Join us in hosting the 2019 National Walnut Council Meeting, June 16-19 in Kansas

Kansas is proud to be the destination for the 2019 National Walnut Council Meeting on June 16-19. “Walnuts in Indian Country” will be the theme for the event being held in the Topeka area, with the headquarters being located at the Prairie Band Casino and Resort in Mayetta, KS. To start the event, participants are invited to sign up for the Walnut Masters Golf Tournament held at Firekeeper Golf Course on Sunday afternoon. The opening reception will follow at the Kansas History Museum on Sunday evening, where participants will be served an excellent assortment of hors d’oeuvres, wines & local beers as well as non-alcoholic drinks. Free access to the museum is offered throughout the evening.

During day two, attendees will be able to participate in a field tour at Barrow Ranch with topics including Drones & Equipment Demonstrations, Assessing Black Walnuts, and Sawmill Demonstrations. After lunch, the group will proceed to Copperhead Hill Ranch, where KS Agroforestry award winner, John Buchanan has established a successful alley cropping system among oaks, walnuts and other high quality hardwoods. Agroforestry experts will be in attendance to provide presentations on design, establishment, and maintenance on a variety of practices. Night sessions include discussions on Women Owning Woodlands by Dr. Tamara Walkingstick, Effects of Fire and Oak Thinning in Woodlands, Protection from Ticks and Disease, and Landowner Show and Tell.

Tuesday’s field tours will be at the Kickapoo Riparian Forest, which includes discussions on Birds of the Forest, Wildlife & Ecology, Working Forest Management, Stream Processes, Forest Assessment, and Plant Identification. After lunch, the sessions return indoors with topics titled Lumber vs. Nuts, Making the Choice by Dr. Bill Reid, former KSU pecan specialist, What can Drones do?, History of the Potawatomi Tribe, and again Landowner Show and Tell.

The final morning will include a breakfast buffet followed by technical sessions on ambrosia beetles & walnut plantations, fire and thinning oak woodlands, and other topics. Events will conclude on Wednesday with a business meeting and state reports.

Spouses tours will also be available as an alternative to the traditional field tours, to experience many of the regional highlights. Destinations for the spouses tour include the State Capital & Governor’s Mansion, Blind Tiger Brewery, Ted Ensley Botanical Gardens, Old Prairie Town and Mulvane Art Museum, and Glaciers Edge Winery.

There is great excitement to host this event and showcase the many efforts here in Kansas. Please consider attending this excellent opportunity for education and collaboration. Early registration runs through June 5th with 1-day for $65 and the entire event registration for $175 and can accessed at 2019walnutcouncil.eventbrite.com. If you would like more information, visit walnutcouncil.org/events/annual-meeting/ or contact Charlie Barden at cbarden@ksu.edu or 785-532-1444.

Upcoming Events

- **December 3 - May 6** – Spring Conservation Seedlings – Online at kansasforests.org or call 888.740.8733
- **April 10 (April 16 rainout)** – Direct Seeding Demonstration at Tom Meek’s Property, Clay County Kansas – For more info, contact Shane Neel 785.617.0717 or shane@ksu.edu
- **June 16-19** – National Walnut Council Annual Meeting – Prairie Band Casino & Resort, 12305 150th RD Mayetta, KS – For more info, contact Charlie Barden 785.532.1444 or cbarden@ksu.edu
- **July 11 – 9:00-3:00** – Kansas Forestry Association Board Meeting– Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism Region 2 Office, Topeka
Notes from the 2019 ATFS National Leadership Conference

Tree farmers from across the country came together in Louisville, Kentucky to celebrate successes, discuss concerns and changes, and plan together for the future of the American Tree Farm System. From Churchill Downs, to the Old Forester and Jim Beam distilleries, Louisville Slugger, and the White Oak Initiative, Kentucky had the opportunity to show-case its distinct character and create a unique experience for participants. “Growing Forest Conservation” together was the theme and was consistently reinforced throughout the 3 days.

One of the more notable changes that was presented by the ATFS was a “Framework for Strengthening and Growing the American Tree Farm System.” Recommendations from the study include managing and growing certification, streamlining the certification process, strengthening forester participation, fostering landowner engagement, embracing variability, and improved communication. While ATFS and partners developed the framework, implementation will be depend upon individual state and regional needs. Input and collaboration are being sought from states and eventually new regional managers will be in place to continue this dialogue and increase ability to work on unique state issues and preferences.

