

# Tree Farmers Celebrate 50 Years

SPRING GROVE (York Co.)— Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, the American Tree Farm System is well on its way to guaranteeing green forests forever. Founded in 1941 in Washington state, the Tree Farm System today boasts 71,000 tree farms growing 95 billion trees on more than 95 million well-tended acres from Maine to Alaska.

"Tree farms are important to forest renewal because individuals own 57 percent of the U.S. forests that keep us supplied with wood and paper products," said Scott Kurtzman, tree farm family Forester of The Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company. "That's more than double the area owned by government and triple the size of industrial holdings. In fact, tree farms cover

an area larger than Japan."

The Glatfelter Pulp Wood Company has belonged to the American Tree Farm System since 1947. There are 1,762 tree farms in Pennsylvania, totalling 890,464 acres.

The Tree Farm System is managed nationally by the American Forest Council in Washington, D.C. The system certifies woodland owners who qualify by complying with strict standards of forest management and who grow trees for products as well as wildlife habitat and other uses according to plans prepared by professional foresters and wildlife biologists.

Tree farms are not just rows of single species trees grown on plantations. They comprise forests

of every size and trees of every species, description, and age imaginable. Tree Farm committees at the state level directly oversee the management of the program, which is funded by private donations and by contributions from the forest industry.

Tree farms also:  
 • Improve water quality. Many certified Tree Farms are owned by water companies which manage their land for watershed values, providing cities with clean drinking water.

• Rehabilitate land. Thousands of eroded farms have been reclaimed by tree farmers, who have spent years planting green forests on what had been played-out gravel pits and coal strips.

• Help wildlife habitat. Tree

Farmers have been instrumental in providing forest habitat for deer, woodcock, ruffed grouse, and numerous other species. Tree farmers are as varied as their lands. They range from former presidents, such as Jimmy Carter, to a current musician with the Rolling Stones rock band. They include nuclear engineers, teachers, dentists, and auto mechanics.

Tree farms of the American Tree Farm System must contain 10 or more acres of forestland. They are routinely inspected every five years to ensure compliance with tree farm guidelines. About 9,000 foresters from all segments of the forestry profession -- both public and private practitioners -- help administer the system in all 50 states.

## NFU Board Outraged Over Federal Farm Policy

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Farmers Union board of directors says it's outraged over House leaders' decision not to pursue a new dairy policy this year, and the apparent willingness of the Bush administration to trade away dairy import protections.

Board members indicated they would concentrate on the Senate, where a dairy diversion package has passed the Agriculture Committee but has yet to be scheduled for floor action. They called it the "last hope" for dairy farmers in 1991.

"In the face of veto threats, Congress has been negotiating against itself on the contents of a dairy program all year," said NFU President Leland Swenson. "It's hard to blame them, given that the administration still opposed anything to help dairy farmers. The travesty is that there are too many producers who will no longer be in business as a result."

"This is a classic example of the Bush administration's inaction on domestic policy," Swenson added. "The lack of leadership by the administration and Congress in addressing domestic issues will carry over into the 1992 elections."

Even as the ink was drying on the 1990 farm bill, dairy prices plunged to a 13-year low, bringing the need for a new dairy program to the front burner. NFU submitted two plans, one for a mandatory two-tier program and one for a voluntary diversion program. Both proposals were designed to

bring farm gate milk prices to levels that would cover costs of production and reduce the cost of dairy programs.

Now, cheese prices are beginning to drop, signaling the start of another plunge in milk prices, he said.

"This rollercoaster will continue until someone takes the lead and changes the program," Swenson said. "If the administration and the House are unable to, our last hope is for Senator Leahy to spearhead the effort," Swenson said.

If no legislation is passed this year, the farm bill provides for a support price of \$10.10 per hundredweight next year, more than \$3 below the average cost of production.

To add insult to injury, Swenson said, further price drops may occur as more dairy products are imported into the United States. It appears that U.S. and European negotiators have reached preliminary agreement on several aspects of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Section 22, the provision that allows quotas on imported commodities if needed for the operation of domestic commodity programs, is on the table.

Also, reports suggest that Section 301, which authorizes countervailing duties in cases of unfair practices by other nations, might be suspended for a period of years, while negotiations for further cuts in agriculture programs continue.

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