

Agroforestry *Update*

September 2008

*British Columbia
Agroforestry
Industry
Development
Initiative*

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Agroforestry Strategic Planning for BC is Underway

Since 2003, the BC Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative has been supporting the development and adoption of agroforestry in the province to bring it from an emerging sector with large but unrealized potential, into an established, self-reliant and dynamic industry. With funding from the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC and the support of the Federation of BC Woodlot Associations, the Agroforestry Management Committee (AMC) and its many partners have delivered:

- Ten demonstration projects that highlight various agroforestry production systems throughout BC;
- Fourteen major tech transfer projects including workshops, training sessions, guidebooks and other extension materials; and,
- An active website, this newsletter, and numerous presentations and information

sessions to hundreds of interested members of community, First Nations, conservation and industry groups throughout BC.

Industry development has followed, and in addition to traditional practices of silvopasture and shelter-belt activity, new enterprises have emerged as direct result of AMC support, including big leaf maple and birch tapping businesses and specialty crops from agroforestry cultivation such as hawthorn for the natural health products market.

As the funding and mandate of the current Initiative come to a close this year there is an opportunity to capitalize on the successes and positive momentum that has been generated to further expand the adoption of agroforestry in BC. This will create additional diversification opportunities in niche production and innovative conservation practices that allow for integration with existing production.

As the next step in the advancement of agroforestry in BC, a new strategic plan is in development to assess the needs and priorities of the sector. The existing Strategic Plan was developed in 2002 for the period of 2003 to 2008. A key to the success of the Agroforestry Initiative has been its focus on the priorities from its stakeholders. The new Strategic Plan will therefore again be authored using direct input from current and potential agroforestry practitioners and will identify those areas and issues, which need to be addressed for further development of the sector.

Your interests and aspirations will continue to guide agroforestry development in BC, so please become part of the planning process.

Continued next page

Strategic Plan *continued*

There are three ways to have your voice heard:

1. Complete a survey.

We've designed three surveys to take the pulse of the sector in BC. These surveys recognize the distinct roles and needs of different groups working towards developing agroforestry as a sustainable production option. The first is designed for producers: farmers, ranchers, woodlot managers, harvesters or other entrepreneurs who work directly with production systems. This survey will allow us to better profile agroforestry production and marketing activities in BC, assess their participation and interest in various agroforestry practices, understand their motivation for using agroforestry and will allow producers to rate support topics and support methods (i.e. how they prefer to learn and receive information). A second survey is designed for businesses that buy products from agroforestry producers (wholesalers, brokers, processors and manufacturers). This survey will help us to understand their buying and marketing activities and assess the interest in various agroforestry

products. It will also allow buyers to rate support methods to improve their connections to producers. The third survey we are undertaking is polling groups and individuals that support resource management and industry development. First Nations leadership, Tribal Councils, Federal, Provincial and local governments, economic and community development groups, colleges and universities, conservation and environmental groups, producer associations or any other group with an interest in supporting sustainable, profitable production options in BC. These groups are engaged in a variety of support roles including extension research, education, policy development and planning. The goals of the support organization survey are to profile agroforestry research and extension activities around BC, assess the interest in various agroforestry topics and allow support groups to rate support topics and methods.

2. Join a regional focus group. In October and November we will be conducting a series of regional focus group meetings to gather more

detailed information and help us with the process of prioritizing agroforestry development needs. This information will be used to assist in shaping future agroforestry support programs and gain a clearer understanding of regional differences and priorities.

3. Send a written submission. General written submissions, of any length, with ideas, suggestions or links to organizations, programs or information you think would be of benefit to the development of agroforestry in BC are most welcome.

Watch for further announcements and information in the "News" section of the Agroforestry Initiative website:

www.woodlot.bc.ca/agroforestry/news.htm

If you would like to participate in a survey, focus group or have other ideas or suggestions, please contact George Powell, Agroforestry Initiative Facilitator:

(250) 983-5114

agroforestry@uniserve.com

"Your interests and aspirations will continue to guide agroforestry development in BC, so please become part of the planning process."

Bigleaf Maple Syrup Extension Materials In Development

“...extension materials will be prepared in the fall of 2008 and will be ready in time for the Bigleaf Maple Syrup Festival on Friday, February 8th, 2009.”

Interest and activity in BC's bigleaf maple tapping industry continues to grow. With funding from the BC Agroforestry Industry Development Initiative, the BC Forest Discovery Centre and maple tapping industry will create extension materials, and an awareness campaign for school children and the general public on bigleaf maple tapping. The goals of this project are to increase public awareness of BC's maple syrup industry, teach people how to tap maple trees and create syrup, and directly connect the growing number of maple syrup producers in BC with consumers.

The idea of a West Coast maple syrup festival arose during a maple-tapping workshop delivered by Gary and Katherine Backlund at the Forest Discovery Centre in September 2007. More than 1,400 people from Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland, and Washington State participated in the inaugural event. Most producers sold out of their product early in the day and over one hundred people participated in each tapping demonstration.

