Getting More Heat from Your Firewood

Heating your home with wood can be a lot of work, so anything you do to make the practice more efficient is helpful. The drier the wood is, the better it will burn. It can take 6-12 months for firewood to dry thoroughly. How fuelwood is stored can make a big difference in the heat value you get out of it, too. If possible, bring inside a few days’ supply at a time. This will allow the wood to dry out even more, and will add some needed humidity to the dry winter air inside of your home. Wood stored outside should be up off the ground, by stacking on pallets, limbs, or blocks. This will prevent the wood from absorbing moisture from the soil. A piece of firewood resting directly on the ground will never really dry out, and will decay, losing heat value. Finally, a tarp or plastic cover on the top of the pile will help it shed rain and snow, and keep the wood much drier. Just cover the top of the pile, and keep most of the sides open and exposed to the sun and wind. Don’t stack it against the side of your house, though, as any unused wood on the ground can attract termites.

Large pieces should be split, for easier handling, and lighting, and to expose more surface area for drying. If you have a mixture of wood species in your pile, use that to your advantage. On mild days, when you just need a morning or evening fire, use the lower density woods, which will burn more quickly, but have less total heat value, like elm, sycamore, and silver maple. Save the oak and locust wood for the really cold days, and if you are lucky enough to have some hickory or hedge wood in the pile, use that on the coldest nights, and you will still have some glowing coals in the firebox the next morning.

To learn more about managing your woodlot for firewood, check out the Kansas Forest Service publication “Managing your Woodland for Firewood.” It can be found on the web at: bookstore.ksre.k-state.edu/pubs/MF773.pdf. The factsheet is also helpful if you buy your firewood, as it lists the BTU value of many species, so you can see that a cord of bur oak is worth almost twice as much as a cord of cottonwood, and the much maligned honeylocust and black locust have more heat value than even red or bur oak.

Upcoming Events

- **September - October** – Order fall conservation seedlings online at kansasforests.org or call 888.740.8733
- **September 21** – Riparian & Range Workshop – Ashland, KS – contact Ben Bloodworth at bbloodworth@tamariskcoalition.org or 970-256-7400
- **October 4** – Fall Forestry Field Day – Kennedy Tree Farm, Randolph, KS – contact Bob Atchison at atchison@ksu.edu or 785-532-3310
- **November 16, 9:00am** – KFA Board Meeting – KDWPT Office, 300 SW Wanamaker Road, Topeka, KS
2017 Agroforestry Award
A Kansas family who has stabilized miles of streambank on the Little Blue River by planting trees and implementing other conservation techniques was recognized during the Agroforestry Field Day June 8. Jim Downard, along with his siblings Karen Haley and Ed Downard, are this year’s recipients of the Kansas Agroforestry Award. The family has improved the quality and health of their woodlands by removing lower quality trees from their property, giving more valuable oak and walnut trees the opportunity to grow strong.

Agroforestry is the integration of trees and shrubs into farming and ranching operations to maximize productivity and conservation benefits. Tree plantings known as riparian forest buffers are just one of many agroforestry practices available to Kansas landowners. The 2017 Agroforestry Field Day was held on the Downard Family Farm in southeast Washington County in June.

2017 Walnut Council Field Day
The Kansas chapter of the Walnut Council held its annual field day at the Overland Park Arboretum on June 2nd. This facility afforded the opportunity to offer an educational event outside the typical format of our field days. The location was used to highlight some local issues and activities, including a portable sawmill demonstration by Tom Hogard of Tom the Sawyer and Dave Bruton of the KS Forest Service, a native tree and wildflower walk led by Ken O’Dell and Jim Earnest of the KS Native Plant Society, a talk on common tree problems by Dennis Patton with Johnson Co. Kansas State Research & Extension, and a demonstration of a slabbing sawmill in action by Dog Holler Custom Slabbing.

