



Ramps (*Allium tricoccum*) coming up in spring

Forest Farming Footnotes

SPRING 2013

SOWING NEW IDEAS

Dear Community Members,

Welcome to our spring newsletter! To continue improving communication and offering educational resources, we have added sections to the newsletter. *Non-Timber Forest Products Tid Bits* highlights common NTFPs. If you have any you would like to showcase, email us the information and we will be sure to share with the group.

We also hope this newsletter advances our professional knowledge of forest farming and establishes connections across our professions. The *Community Discussion Board* provides a space in each newsletter to address topics of interest in this area. This issue's piece is meant to encourage dialogue between members about forest farming in relation to wildcrafting. Another topic that could benefit from member discussion is CoP branding to distinguish our social media and community content.

Lastly, thanks to Nancy Franz for the title of our newsletter and leading the evaluation committee.

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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

Pages

Extension faculty and staff have published 46,704 pages: 15,925 articles, 14,629 FAQs, and 13,324 news items to www.extension.org.

Last week 11,651 of those pages, the home page, and the landing pages for 64 groups had 97,232 views.

[Explore more »](#)

eXtension.org Data Page 6

A new section has been created on eXtension.org called Data. It offers a quick overview of Google Analytics group information.



Pinterest Page 2

Pinterest highlights websites using visual pinboards related to specific interests. It provides our community with another tool for public outreach and education.

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

The 13th North American Agroforestry Conference will be held June 19-21, 2013 at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada.

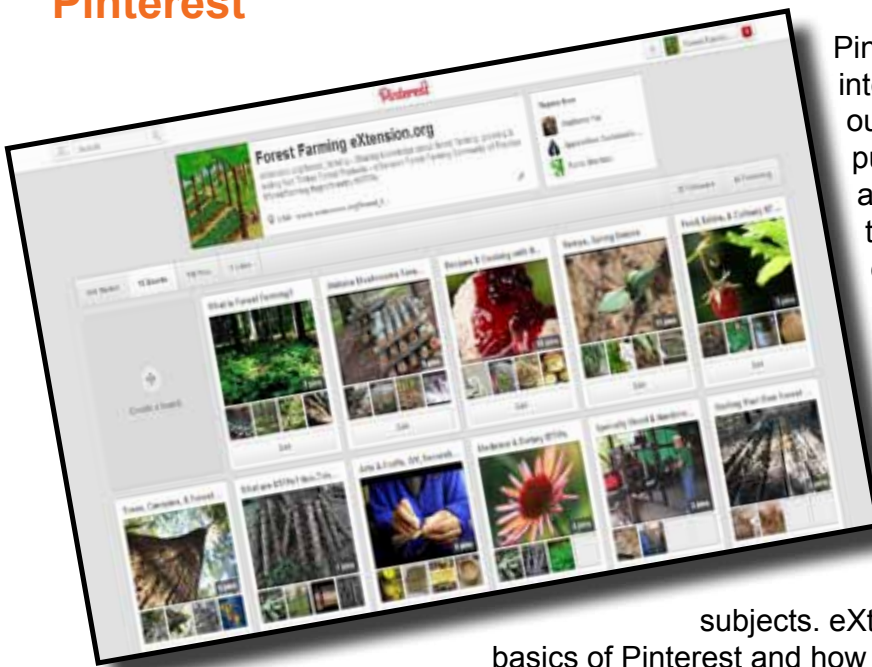
The conference will consist of two days of plenary and concurrent sessions (June 19 and June 21) and include an agroforestry field tour of in the Charlottetown area on June 20. Participants who register for the pre-conference tour on June 17-18 will visit agroforestry sites in New Brunswick.



For more information visit: <http://2013naac.com/>

The conference also provides an opportunity for attending CoP members to catch up, share a little about their current projects and goals, and get some work done for the network. Those that attend and are able to meet will hear updates on specific network initiatives and optimization. We also will discuss next steps and collaboration too. There also will be time and resources available to continue building CoP content.

Pinterest



Pinterest is a great way to draw attention to interesting information on the web. It provides our CoP a platform for aggregating already published content by adding a photograph to a link of a document. As long as we link back to our CoP in the caption of each "pin" we will continue to drive traffic to our site. Currently we have 119 pins under 18 boards. We have 22 people or organizations following us and we are following 40 people or organizations.