With interest expressed from Vancouver Island teachers, the 2009 festival is expanding to include an elementary school education program. In support of the festival, a number of extension and promotional materials will be prepared. These include a brochure that outlines festival events, tapping tips, producer contact information, and syrup production information; a computer-based slide-show that will provide an overview of maple tapping and syrup making, tapping demonstration equipment; and, preparation of a static display at the Discovery Centre with an evaporator where students can learn 'hands-on' how to make syrup. These materials will allow youth and students to learn the basics of tapping and syrup production.

The BC Forest Discovery Centre is a 100-acre, non-profit museum with charitable status. The Centre's mandate is to educate the public on the past, present and future of the forest industry on the coast of BC. There are many logging exhibits, heritage buildings, mature second-growth forest, walking trails and an

operational rail line. About 25,000 visitors enjoy the Centre annually with 1,200 students participating in forest history and ecology education programs. The Centre offers several special events throughout the operating season (Easter to Thanksgiving) and a Christmas Express in December. The Centre is closed to the public in January and February, with the exception of the Bigleaf Maple Festival.

The extension materials will be prepared this fall and will be ready in time for the Bigleaf Maple Syrup Festival on Friday, February 8th, 2009. Festival participants will leave the event with enough knowledge and basic supplies to start tapping their own trees at home and gain an understanding of the significance of maple syrup to the West Coast agroforestry industry.

Hawthorn Agroforestry Continues to Show Promise

For the past four years, the West Kootenay Herb Growers Co-operative (WKHGC) has been developing agroforestry production systems to provide a local, sustainable supply of hawthorn for sale into the growing natural health products (NHP) market. And interest from potential producers and the market opportunities for native BC hawthorn are also growing, as evidenced by a 'standing room only' crowd at the Arrow Lakes Grill in Edgewood on August 1st for series of presentations and a tour updating progress at the Hawthorn Agroforestry Demonstration Farm Trial.

Hawthorn is ranked among the top 25 selling Herbal Dietary Supplements in US. Annual sales are estimated at \$29 million and have grown 7% in the past three years. Hawthorn's popularity has been elevated by recent research and media attention. According to Paula Brown, Program Head at the BC Institute of Technology's Natural Health Product Research Group, research published in the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews (January 2008) suggests hawthorn extract helps blood flow and can significantly ease the symptoms of chronic heart failure.

The WKHGC's agroforestry production trials are exceeding expectations, and their processing, botanical and chemical evaluations are also building the necessary product quality standards to access domestic NHP markets. As emphasized by Jim Strausz, General Manager at the Strauss Herb Co, consumer concerns for product quality and safety assurances are driving manufacturers to secure high quality inputs from BC suppliers. This bodes well for a domestic hawthorn market to replace imports used in existing products such as Strauss' signature *Heart Drops*.

"Hawthorn's popularity has been elevated by recent research and media attention."



Some members of the West Kootenay Herb Growers Co-operative pose with the 'fruits of their labour' at the recent Hawthorn Agroforestry Demonstration Farm Trial tour.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

2008 Annual General Meetings of the WPDC and the FBCWA

October 2-4, 2008
Kamloops

Join the Woodlot Product Development Council and the Federation of BC Woodlot Associations at the South Thompson Inn, nestled on the shores of the South Thompson River. The conference theme is *Woodlots: Facing our Future*. Woodlot licensees are proud to uphold a tradition of forestry excellence, while building prosperous communities and striving to preserve forests for the future.

Woodlots have been an integral part of BC's forest sector for over 5 decades. Despite constant and ongoing changes over time, the one constant has been the fact that woodlot licences continue to provide the kind of socio-economic benefits and environmental management so vital to the future of the forest resources and the communities where we live. Highlights include:

- Keynote Speaker: Larry Mason, Rural Technology Initiative, University of Washington.
- Six informative breakout

sessions with more than 14 presenters.

- Woodlot Stewardship Recognition Program featuring 2nd and 3rd generation woodlot managers.
- Panel discussion: Working safely in the woodlots.
- Three outstanding field tours showcasing local land managers.
- Opportunities to network in a relaxed environment.

For registration contact Cathy McClary at the Woodlot Product Development Council:

Phone 1-888-925-9995
Fax 1-250-962-9199
Email cjmclary@shaw

Or register online:

www.woodlot.bc.ca

Shop the Wild Festival

Royal Roads University

October 4-5, 2008
Victoria

The 3rd annual Shop the Wild Festival offers the perfect opportunity to learn about the benefits of going green and choosing local - come and enjoy fresh and delicious wild edibles direct from BC's farms and forests and explore the rich variety of

'goods from the woods' that producers have to offer. This is a free public event with over 50 exhibitors, wild food demos, guided nature walks, face painting and musical entertainment - its fun for the whole family!

