



Tapping maple trees to collect sap for syrup production. (Photo rights- <http://albanykid.com/2013/05/26/new-york-maple/>)

# Forest Farming Footnotes

FALL  
2013

## TAPPING RESOURCES

Dear Community Members,

We are delighted to provide another installment of Forest Farming Footnotes to keep you up to date and informed on CoP accomplishments and address issues and ideas pertinent to forest farming and our eXtension network. We also cover new developments and continue discussion on key facets of forest farming. In this issue, Katie Trozzo submitted an interesting community discussion piece regarding her views on the relationship between forest farming and forest gardening. Your reactions and thoughts would certainly benefit the group. In fact, the tricks of the trade section covers how you can contribute to discussion on Katie's piece or anything else that "ramps" you up! We also share member activities in support of our overall mission, like highlights from the Agroforestry Academy recently hosted at the University of Missouri's Center for Agroforestry and content development initiatives by CoP members such as Becky Barlow from Auburn University.

Stay well and enjoy. Until next time.

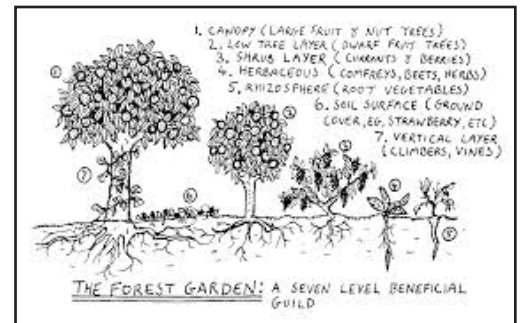
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## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS



### Community Discussion Page 4

We continue discussing the scope of forest farming in a discussion led by Katie Trozzo examining the relationship between forest farming and forest gardening.

## Connect with us



### Social Media Update Page 2

We now have Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts to draw more attention to forest farming and to engage our Community of Interest.

## 13th North American Agroforestry Conference Summary June 19-21, University of Prince Edward Island

The 13th North American Agroforestry Conference took place at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown, Canada in June. It was a great opportunity to network and many of our members gave presentations in the section on Non Timber Forest Products and we were able to have a member meeting as well as recruit new members.

Ken Mudge and Steve Gabriel of Cornell University presented on *Forest Farming of Shiitake Mushrooms: Building a Network and Markets in the Northeast US*. Their network can be accessed at <http://blogs.cornell.edu/mushrooms>. Ken also presented on *Effect of Cultural Practices on Log Cultivation of Shiitake Mushrooms*. Bryan Sobel, from Cornell University, presented on *Production System and Species Selection Affects the Concentrations of Phenolics and Flavonoids in Lion's Mane Mushroom (Hericium sp)*. Information from his research can be found under the Forest Farmings Tid Bits section on page 3.



Catherine Bukowski gave a summary of accomplishments and lessons learned from managing our CoP in her presentation on *Lessons from the Management and Membership of a Virtual Forest Farming Network*. Many of these results have been shared with members through our newsletters and other updates on the website. Mike Farrell of Cornell University discussed *Black Walnut Syrup Production as an Agroforestry Crop* and he joined our community following the conference. A copy of the conference proceedings can be downloaded or viewed [online](#).

### Social Media Update



Priya Jaishanker has recently joined the community as our new Extension Media Assistant. Her main focus is on creating videos of forest farming techniques, but she is also working to increase our social media presence.

Thanks to Priya we now have Facebook, Twitter and YouTube accounts. If you have an account with any of these social media platforms, we encourage you to like our pages, start following us, promote them to your networks and to contribute appropriate content. Priya is currently creating a blog to accompany

the eXtension website while also giving our community

of interest an opportunity to comment and engage with the content. Our

Pinterest account is gaining more followers and our Flickr account now has over 500 photos that can be used in your presentations and publications! Click on the buttons below to visit our sites or see page 7 for urls:



# NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCT TID BITS

Here are some common NTFPs and interesting facts you should know about them...



