



# The Voice for Illinois Forests

*Acting on issues that impact rural and community forests and promoting forestry in Illinois*

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## Message from the President

*By John Edgington*

Doing the right thing. Getting it right the first time. Whether you're managing land or leading an organization, the best decisions are not always obvious at first glance.

My dad and his dad were farmers. When I think of stewardship and land ethics, I probably got most of my positive influences from my grandfather, but I learned some of the best lessons from my dad.

I remember this one time he cleared a stream bank - stripped all of the trees and shrubs so it would look cleaner and we could farm closer to the field's edge without shading or root competition. You can probably guess what happened next. A lot of rain and a swollen creek showed my dad what an important function those trees and shrubs had been playing all along. Soon we were planting trees and trying everything we could to hold the soil in place.

When it comes to the trees and forests of Illinois, we'd all be so much better off if we could get it right the first time. That's why we have a science-backed profession called forestry, and foresters across the state who are qualified and available to advise landowners before they do something that might seem fine at first, but has consequences that will take many years to overcome.

The infrastructure we have in place in Illinois Forestry is barely enough to hold it all together, let alone to make our forests thrive. Look at the staffing levels in the IDNR Forestry Division (see page 8). District Foresters are on the front line of defense and already spread dangerously thin. There is relentless pressure to find income sources *in addition to* the 4% FDA Harvest Fee to support staffing. Meanwhile, the cost-share program that the FDA Fund was *supposed* to provide is increasingly seen as secondary to the retention of the people needed to carry it out.

Those of us who have been exposed to the merits of forestry and forest conservation understand what's at stake here. We know how long it takes to rehabilitate a woods that has been high-graded. We're alarmed by the spread of invasive plants and insects. We can see the shifting composition of forests that have been "protected" from disturbance - instead of being renewed by it. And, how short-sighted it would be to lose the capacity to produce native plant materials at our state nurseries.

The Illinois Forestry Association exists because we can't always count on landowners or the government to do the right thing. We have to reach as many people as we can before they clear that proverbial streambank, and be there to help them fix it if they do. Whether realized or not, everyone in Illinois needs and benefits from forestry. Thanks for doing your part to support our efforts!



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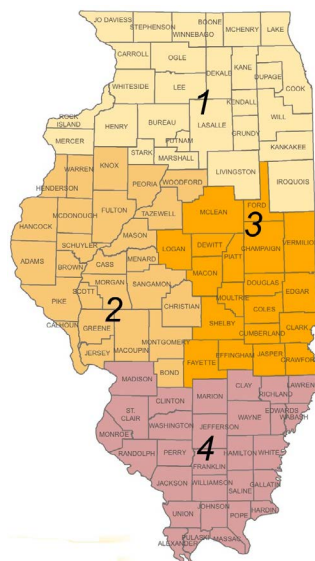
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## Our Mission

The mission of the Illinois Forestry Association is to act on issues that impact rural and community forests and to promote forestry in Illinois.

## Our Vision

The vision of the Illinois Forestry Association is to be a highly effective, "go to" community of well-informed property owners who are managing their trees and forests and are influential with their peers and government.

## Five Goals

Promote forest management and help landowners manage forests

Educate members and the general public

Policy advocacy for IL forests

Understand/engage members and increase membership

Efficient and Effective IFA Governance

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It is encouraging, and it gives me a sense of pride and accomplishment to look back at how the IFA has evolved and grown over the last eleven years. We recently had the first Board of Director's (BOD) meeting that included the new members that were elected at our annual meeting in September. As we went around the table to introduce ourselves, this is what came to my mind.

Looking back on the very beginnings of the IFA, and the many years I was working in the IDNR Forest Resources Division before that, I personally saw the need for a state-wide forestry organization that could speak for the forest landowners, urban forestry, forest industry, and the Division of Forestry in the IDNR. I was not alone in this thought. There had been attempts to form such a forestry organization in the past, but to no avail. Some said there were too many potential problems to overcome, such as Illinois was too long north to south to have an effective, state-wide forestry organization. But the concept was given a new beginning following the Forestry Summit Conference in 2004. One of the recommendations that came from the conference was the need for a state-wide forestry organization.