The impact these changes will have on Kansas are yet to be determined. When KFA chose to utilize the Recognition pathway instead of Certification pathway during the State Voice, State Choice initiative, we no longer required third-party certification for tree farms. Once the new regional manager is in place, KFA will continue to advocate for partnering with the American Forest Foundation to increase forestry in Kansas.

Final highlights of the trip were sharing the story of KFA, learning from other states, networking to improve programs, and connecting with ATFS and AFF leaders and staff as well as nationwide tree farmers. Through these collaborative efforts, the Tree Farm conference provided the platform to learn from each other and continue to seek success on goals to grow conservation in forestry. Balancing national efforts, while focusing on specific needs of Kansas will be the plan moving forward.

KFA would like to represent all its members and if you want to be a part of the process, we welcome your input. As more changes arise, information will be shared with membership through newsletters, online, and at member events. If you want to know more or become involved, consider attending the next board meeting on July 11th or by communicating with a board member with contact information found on the website.

Order your new Kansas Forestry Association signs

These 28” x 10” membership signs are made of aluminum and are ready to mount and display. They cost $20.55 plus shipping to recoup the cost to KFA. Order your membership sign online at the KFA website, or by contacting Shane at 785-617-0717 or shane@ksu.edu.

www.KSForestryAssociation.org
Project Learning Tree is Connecting Classrooms to Tree Farms

A continuation of an initiative to engage tree farmers in environmental education and make educators more aware of forestry practices was held in Emporia on February 9th. Area teachers participated in training for Project Learning Tree and then had the opportunity to visit the Turney’s Tree Farm. "The community-building activities and movement were very engaging and kept my focus," commented Ella a Free State high school student. Ashley, an early education assistant director shared that the program had, “Real application for young children to inspire curiosity and inquisitive actions.” Teachers will now take their experiences and resources back to their schools to utilize in their K-12 classrooms to share the story of forestry in Kansas. This is a part of a larger effort to get more students outside, engaged in learning about environmental issues in natural habitats.

The grant was a collaboration between the Kansas Forestry Association, the Kansas Forest Service, Kansas Tree Farm System and the Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education with financial support from the American Forest Foundation. A goal of the project is to make more people aware of forestry practices and create educational opportunities at tree farms. “The workshop participants were really excited to visit the Turney’s Tree Farm after a day of great hands-on forestry activities. They were cold, but engaged and curious about the process of tree farming and asked some great questions about grafting and forest products,” said Laura Downey, executive director of KACEE. KFA will continue to work with KACEE to create more opportunities for schools and educators to experience Kansas Tree Farms and learn about the features and benefits of forestry in Kansas. Kansas Tree Farmers will be contacted to see if they have interest in some aspect of these educational efforts. This will then be shared with schools as more are trained to use the Project Learning Tree curriculum and field visits with learning opportunities will be scheduled by the local teachers. If you have any questions or interest, please contact Shane Neel at 785-617-0717 or shane@ksu.edu or Laura Downey at 785-532-3322 or ldowney@kacee.org.

KFS hosts Demonstrations on Planting Bare-Root Seedlings and Direct Seeding

In an attempt to showcase new techniques, increase awareness and create dialogue about best management for streamside forestry, the Kansas Forest Service is planning a series of demonstration plantings. Water quality foresters Jarran Tindle and Andy Klein are utilizing techniques such as direct seeding and cover cropping in combination with more traditional bare-root seedling plantings to increase viability and lower costs. The first of these workshops in the series will be held in Clay County at Tom Meek’s place on April 9th. If you are interested in attending a demonstration in your area, information can be found on the KFA website or by contacting Shane Neel.
Special thanks to contributing authors: Charlie Barden, Bob Atchison, Cassie Wandersee, Carolyn Turney, Andy Klein, Jarran Tindle, and Shane Neel.

How can you become more involved as a KFA member? Would you like to serve on the KFA board of directors? How can we share your story of conservation on your land? We would love to hear from you; please contact us with your ideas.

If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact Shane Neel, Program Director with your email address at: shane@ksu.edu

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