## PINE STRAW

Pine straw is produced when southern pine trees such as longleaf (*Pinus palustris*), slash (*Pinus elliotti*), or loblolly (*Pinus taeda*) cast their needles in the fall. This annual needle shedding is a natural biological process where older, spent needles fall from the tree to be replaced by new ones. The resulting pine straw can be raked by hand or harvested using a mechanical raking machine and turned into bales that are sold to retailers, landscapers, and homeowners who use the straw as landscape mulch. The change in soil chemistry as a result of using pine straw often is overstated and can be used with a variety of plants.



## LION'S MANE MUSHROOMS

Lion's Mane mushrooms (*Hericium sp.*) are thought to have multiple health benefits, especially neurological and potentially against cancer. The mushroom is 20 percent protein and said to taste similar to seafood. They are increasingly studied for their neuroprotective qualities that can help stimulate nerve regeneration. One of our members, Bryan Sobel, studied concentrations of flavonoid and phenolic content, which are thought to be the source of health benefits, in mushrooms that were forest farmed as compared to those grown indoor on a fortified sawdust substrate. All of the forest farmed mushrooms contained roughly ten-fold the concentrations of phenolics and flavonoids when compared to the same strains grown in a climate controlled site.



## SAW PALMETTO

Saw Palmetto (*Serenoa repens*) is a fan palm tree that grows native along warmer portions of the southeast US coast and can reach heights of 10 feet. Yellow berries are produced in the summer and ripen to a brownish black in the fall. Native Americans used the berries as a staple food and medicine. Today saw palmetto berries are commonly used to treat symptoms of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH), or enlarged prostate. According to the [American Cancer Society](#), some clinical studies have found that saw palmetto relieves difficult and frequent urination due to BPH, but there are no results showing that it can prevent or treat it. It is more generally used to modulate and balance hormones in both men and women.



## BLACK COHOSH

Black cohosh (*Actea racemosa*) is a tall flowering plant found most commonly in rich soils of the Appalachian mountains, but with an extensive range as far west as Indiana and Missouri. Other common names include: black snakeroot, bugbane, and bugwort. Native Americans used the rhizome for over two centuries for kidney ailments, malaria, rheumatism, and sore throats as well as treatment for various female conditions. The [University of Maryland Medical Center](#) states that despite positive clinical study results on the herb's ability to reduce menopause symptoms for women who cannot or will not take hormonal replacement therapy (HRT), there is still debate on its effectiveness and safety beyond 6 months of use.

# COMMUNITY DISCUSSION BOARD

## Forest Farming vs. Forest Gardening: Could They Be Intertwined?

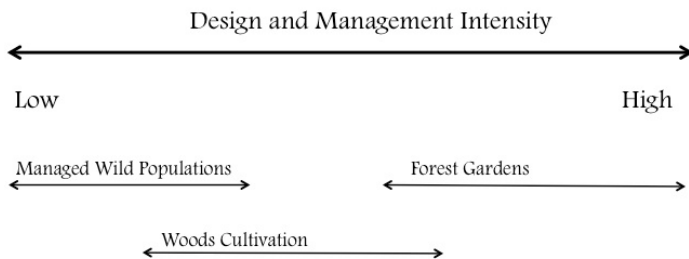
Katie Trozzo

In this note, I will share some queries and additional ideas we could consider in defining forest farming, as a continuation of the dialogue started by Steve Gabriel (<http://farmingthewoods.com/2013/04/04/forest-farming-vs-forest-gardening-whats-the-difference-2/>). Many of these queries and ideas focus on the possibility of forest gardening as a type of forest farming.

First, could we consider forest farming practices to be organized along a spectrum of management and design intensity? (See figure below) If so, some practices along this spectrum include managed wild populations, woods cultivation, and potentially forest gardening. The management of wild populations requires low management and design. We mostly protect and perpetuate wild plants. Woods cultivation requires more design considerations involving plant selection, siting, spacing, protection from wildlife and more intensive management. Forest gardens could be considered a highly intensive type of forest farming where we choose elements of the entire system from scratch including overstory trees.

The idea of including forest gardens as a practice within the field of forest farming was elicited by a few questions outlined below. These questions could be helpful to consider as a community when deciding how forest gardens relate to or fit within the field of forest farming,

### Forest Farming



1. How do practices outlined in seminal works such as J.Russell Smith’s *Tree Crops* and J.Sholto Douglas and Robert Hart’s book *Forest Farming* fit into our contemporary definition of the field? These authors look at tree-based production of food, fiber, medicine, and fodder with a focus on reforesting marginal farmlands. This focus on multi-story farming systems where the overstory trees are selected and managed seems more congruent with the intensity of forest gardening systems.

