

Woodland News

building a house without a plan. The benefits of having a plan in these instances — helping achieve goals, setting a course of action, setting priorities, and so forth — also apply to managing your forest.

Plans written by natural resource professionals will help you learn more about your property and schedule management activities, whether they include timber harvests or not. Management plans also help you identify and consider special ecological features on your property, such as vernal ponds, stream buffers, and rare species and communities. They can incorporate aesthetic and recreational goals, as well.

The Forest Stewardship Program assists landowners in establishing resource plans for their woodlands. The program is designed to account for all forest values — wildlife, timber, water, aesthetics, and recreation, to name a few. The program links landowners with a wealth of technical assistance to manage their woodlands according to their objectives.

To find out more about the Forest Stewardship Program or request the free publication, "Forest Stewardship Bulletin #6: Planning Your Forest's Future," call (800) 235-WISE (toll free), send e-mail to RNRext@psu.edu, or write to Forest Stewardship Program, Forest Resources Extension, The Pennsylvania State University, 7 Ferguson Building, University Park, PA 16802.

PENNSYLVANIA'S PRIVATELY-OWNED FORESTLANDS

Seth P. Cassell
Service Forester

DCNR Bureau of Forestry

When people talk about Pennsylvania's forests, they often refer to state forestland — the Susquehannock, Elk, Tioga, Bald Eagle, Gallitzin, and others. The vast state forests and other public lands are indeed the backbone of Pennsylvania's forest industry.

However, many are surprised to learn that a vast majority (75 percent) of the state's forestland is privately owned. Private forests surround hunting cabins, cover hillsides, and dot farm fields throughout the state. With an average size of 23 acres, these forests comprise most of Penn's Woods.

In many respects, we are fortunate to have the forest we enjoy so much today. Throughout most of our state's history — from the time the first settlers prodded into the wilderness to when the last logging railroad chugged out of the mountains — people have used the forest without much consideration for the future. At the dawn of the 21st century, as our forests push forward to maturity and timber harvesting increases, we as a community are again faced with important management decisions that will ultimately shape the future of Penn's Woods.

With maturing forests and high hardwood timber prices, many landowners are considering the decisions involved with har-

vesting timber. Most do not own their land as a timber investment, but instead for aesthetic and recreational purposes. Still, most do not want to ignore the economic and management opportunities that timber harvesting offers.

Unfortunately, many do not adequately consider the long-term management of the resources on their land before harvesting. Service foresters with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Forestry, assist landowners in managing their woodlands. All too often, they receive telephone calls from landowners who say, "I just had a timber harvest on my property. Could you come out and see if I did the right thing?" However, preparing for the right outcome starts well before the first tree is cut.

It all begins with a plan. Few people would consider going on vacation, investing, retiring, or

Spraying Weeds With Vinegar Inexpensive And Safe, Says ARS

BELTSVILLE, Md. — Some home gardeners already use vinegar as a herbicide, and some garden stores sell vinegar pesticides. But no one has tested it scientifically until now.

Agricultural Research Service scientists offer the first scientific evidence that it may be a potent weedkiller that is inexpensive and environmentally safe — perfect for organic farmers.

ARS researchers Jay Radhak-

rishnan, John R. Teasdale and Ben Coffman in Beltsville, Md., tested vinegar on major weeds—common lamb's-quarters, giant foxtail, velvetleaf, smooth pigweed and Canada thistle — in greenhouse and field studies.

They hand-sprayed the weeds with various solutions of vinegar, uniformly coating the leaves. The researchers found that 5- and 10-percent concentrations killed the weeds during their first two weeks of life.

Low Temperatures Could Damage Young Corn, Soybean Plants

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — Unseasonably low temperatures in central Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio may have damaged newly emerged corn and soybean plants.

Growers will want to closely assess damaged plants before making future decisions, said Matt Antos, an agronomist with Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., in State College.

"The bottom line on diagnosing low temperature injury to corn and soybean plants is to wait three to five days after the weather event before assessing the extent of the damage," said Antos.

Antos explained locally-reported temperatures on a clear night can be 2 to 5 degrees colder at the soil surface. Corn can be killed when temperatures drop to 28 degrees, and soybeans can withstand slightly colder weather.

