

New Inventory Of Penn's Woods To Begin

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Are the trees in Penn's Woods growing faster than they are dying or being cut? Are wildlife habitats changing in Pennsylvania?

The USDA Forest Service Northeastern Research Station's Forest Inventory and Analysis Unit, in cooperation with the DCNR's Bureau of Forestry, are researching these questions by conducting the fifth inventory of Pennsylvania's forest resources.

In response to state, industry, and other users, a new state-level annual inventory system has been developed to monitor health and sustainability of forest ecosystems across the United States. The system uses a three-phase approach: satellite image classification of the entire state, a ground sample and a more detailed ground subsample for forest health issues.

A key feature of the new approach is the measurement of 20 percent of all field samples annually. These changes will help identify changes in Penn's Woods more quickly.

In May 2000, Forest Service crews collected field data from 968 randomly chosen 1/6th-acre plots throughout the state. This translates to one plot for every 29,700 acres. This process will

be repeated in each of the following four years until a total of 4,839 plots is established. The plots will be remeasured on a five-year cycle.

The six crews are located at the DCNR's Bureau of Forestry offices in: Clarion, Clearfield, Duncansville, Long Pond, Middletown and South Williamsport.

When the forest inventory is

completed, the results will describe the extent of Pennsylvania's forestland, the volume and quality of timber on forestland, and on recent trends in growth, mortality and timber removals.

Data are also being collected on wildlife habitat, responses of trees to climate change, as well as insect and disease problems.

The inventory also includes two sets of questionnaires. The

first set will be mailed to a sample of forestland owners. The owners of approximately 2,900 forested plots will receive questionnaires dealing with their reasons for owning forestland and present and future uses of the land.

The second set will be sent to the timber products industry. Levels of industrial wood production will be compared with previous inventories to deter-

mine trends in the demand for wood products.

Earlier inventories were conducted in 1958, 1968, 1978 and 1990. Periodic forest inventories provide data to be used in planning natural resource programs on national, state and local levels. The results from all five years will be published in 2005.

From Pennsylvania Department Of Environmental Protection

Cultivated Blueberry Producers, Importers Approve National Promotion Program

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Producers and importers of cultivated blueberries have voted to approve a national promotion program. The vote was taken in a referendum conducted by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service from March 13-April 14.

"The cultivated blueberry industry has recognized that a mandatory national promotion program is a valuable marketing tool," said Kathleen L. Merrigan, AMS administrator. "Industry members will fund their self-help program to increase market efficiency, develop new markets and marketing strategies, and enhance the image of cultivated blueberries in the

United States and abroad. We will work with them to help them meet their goals."

In the referendum, 67.8 percent of those who voted favored implementation of the order. Those who voted in favor represented 73.2 percent of the volume of cultivated blueberries represented in the referendum. Any current producer or importer of 2,000 pounds or more of cultivated blueberries during the 1999 calendar year was eligible to vote. The program will become effective 30 days after final publication in the Federal Register.

The promotion program will be administered by a council of

13 members under USDA supervision. Council members will be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture from nominees submitted by the industry. USDA will begin the nomination process soon after the Blueberry Promotion, Research, and Information Order becomes effective. For more information, contact Oliver L. Flake at (888) 720-9917 (toll free) or e-mail oliver.flake@usda.gov.

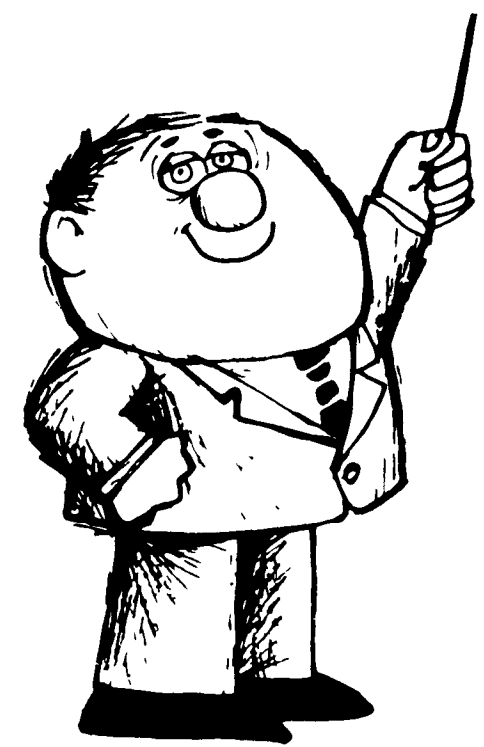
The program will be funded by an assessment of \$12 per ton of domestic cultivated blueberries and \$12 per ton of fresh and processed imported cultivated blueberries starting in 2001. The program is the second to be im-

plemented under the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act of 1996. A program for peanut producers was implemented in July 1999.

Since the referendum was announced earlier this year, the U.S. secretary of agriculture has received information that the official title of the new program for cultivated blueberries may cause confusion in parts of the blueberry industry, since native blueberries are not covered by the program. Therefore, soon after the new program becomes effective, the secretary will issue a proposed rule to seek comments on changing the title of the program to clarify that the program covers only cultivated blueberries and cultivated blueberry producers and importers.



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