2. When a forest garden becomes mature and understory plants become a focus, would the garden then be considered a forest farm? If the two are separate, how does maturation of the system fit in? Would the system be defined differently at different successional stages? Is this 300-year-old food forest in Vietnam (<http://www.permaculture.co.uk/videos/300-year-old-food-forest-suburbs>) considered forest farming?

3. Is the separation of forest gardens and forest farming consistent with how other agroforestry practices are defined? In the silvopasture model, the system can be developed from both an existing stand of trees or an open field. Forest farming could also be started from an existing stand of trees or from an open field. Forest gardening and all that has been developed within the practice could be the tool for establishing forest farming from scratch.

### References

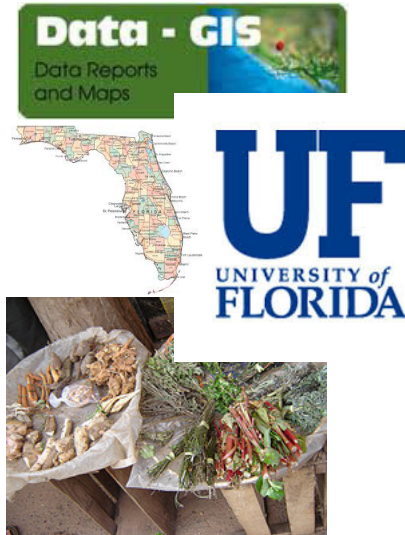
Douglas JS, Hart R (1984) *Forest farming: Towards a solution to problems of world hunger and conservation*, new edition. Intermediate Technology Publications, London

Smith JR (1950) *Tree crops: A permanent agriculture*. Island Press, Washington DC

**TO CONTRIBUTE YOUR THOUGHTS, SEND AN EMAIL TO:**  
[forestfarming@extension.org](mailto:forestfarming@extension.org)

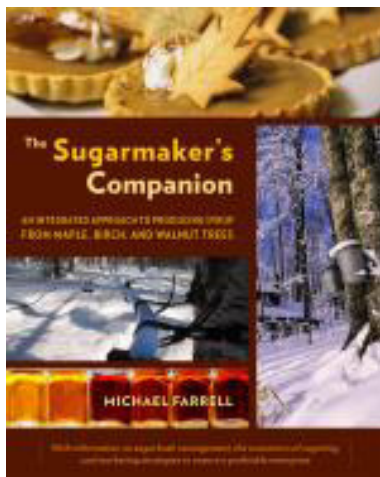
## MEMBER PROJECTS

We extend a special thanks to our community members that are contributing to the Forest Farming CoP through their websites and projects...



### Florida NonTimber Specialty Products Assessment

Michael Andreu from the University of Florida (UF) School of Forest Resources and Conservation and Ajay Sharma from UF, West Florida Research and Education Center recently joined our community. Both are investigators on a project starting in the coming months with funding from the Florida Division of Forestry and directed by Kimberly Bohn UF, West Florida Research and Educational Center. The project will assess suppliers of NTFPs and their markets with the end goal of creating an online directory and GIS map of harvester locations and sources of collection. The project will target products such as saw palmetto, St. John's wort, spanish moss, honey and pine straw but will also contact county foresters and visit farmer's market to interview buyers to learn about additional products. Ajay plans to assist the CoP with information on saw palmetto to increase medicinal herb content.



### The Sugarmaker's Companion

Mike Farrell is the Director of the Uihlein Forest- Cornell's Sugar Maple Research & Extension Field Station in Lake Placid, NY. His research has focused on evaluating the growth potential of the maple industry based on ecological, social, economic and public policy factors. Apart from writing over fifty articles on maple syrup production and forest management, he recently authored his first book, *The Sugarmaker's Companion: An integrated approach to producing syrup from Maple, Birch and Walnut trees*. To purchase the book visit [ChelseaGreen.com](http://ChelseaGreen.com). Mike aims to contribute articles and FAQs on syrup production and the differences between types of syrup and implications for management. We will also be producing syrup production videos in Lake Placid with him to add to our YouTube channel series.