Following other members helps people keep automatically updated with new information. Following also allows us to engage with interested users and to gather information and trends on related

subjects. eXtension developed a webinar that teaches the basics of Pinterest and how it can be best used: <https://learn.extension.org/events/476>

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Our boards offer a place to post recipes, arts and crafts that can be made with NTFPs, links to websites with resources such as articles, books and blogs and forest farming facts. There are general boards that contribute to the discussion on forest farming. Feel free to login to Pinterest and add information. The file titled **Pinterest Information** under the Admin Documents on the Create site contains the login, password, and general guidelines for pinning (<http://create.extension.org/node/96238>). If you are not comfortable with using Pinterest, but have information that you would like to add, then send an email to Cathie Bukowski (cjbukows@vt.edu) with the website links. If you simply want to start following us, then visit our page at <http://pinterest.com/forestfarming/>

NON-TIMBER FOREST PRODUCT TID BITS

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



RAMPS

Spring is the perfect time of year for harvesting one of the more popular forest vegetables in the eastern United States. The ramp (*Allium tricoccum* Ait.) is a member of the onion family closely related to leeks. In early spring, ramps send up smooth, broad, lily-of-the-valley-like leaves that disappear by summer before the white flowers appear. Ramps can be forest farmed under hardwood canopies with rich moist soils and established with bulbs similar to onion starts purchased at local farm and seed stores.



SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS

In addition to their unique flavor, shiitake contain lentinan, which helps to maintain immune systems. They also include D-Eritadenine, which can help lower cholesterol, support cardiovascular health, and source beneficial antioxidants and iron. Although more clinical studies are needed. The American Cancer Society (ACS) notes that shiitake extracts could have antiviral properties by producing natural proteins that help inhibit virus multipliers, as well as properties that are beneficial when fighting cancer and recovering from associated treatments. Research regarding the anti-cancer properties of shiitake has been ongoing since the 1960s and the ACS recommends including it as part of a balanced diet.



HONEY

The FDA lacks a standard on pure honey, most sold in the United States is without pollen due to use of an ultra-filtration process. Pollen serves as a natural marker and can be used to confirm source location and thereby determine quality. Food Safety News and Texas A&M University studied popular store-brought brands of honey and recommended a need for rules that would limit the amount of “honey laundering” and establish a “standard of identity” for 100 percent pure honey (<http://goo.gl/nyqnv>). In the meantime, honey producers that practice apiculture in forests and do not use ultra-filtration processes have a potential marketing advantage over commercial brands by advertising products as 100 percent pure and woods grown.



SYRUP

Maple syrup not only tastes great but also has health benefits. Depending on grade and quality, it is known to be a good source of manganese, zinc, calcium, and potassium, as well as possess anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. It may also be beneficial to diabetics because it contains phenolics, which are being studied for their ability to balance blood-sugar levels. Another syrup made from Birch sap, has a rich spicy-sweet flavor and is a popular product from Alaska where it is being promoted by gourmet chefs in dishes such as birch syrup glazed duck and birch butter pecan ice-cream. Researchers at Cornell University’s Extension station in Lake Placid, NY are studying the potential for syrup created using black walnut sap.

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION BOARD

A few thoughts on NTFPs, wildcrafting and forest farming

John Munsell and Jim Chamberlain

WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOURS

At our kickoff meeting in Blacksburg a little over a year ago an energetic discussion broke out regarding wildcrafting and forest farming. Some in attendance may recall that there was a difference in opinion about whether the two share philosophical and practical aspects. For some, forest farming was altogether different from wildcrafting because it focuses on the cultivation of NTFPs. Others felt judicious wild harvests with sustainability in mind are simply the most extensive form of forest farming.

This difference of opinion is important for understanding who we are as a network, how we present ourselves, and where we will go as a community of NTFP experts, educators, practitioners, and advocates. Through content development on our site we have the opportunity to work together to explain practices such as wildcrafting and forest farming and how they relate to NTFP use. We think it is essential to collaborate now and build something we share.

A paper authored by Vaughan et al. (2013) in the *Journal of Forestry* outlines some of the common ground in the management of NTFPs (one of which is forming networks such as ours). The authors explore the human facets of wildcrafting and NTFP management and note that forest farming techniques and systems are presently used but there is still room for improvement. We believe our eXtension community is a resource that will help advance forest farming and the principles of agroforestry across spectrum of NTFP harvesting and management.