The location also provided the opportunity to bring together rural and urban communities. The urban group had a chance to learn about forestry and natural resource issues in KS, and the rural group got to hear about urban issues such as the impact of development on natural hydrology. A big “thank you” to the staff of the Arboretum and its welcoming director, Karen Kerkhoff, for their support in making this day happen.

“I enjoyed the [Walnut Council] field day very much. That was my first field day as an attendee. I really was impressed how well managed the programs were and how knowledgeable the staff was. There was also such a large range of attendees which was great to know and understand everyone’s interests and the venue was a perfect setting. Looking forward to the next field day already.” – Alan Eckley, American Walnut Company

www.KSForestryAssociation.org
KFA By-laws Revisions

As a recognized not-for-profit organization at both the state and national levels, the KFA wrote and ratified our by-laws to guide our operation five years ago. As with any group, changes occur and develop along the way.

At our most recent Board of Directors meeting on August 3, 2017, a review of the by-laws was discussed, and changes were approved. Typically, when organizations grow, by-laws are reviewed and updated to reflect how the organization is working. With approval from the KFA Board, we plan to vote on those amendments as allowed by rules under Article VIII, A. 1. of the current by-laws, “Two-thirds vote of the ‘Association’ membership present and voting, provided such amendment(s) have been sent to all ‘Association’ members of record at least (15) days in advance of the meeting.” Our meeting to vote on the proposed amendments will coincide with the Fall Forestry Field Day on Wednesday, October 4, 2017 held at the Kennedy farm.

Each member will receive a copy of the current by-laws with the ten different areas of change highlighted. All members should receive a copy, along with a letter explaining the reasons for each change by mid to late September. Changing by-laws can be a difficult process, the organization needs to be vibrant and focused on its direction. Keeping this in mind, the board carefully reviewed the by-laws to reflect our work in a uniform manner.

– Carolyn Turney, KFA President

Fall Forestry Field Day – October 4th – Kennedy Tree Farm, Riley County

The 2017 Fall Forestry Field Day will be held Wednesday, October 4th at the Kennedy Tree Farm just north of Manhattan near Randolph, Kansas.

The Kansas Forestry Association and the Kansas Forest Service have recognized Bill Kennedy as the 2017 Forest Stewardship Tree Farmer of the Year. This prestigious award goes to landowners who demonstrate a long-term stewardship ethic in the care of their woodlands and related natural resources. Kennedy began planting a variety of trees through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in 1990. Over the last 27 years, he has endeavored to replace less desirable species through firewood harvests and additional plantings of bur oak, shagbark hickory, and most recently, pecan. Kennedy’s work creates an excellent hands-on learning venue for other landowners interested in managing woodlands. Some of the educational events to be featured at the field day include: controlling invasive plants like bush honeysuckle; updates on common tick-borne diseases in Kansas, and the latest protections; new innovations in the use of native Kansas wood products such as Bio-char; how to get started raising honeybees, and the importance of pollinators; how to care for your woodlands and young tree plantings; creating excellent habitat for wildlife; and an informal question and answer session with a variety of woodland owners and Tree Farmers.

There is a $12 registration fee to cover the cost of lunch and morning refreshments. For registration information visit www.kansasforests.org under “News & Events,” or call the Kansas Forest Service state office at 785-532-3310, or email Bob Atchison at atchison.ksu.edu.

Member Benefits Reminder!
As a member of KFA, you are eligible for a 7% discount from Forestry Suppliers, Inc. Use code KKS when placing an order online or over the phone – www.forestry-suppliers.com – 800.752.8461
Special thanks to contributing authors:
Charlie Barden, Katy Dhungel, Darci Paull, and Carolyn Turney

The KFA would love to hear from you!
What have you been doing with your land?
What would you like to see KFA doing for you?

Help KFA to save money and trees, go paperless!

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically in the future, please contact Julie Sharp with your email address at: jsharp.kfa@gmail.com