### Pine Straw Management

Becky Barlow from Auburn University focuses her extension and research on Southern pine ecosystems, forest management, agroforestry practices and working with landowners to increase income generating activities on their property. She has been extremely helpful in the last few months contributing articles and FAQs on pine straw that we will be posting to our site in the coming month. She recently produced two award winning videos highlighting longleaf pine management for private landowners and a second video on Silvopasture practices. We hope to work with Becky to produce pine straw management practices for our YouTube channel series in the coming months.

## Agroforestry Academy Follow-Up

The University of Missouri Center for Agroforestry hosted a week-long Agroforestry Academy in early August at its main campus in Columbia. The academy was designed as a “train-the-trainer” program and 27 people from seven states participated. Federal and state government agency personnel, natural resources professionals, and educators and extensionists received workshop style training on agroforestry practices and principles, visited active field sites, and worked through an agroforestry planning exercise. The Academy is sponsored by SARE and developed in collaboration with the Mid-America Agroforestry Working Group (MAAWG) based out of the Leopold Center at the University of Iowa.

Mike Gold, a member of the forest farming CoP and faculty at the University of Missouri was the Academy’s lead coordinator. Another CoP member, John Munsell from Virginia Tech, provided a presentation on forest farming. Also in attendance were CoP members Tracy Coulter of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry, Rich Straight of the National Agroforestry Center, and Diomy Zamora of the University of Minnesota. A forest farming highlight was the presentation by owner Nicola McPherson about Ozark Specialty Mushrooms’ operation, distribution, and sales. The release of the Center’s 2013 [Agroforestry Training Manual](#) coincided with the Academy and served as baseline content for the presentations, site visits, and design exercise. CoP members John Munsell, Jeanine Davis, and Jim Chamberlain authored the chapter on forest farming.




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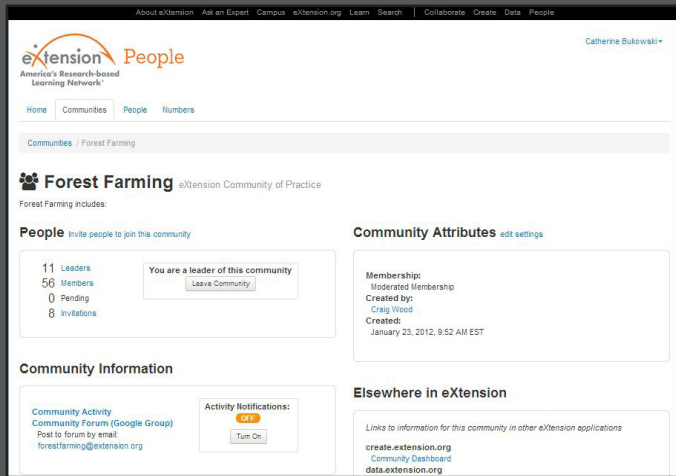
## Tricks-of-the-Trade

eXtension.org received a new site design this summer to make it more aesthetically pleasing and intuitive. As a result, we now have banner photos across the top of the page that will help attract attention to articles, social media buttons located near the top and standardized across the site as well as the addition of rotating bios to present CoP members on our landing page. Since we have over fifty members, we would like to make sure that everyone’s bio is added to the site to be part of the rotation. In the coming weeks we will send out the bios of our members based on information gathered from internet accessible sources. We will send out a list of the bios to all our members to confirm the information and to allow you to make changes. Once complete, we will also compile and send them to all our members so that everyone can learn about our community participants. We hope this will foster a chance to form partnerships with others that you may not have known are interested in forest farming as well as update members on all projects that are happening within this field. Of course, you also will have the option of opting out of having your bio displayed if you so choose.