For more information visit www.buybcwild.com/shop-wild

11th North American Agroforestry Conference

Agroforestry Comes of Age: Putting Science into Practice

May 31 - June 3, 2009
Columbia, Missouri

Abstracts for oral presentations and poster presentations at the Conference must be submitted electronically by November 1, 2008. For more information about the conference and field tours, and to find the guidelines for submitting abstracts for oral and poster presentations, please visit the UMCA website:

[www.
centerforagroforestry.
org](http://www.centerforagroforestry.org)

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Announcements and Upcoming Events *continued*

Agroforestry Workshop and Tour:

Forest Farming with Berry Crops

October 16-17, 2008

The Westerly Hotel -
Best Western,
Courtenay, BC

Vancouver Island and surrounding region is blessed with an abundance of natural forest resources. The Agroforestry Management Committee invites you to participate in a unique opportunity to learn about options for diversification of your agricultural or woodlot enterprise, as well as the conservation benefits of adopting agroforestry practices with forest farming. This workshop will highlight leading-edge, practical information on forest farming, native berry crop production options, their ecology and propagation techniques, land access and management issues, as well as harvesting and processing technology, value-added opportunities, good agricultural and collection practices and food safety. Lunch and refreshments at the workshop are included in the registration fee.

Some of the species of interest for discussion during the workshop and tour include salal, red huckleberry, thimbleberry, salmonberry, saskatoon berry, blue (mountain) huckleberry, and Oregon grape.

The tour will visit a working woodlot in the Comox valley using agroforestry practices and a managed forest on Mount Washington for discussions on production, conservation and accessing land. Lunch and networking at the Alpine Lodge on Mount Washington are included in the registration fees. The workshop presentations will include:

“Introduction to Forest Farming” - *Harold Macy*, Headquarters Creek Woodlot and member of the provincial Agroforestry Management Committee.

“Vancouver Island Berry Production Options and their Ecology” - *Wendy Cocksedge*, Royal Roads University, Centre for Non-timber Resources.

“Berry Propagation Methods” - *Siriol Paquet*, Sylvan Vale Nursery.

“Access and Land Management Issues” - *Steve Lorimer*, TimberWest.

“Berry Production and Harvesting Overview” - *Mark Sweeney*, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

“Good Agricultural Practices and Food Safety Awareness” - *Raman Gill*, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

“Options for Adding Value” - *Keith Hunter*, First Nations Wildcrafters, BC.

The early registration fee is only \$75 for both days and \$50 for a single day for those paying by October 6. The full rate of \$95 for both days and \$70 for a single day are payable after that date.

Agenda and mail-in registration forms are available in the “News” section of the Agroforestry Initiative website:

www.woodlot.bc.ca/agroforestry/news.htm

Workshop space is limited. Register online at:

<http://bcagroforestryi.workshop.sgizmo.com>

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For more information on this Workshop and Tour, or to request a mail-in registration form, please contact:

George Powell
agroforestry@uniserve.com

Announcements and Upcoming Events *concluded*

Huckleberry Summit Website Launched

Joyce Mastenbrook, a graduate student at the University of Washington has compiled presentations and information presented at last year's huckleberry summit in Washington:

http://students.washington.edu/jklm/Huckleberry_Summit_2007/index.shtml

Presentations are available for a free download and include information on propagation and management of huckleberries and bilberries.

Farm Assessment Review Underway

Landowners in BC have the opportunity to provide input on Farm Assessment classifications in during a province-wide review. The Farm Assessment Review is evaluating the farm classification process and associated regulations with a focus on simplifying and streamlining the regulations, while at the same time ensuring the property assessment system is fair, equitable, transparent, enhances competitiveness and supports innovation. The definition of "Farm" and

the list of activities which constitute "Primary Agricultural Production" for the purposes of meeting income thresholds are not included in the mandate of this review and are not being examined at this time.

More information on the Farm Assessment Review, including a listing of the public consultation and other opportunities for input is available at:

www.sbr.gov.bc.ca/Farm_Assessment_Review.htm

New Extension Notes Available

The image shows two overlapping Agroforestry Extension Notes. The top note is titled "High-Value Hardwoods" and is dated June 2008. It discusses the use of hardwood trees in agroforestry systems. The bottom note is titled "Silvopasture with Christmas Trees" and is dated September 2008. It discusses the integration of Christmas trees with livestock grazing. Both notes include text and small photographs of trees and a cow in a field.

Two new extension notes are available on the Agroforestry Initiative website. "High Value Hardwoods" highlights tree selections suitable for southern BC that can add aesthetics, habitat and generate additional farm income. "Silvopasture with Christmas Trees" outlines a unique agroforestry opportunity to integrate BC's native stand Christmas tree production with grazing. The Extension Notes can be downloaded for free from:

www.woodlot.bc.ca/agroforestry/tools.htm

Contact Us

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[www.woodlot.bc.ca/
agroforestry/](http://www.woodlot.bc.ca/agroforestry/)

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If you have suggestions for future editions of the *Update* or know of an event that should be included, please let us know.

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