**TO CONTRIBUTE YOUR
THOUGHTS, SEND AN EMAIL TO:
allforestfarmingmembers@lists.
extension.org**



In the above photo forestry students are learning about forest farming of ramps at Virginia Tech's Kentland Farm. The photo on the left is wildcrafting of ramps, taken from the following website:
<http://homestead.org/CatherineLugo/Wildcrafting/GoWildcrafting.htm>



MEMBER PROJECTS

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



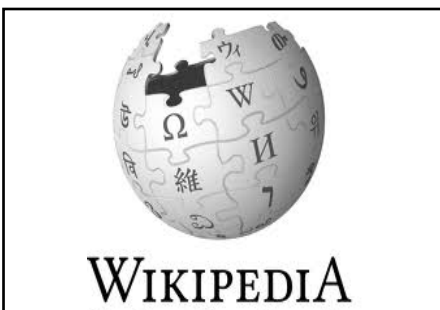
SHIITAKE AND RAMP PRODUCTION VIDEOS

John Haworth recently joined as a media specialist. He has been filming Ken Mudge and Jim Chamberlain explaining shiitake and ramp production for our first video series on forest farming. Soon he will film and interview medicinal producer and community member Dave Carman in West Virginia. John is also helping to establish a YouTube channel that will host videos and link to our CoP. The demonstration sites used for filming will also serve as educational sites for Cornell and Virginia Tech universities.



WILD FOREST GOODS - www.ntfpinfo.us

The Institute for Culture and Ecology (IFCAE) recently completed the Wild Forest Goods project to advance ecological and economic opportunities on small to medium-sized private forestlands in the United States. Funding was provided by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (formerly CSREES). The project linked nontimber forest products, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem service strategies in an effort to improve economic diversification and income creation, provide immediate benefits, and promote long-term ecological and cultural health. Thanks to Eric Jones for sharing this resource, linking to our site, and contributing some of the great photos to our Flickr account! www.ntfpinfo.us



WIKIPEDIA- FOREST FARMING

Thanks to Catherine Bukowski, John Munsell, Jim Chamberlain and Mike Jacobson for rewriting and editing the forest farming Wikipedia page. The page gives a brief history of the practice along with links to websites, such as our eXtension CoP page. This will increase traffic to our site. Everyone is invited to review the page and offer edits. You can edit the page by signing-up for Wikipedia or by emailing the information to Catherine Bukowski: cjbukows@vt.edu



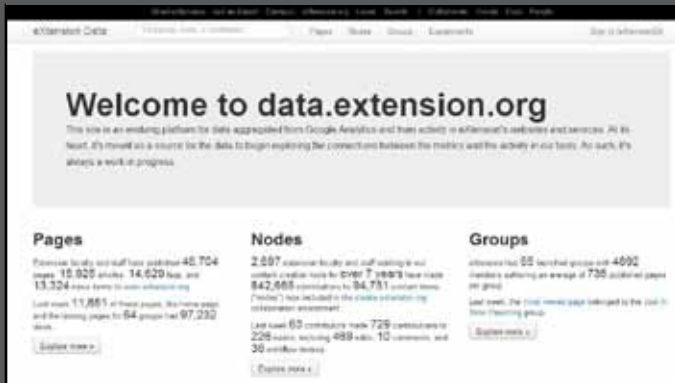
RURAL ACTION NETWORK and APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Appalachian region is a valuable source of non-timber products that may offer alternative income opportunities for land owners. This page provides land owners with information about economically important species that can be cultivated in the forest understory. Thanks to the Rural Action Network staff for joining our CoP and placing the Ask an Expert widget on their website!

STEP 1 Login to the Create site. The link for data will be in between the links for Create and People towards the top of the page. See the red arrow.



STEP 2 The data link will bring you to the welcome page for data.



STEP 3 In the search box type in forest farming



STEP 4 You will be brought to a page that shows Google Analytics data for the forest farming pages of the eXtension.org site.



TRICKS-OF-THE-TRADE

Google Analytics

People are searching for forest farming, and our site is attracting their attention. Since March 2012, our sites have attracted over 3,000 visitors from across the globe, including the U.S., Netherlands, Nepal, South Korea, and Malaysia. Collectively, our pages have been viewed over 27,000 times and visitors are engaged. On average, visitors reference 8 pages each time they visit. Visitors are using our content; each one of our FAQ pages has been viewed over 30 times, some over 300 times. Visitors searching for forest farming information on the web are connecting directly to our FAQs, articles, & resources.



eXtension.org Data

eXtension has added a new section to the website backend. The backend includes the areas members login to use. You will now find a link between Create and People for Data. Data is based on Google Analytics, but presented in a much cleaner and easy-to-read interface. eXtension states the following about the Data page:

This site is an evolving platform for data aggregated from Google Analytics and from activity in eXtension's websites and services. At its heart, it's meant as a source for the data to begin exploring the connections between the metrics and the activity in our tools. As such, it's always a work in progress.

The next time you want to take a quick look at how much traffic the forest farming pages are receiving simply go to <http://data.extension.org>. Follow the steps to the left to see data for our pages.