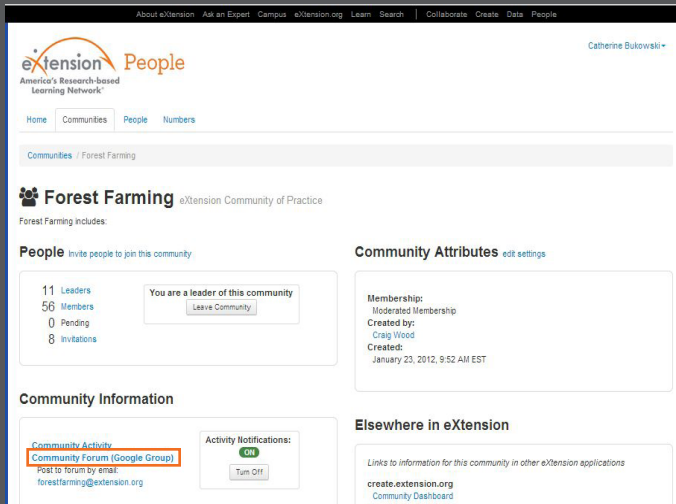
The information on the new site design as well as bios can be found here: New Community Homepages <http://create.extension.org/node/96613>. Please keep in mind that we will need a photo to accompany your bio with the following specifications:

*Bio Photo: The rendered image size on a home page is 223 px by 130 px (72 dpi). You could use that as the image size in the bio article, but we recommend uploading a 446 px x 260px (72 dpi) because that’s a nicer proportion for the bio page itself. Bio photos should feature you, other elements should be minimal. When uploading your bio photo be sure to select “Original” size when asked in the menu options during the upload to ensure that the image’s size is retained and not cropped.*

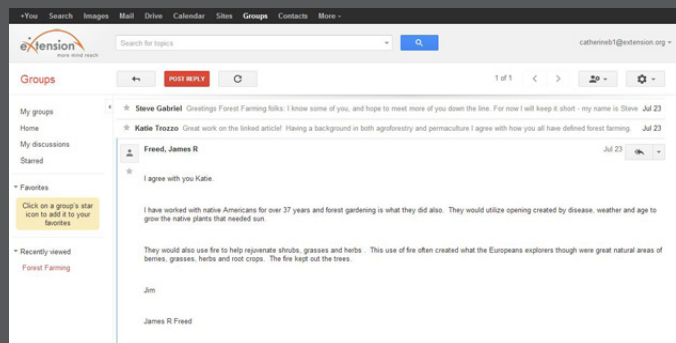
**STEP 1** Login to [www.people.extension.org](http://www.people.extension.org). Click on Communities under the eXtension logo, then click on Forest Farming. Scroll to the bottom of the page to Community Information. Activity notifications will be orange if they are set to off. Turn them on and the button will turn green.



**STEP 2** If you want to post to the forum on the Google Groups page, click on the Community Forum link that has the orange box around it in the snapshot below. Alternatively, the forum email is listed below the link. Note the activity button is green and has now been turned on.



**STEP 3** Clicking on the Community Forum will take you to a login that leads to the Google Group as seen below.



## Tricks-of-the-Trade Cont.

### Google Groups

eXtension.org has done away with the listserv that was previously being used in exchange for connecting our accounts to Google Groups which



### Groups

provides a discussion forum setup. Members can login using their eXtension username and password to participate in discussions. An alternative method of adding to discussions is emailing a response to [forestfarming@extension.org](mailto:forestfarming@extension.org). Anything emailed to that address will be sent to all CoP members as well as listed on the Google Group page. In order to receive notifications of email sent to the group follow the steps to the left to turn notifications on.

### Ask an Expert Workbook

eXtension has made a workbook to assist in configuring and using the Ask an Expert 2.0 system. From the eXtension website:

See how to configure Ask an Expert settings to receive, answer, and manage eXtension Ask an Expert questions.

Share this workbook link using this address: <http://create.extension.org/node/96175>.

Need help?

For Ask an Expert “How-To” Workbook questions, contact Denise Johnson ([johnson.2924@osu.edu](mailto:johnson.2924@osu.edu)) or Karen Jeannette ([Karen.jeannette@extension.org](mailto:Karen.jeannette@extension.org))

### Social Media Sites

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/ForestFarming>

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Forest-Farming/580992695295567>

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/exforestfarming>

**Pinterest:** <http://www.pinterest.com/grass/forestfarming/boards/>

**Flickr:** <http://www.flickr.com/photos/forestfarming/>