

TREE FARMING IN IOWA

•The National Program

A *Tree Farm* is forested land being managed for the continuous production of multiple products and benefits. Except for large government holdings, most natural woodlands and tree plantations are eligible for Tree Farm certification. The American Tree Farm System is sponsored by the nation's forest industries through the American Forest Foundation and is endorsed by a variety of private and public organizations and individuals.



•The Iowa Program

The Iowa Tree Farm Program was initiated in 1955 and began to grow rapidly in the early 1980's. At least 50 new properties have been added annually in recent years. Iowa now has over 1,000 active Tree Farms averaging about 80 acres in size.

The mission of the Iowa Tree Farm Program is to promote and recognize stewardship of Iowa's woodland resources. The general goals of the program are: 1) increase sustainable woodland management and recognize certified Tree Farmers; and 2) increase public awareness of the multiple benefits of Iowa's woodlands.

The Iowa Tree Farm Committee administers the program in the state; committee members are primarily professional foresters and active Tree Farmers. This state committee maintains the national Tree Farm Standards. Field assistance for landowners and certification of properties are handled by the District Foresters of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and several private consulting foresters.

Benefits for Landowners

Tree Farming is not a get-rich-quick proposition, but income from timberland can be doubled or tripled by the adoption of accepted forest management practices. Tree Farm practices can also: increase wildlife populations by providing more food and better habitat; protect streams

and improve water quality and yields; and increase the real estate value. These benefits can be realized without detracting from the scenic beauty or reducing opportunities for family recreation. Finally, protected woodlands can be exempted from property tax under the Iowa Forest Reserve law.

Basis for Qualification

Tree Farm Standards are high, but an interested woodland owner can identify and implement wise manage-



**Iowa Grows Quality Walnut Trees
and Other High Value Hardwoods**

ment practices which can quickly qualify the property as an Iowa Tree Farm. To qualify for Tree Farm status in Iowa, a woodland must be: 1) privately owned or a small public ownership; 2) managed for the growth and harvest of repeated forest crops; 3) completely protected from grazing; (4) adequately protected from fire, insects, and disease; and 5) at least five acres in size for hardwood stands or three acres in size for conifer plantations.

Certifying a Woodland

Certification begins with a request from a landowner to meet with a professional forester (approved by the Iowa Tree Farm Committee) for an evaluation of the woodland property. A visit may be requested by completing and mailing the application form on this leaflet. There is no charge for this visit.

After surveying the property and discussing its condition with the owner, the forester sends a completed application form to the Chair of the Iowa Tree Farm Committee for review. Following approval, the new Tree Farmer receives an official membership certificate signed by the Chair of the Iowa Tree Farm Committee and by the Vice President of the American Forest Foundation. The approved landowner is also given a green-and-white Tree Farm sign to mark the property and periodically receives useful information on a variety of forestry topics from the American Forest Foundation.

Accomplishments of the new Tree Farmer may be recognized at an appropriate public meeting such as a Forestry Field Day. A news release may be sent to the local press to identify and recognize the new Tree Farmer.

Iowa Tree Farms are reinspected by an approved professional forester every five years to review management activities and to provide opportunity for consultation. Certification may be withdrawn, if management standards are not maintained.

For more information about Tree Farming in Iowa, simply fill out the form on this leaflet and mail it to the indicated address. Or, you can contact your public or private forestry consultant directly.



Application to Become a Tree Farmer

I would like to receive advice and information on how to best manage my woodland area to qualify as an Iowa Tree Farm.

Acres of Woodland
County

Please make arrangements for a Tree Farm Inspecting Forester to contact me.

(name)

(mailing address)

(town/city)

(state and ZIP)

(daytime phone number)

Return completed form to:

**Paul Tauke
Iowa Tree Farm Committee
Loess Hills State Forest
Box 157
Pisgah, IA 51564
(Phone 712/456-2175)**