I was fortunate to be appointed on the task force to put together the framework for what has become the IFA. We met and discussed all of the challenges in forming such an organization, plus the pros and cons of proceeding with our recommendations. I will never forget our final meeting held in a conference room at the IDNR building in Springfield. Stephanie Brown and I seemed to simultaneously look down the table at each other and we said, "Let's just do it."

After that, a steering committee assisted by NRCS and its RC&D Coordinators held a series of meetings in 2005 that resulted in a draft set of By-Laws, incorporation papers, a plan of work, and non-profit status from the IRS. We began accepting members into the IFA on January 1, 2006.

Since that time the IFA has grown in membership to almost 1000 members from all aspects of forestry in Illinois. We have sponsored legislation to help forest landowners protect their forest land and continue forestry services in Illinois. We have sponsored conferences and local meetings, joined other natural resource organizations where our voice for forestry issues is being heard, and now have groups and organizations contacting the IFA for input on forestry in Illinois.

Why is the IFA successful? We have members that are interested and dedicated to good forestry. We have wonderful people willing to voluntarily serve as officers and BOD members to guide the association. The new IFA Board members are no exception. There is also a Technical Advisory Committee to assist us in promoting forestry and helping our members. And, we have an Executive Director who is dedicated to making it all work to achieve our goals.

Every one of us in the IFA can be proud of what we have accomplished so far, and it will even get better.



*Dave Gillespie extends our sincere thanks to Senator Sullivan, presenting him with a solid walnut bowl handcrafted by Dan Schmoker, Region 2 Director.*

*Thank you for  
being a friend.*

## IFA Honors Outgoing Senator John Sullivan

Dave Gillespie, IFA Secretary and Chair of the IFA Legislative-Policy Committee, met with Senator John Sullivan recently and presented him with a hand turned walnut bowl from the IFA. The bowl was made by IFA Region 2 Director, Dan Schmoker.

Senator Sullivan is from the 47th District. He has been a State Senator for fourteen (14) years, and has chosen not to run for reelection. His tenure will end when the newly elected Illinois officials take office in January, 2017.

The IFA's relationship with Senator Sullivan began when the IFA wanted to enact a Purple Paint Law in Illinois. We brought the concept for the legislation to Senator Sullivan through our lobbyists at that time, Paula and Jenny Purdue. Senator Sullivan guided the writing of the legislation, sponsored the Purple Paint Law, and guided the legislation through the legislature. He also sponsored legislation that restored the Illinois Forestry Development Council. He became the IFA's "go to" person when concerns regarding forestry issues arose in the IDNR and the State Legislature.

It has been a pleasure to work with Senator Sullivan over the 10+ years that the IFA has been advocating for forestry in Illinois. He prides himself on being the only State Senator that is a farmer. As he was always there to listen to the IFA's concern and opinion on forestry issues, we will miss his insight and the action he would always take to help us with forestry issues.

We want to sincerely thank him for all the help he has given to forests and forestry in Illinois. He will be missed in the Illinois General Assembly.



## IFA-SAF Oak Forest Restoration Conference Well-Received

by Stephanie Brown

By all accounts, it was a rousing success. The 11th Annual Meeting of the Illinois Forestry Association, held jointly with the Fall Meeting of the Illinois Society of American Foresters, focused on the reasons and methods for managing oak forests and woodlands in Illinois.

Participation during the 3-day program ranged from 50 to 70, with every seat occupied during Friday afternoon's main event. The US Forest Service made it possible to have the meeting at SIU's Touch of Nature Center - an ideal setting for our group - by covering meeting room fees that totalled over \$1000. Other major sponsors included the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Oak Woodlands & Forest Fire Consortium, and University of Illinois Forestry Extension.



**Be the Tree.** Participants in the ABC's of Forestry workshop had fun learning how a tree grows by practicing a Project Learning Tree activity led by Tricia Bethke of The Morton Arboretum. Jim Hynes and Jim Kirkland acted out the "tall and strong" heart wood.



**Thursday Afternoon: ABC's of Forestry Pre-Conference Workshop:** Chris Evans and Jeff Harris were the lead presenters of a newly-developed 4-hour course for beginners, although many veterans showed up to learn, as well. Each attendee left with a copy of the soon-to-be-repurposed three ring binder: "A Landowner's Guide to Woodland Stewardship" and a "Managing Your Forestland" DVD.



