habitat**
- **Recreational activities**
- **Scenic beauty**
- **Soil erosion reduction**
- **Water quality improvement**
- **Wood and other forest products**
- **Income when harvesting forest products**
- **Raw materials for Ohio's forest products industries**
- **Carbon sequestration**
- **Diverse plant and animal communities**

The vast majority of Ohio forests and woodlands (more than 73 percent) are family forests, owned by private, non-industrial landowners. These family forest owners have the opportunity to care for and manage their woodlands to provide the benefits they desire, while at the same time practicing a land stewardship ethic that leads to

the development of healthy, sustainable woodlands that contribute to public enjoyment and benefit. The purpose of the Tree Farm Program is to provide the knowledge and assistance necessary for family forest owners to sustainably manage their woodlands to achieve this goal.

The Tree Farm Program

The American Tree Farm System® (ATFS) was organized in 1941 in response to concerns that America's private woodlands were being harvested at an unsustainable rate. Through ATFS and supporting state programs, participating family forest landowners receive individual forest management assistance, educational programs, and opportunities to see demonstrations of sustainable woodland management. Upon completing a forest management plan for their property and demonstrating commitment to its implementation, the woodland is inspected and certified as a **Tree Farm** by ATFS.

From the beginning the terms "tree farmer" and "tree farming" were adopted to introduce the public and woodland owners to the concept of sustainable forestry in terms they could easily understand. Linking the term "farming" with trees communicated the Tree Farm Program's commitment to the sustained production of forest benefits over time. That concept was distinctly different from the "cut-out and get-out" logging philosophy that dominated much of the early 20th century. To this day, certification as a Tree Farm by ATFS is high recognition that the family forest landowner is committed to excellence in forest stewardship. Nationwide ATFS has certified over 91,000 Tree Farms with 24 million acres in 44 states.

The Ohio Tree Farm Program, organized in 1946, brings together experienced Tree Farmers and foresters from industry, governmental agencies, educational institutions, and private organizations to administer the Ohio Tree Farm Program. The

Ohio program works jointly with ATFS to support family forest landowner education, to provide individual assistance in the development and implementation of a sustainable woodland management plan, and to recognize woodland owner accomplishments.



Benefits of Becoming A Certified Tree Farm

- Development of a sustainable management plan for woodlands designed to accomplish your ownership objectives.
- Free professional management recommendations during initial inspection and re-inspections.
- Participation in a network of professionals and landowners who share commitment to sustainable forest management.
- Invitations to seminars, field days, and workshops designed to help you achieve the goals you have set for your Tree Farm.

- Complimentary subscription to *Ohio Woodland Journal*, the quarterly publication of the Ohio Tree Farm Program.
- State and national annual conventions where you can attend workshops and share information, experiences, and fellowship with other Tree Farmers.
- Opportunity to be recognized by fellow landowners and forestry professionals by receiving state, regional, and National Outstanding Tree Farmer awards.
- Opportunity to display the Tree Farm's nationally recognized sign verifying that sustainable forestry is practiced in your woodland.
- Opportunity to become active in Ohio or National Tree Farm Program and influence decisions and policy that affect family forests.
- Third party certification of sustainable forest management as a certified Tree Farm.

How Does My Woodland Become A Certified Tree Farm

Participation in the Ohio Tree Farm Program is open to all family forest landowners who

- own **10 or more contiguous wooded acres**
- are committed to the **sustainable management** of their woodlands, and
- have an acceptable **written management plan** that is designed to meet ownership goals and sustain the woodlands for future generations.

Woodland owners without a written management plan can receive help from the Ohio Tree Farm Program in identifying an appropriate forestry professional to help develop their plan. Forestry professionals commonly available to provide this assistance

include ODNR Division of Forestry Service Foresters, private consulting foresters, Soil and Water Conservation District foresters, and industry foresters.

Information regarding certification can be found by contacting the Ohio Tree Farm Program as directed at the end of this brochure. Eligible applicants will be contacted by a Tree Farm Inspector to schedule a visit to their woodlands to review their management plan and activities. Woodlands with an acceptable management plan and an owner committed to sustainable woodland management will be recommended for certification as a Tree Farm.

A woodland owner just discovering the benefits of sustainable forest management, who may not have an acceptable written management plan or who has not had time to demonstrate their commitment, can still participate in the program as a **Pioneer Tree Farm**. Many of the benefits of participating in the Tree Farm Program are available to Pioneer Tree Farms. A Pioneer Tree Farm must achieve the standards for certification as a Tree Farm within five years to continue participating in the Tree Farm Program.



Sources of Information and Assistance

The Ohio Tree Farm Program is administered by the Ohio Tree Farm Committee, a volunteer organization made up of forest resource management professionals and experienced Tree Farmers. The program's sponsors are the American Forest Foundation, the Ohio Forestry Association and the ODNR-Division of Forestry. For more information about the Ohio program visit www.ohiotreefarm.org/, or contact:

Ohio Forestry Association

1100-H Brandywine Blvd.,
Zanesville, OH 43701
phone: 888-388-7337
www.ohioforest.org/

Additional information on the Ohio Tree Farm Program and other woodland management resources can be obtained from the following organizations and agencies:

American Forest Foundation is the national organization that sponsors the American Tree Farm System. For more information visit www.treefarmssystem.org/ or contact them at 202-463-2462.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources

Division of Forestry is a cosponsor of the Ohio Tree Farm Program and provides forest management assistance to private woodland owners through it's service forestry program.
www.dnr.state.oh.us/forestry/

Ohio Society of American Foresters provides a listing of member foresters and forestry technicians who provide forestry services to woodland owners. www.osafdirectory.com

Ohio State University Extension provides forestry educational programs and publications
www.woodlandstewards.osu.edu