"The recovery will depend on whether the growing point region was damaged," said Antos. The growing point region of corn younger than six leaves, roughly knee-high, is below the soil surface and protected from above-ground frost damage. Inspecting the growing region too soon after a freeze may not show damage. Antos recommends waiting three to five days after the cold nights

to fully assess the situation.

"Injury to the crop can look very serious the day after the event, but recovery may be possible if the growing points are not damaged," said Antos.

Initially, corn above ground may look severely damaged with droopy, greenish-black leaves. The damaged leaves will bleach to a straw color as the tissue dries. Antos said at this point, the whorl may "knot." Knotted plants usually recover as expanding whorl tissues break the knots. If the growing point is below the soil surface and protected from above-ground damage, the corn should recover.

After three to five days, surviving corn plants should show new leaf tissue expanding from the whorls. Yield loss to frost-damaged corn younger than V6 is related to the degree of stand loss rather than the degree of leaf damage.

Antos noted that surviving soybean plants will show new leaves emerging from one or both nodes at the cotyledons. And, if a significant portion of the corn or soybean population is obviously dead after three to five days, replanting may be justified.

For more information contact Matt Antos, Field Agronomist, State College, (814) 867-0641.

Older plants required higher concentrations of vinegar to kill them. At the higher concentrations, vinegar had an 85- to 100-percent kill rate at all growth stages. A bottle of household vinegar is about a 5-percent concentration.

Canada thistle, one of the most tenacious weeds in the world, proved the most susceptible; the 5-percent concentration had a 100-percent kill rate of the perennial's top growth. The 20-percent concentration can do this in about 2 hours.

Spot spraying of cornfields with 20 percent vinegar killed 80 to 100 percent of weeds without harming the corn, but the scien-

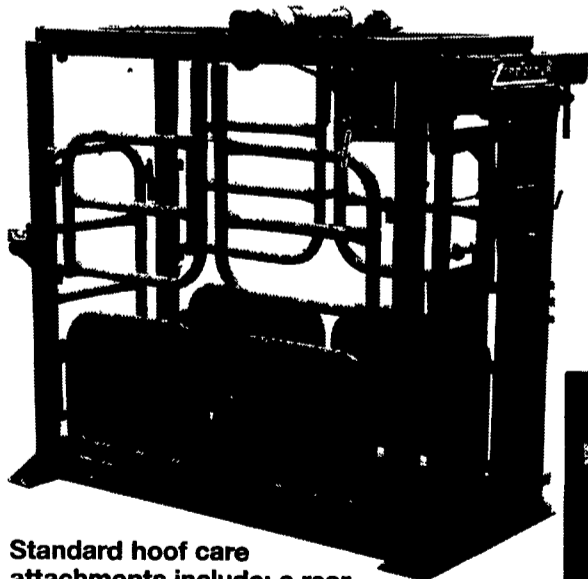
tists stress the need for more research. If the vinegar were sprayed over an entire field, it would cost about \$65 per acre. If applied to local weed infestations only, such as may occur in the crop row after cultivation, it may only cost about \$20 to \$30.

The researchers use only vinegar made from fruits or grains, to conform to organic farming standards.

ARS is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific research agency.

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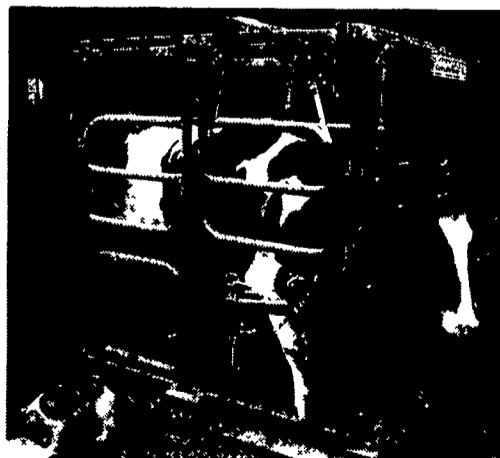
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For further information or sale catalogues, contact
Mike Firestine at 717-866-4185
or C.J. Furlong at 717-892-2758