**Friday Morning: "Walk in the Woods"** - Light showers didn't dampen the enthusiasm for the outdoor follow-up to the ABC's workshop. Charles Ruffner and Jeff Harris each led informative hikes, while other experts offered show and tell about Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), wood projects for wildlife, tree ID, invasive species, and more. Our rain plan included a screening of the documentary: "[America's First Forest.](#)"



### IFA-SAF Oak Conference - continued

The Friday afternoon program was value packed with six presenters focused on different aspects of oak forest restoration. Their slide presentations are now available for downloading at <http://ilforestry.org/event-2306885>.

#### Friday's Main Event - Let the Sun Shine In!



Following some laid back social time and a scrumptious steak dinner, literally cooked on an open fire, the IL-SAF group held their business meeting, while some ventured down to the pavilion for a Fireside Forestry gathering with John Burk of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

#### Buffalo Tro & Social Hour



#### IL-SAF Business Meeting

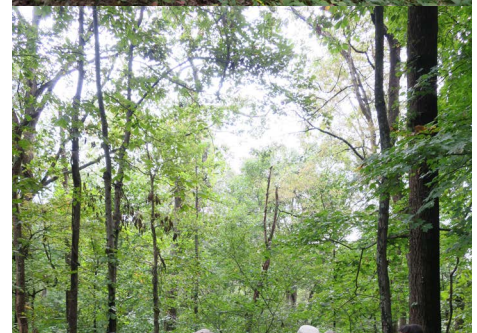


#### Fireside Forestry



Saturday's agenda began with the IFA Annual Business Meeting, followed by a scenic road trip over to the State Forest to see and learn about various management practices that are planned or have already occurred as part of the adaptive strategy in progress. [Click HERE](#) for a set of event photos with captions!

#### Saturday's Field Tour at Trail of Tears State Forest





### OAKtober Observed with Encore Special Edition



The Illinois Forestry Association marked the second year of Governor-proclaimed Oak Awareness Month with a special edition of our quarterly newsletter. The OAKtober issue was similar to the Fall issue, with a few notable twists. The same featured articles, recruited with oak restoration in mind, were included in both. Since it was an electronic-only release, there was room to add the latest announcements of upcoming events. We also included some preliminary photo highlights from the annual meeting. More importantly, the effort was designed to reach beyond our membership to help new people learn about forestry and the IFA. The rest of the year, our newsletter is more of an exclusive member benefit. We did a special President's message and sent it out to everyone who has ever been a member of the IFA. Others were asked to share the newsletter with their contacts, and we were able to reach over 17K people with a boosted Facebook post.

<http://ilforestry.org/newsletters>



### Forestry Council (Finally) Funds FDA Newsletter

Illinois Forestry Development Act (FDA) participants, who by now may have forgotten they subscribed to a free e-newsletter "just for them," will soon be reminded, thanks to the state's stop-gap budget that included funding for the Illinois Forestry Development Council's FY17 operation and small grant program. Partial funding was approved in FY15, prior to the last renewal mailing/invitation sent by the IDNR to all FDA program participants. The budget impasse prevented timely approval of Phase 2, leaving the newsletter's production and roll-out in limbo. Procedural log jams now removed, the project is back on track. All IFA members with a valid email address, plus the FDA participants who voluntarily "opted in" by subscribing, will receive a copy via email in early 2017 and again in mid-June. The newsletter's purpose is very specific - to share information that informs FDA participants about program requirements and encourages compliance. We also want them to know that the FDA wasn't created to be a tax loophole. It's a program that aims to serve and reward good land stewardship.

<http://ilforestry.org/FDA-News>

### Whittom Receives Special Achievement Award



Chris Whittom, IDNR Forest Resources' Forest Stewardship and Legacy Program Manager, accepts IFA's Special Achievement Award for Exceptional Service and Dedication from Mike McMahan, outgoing IFA President, during the 11th Annual Business Meeting on October 1st. Since joining the IDNR, Chris has collaborated with us to refine our outreach role with FDA program participants. This year he was also instrumental in improving the language of a potentially worrisome proposed amendment to the Wrongful Tree Cutting Act. He serves as a Technical Advisor to the IFA.

### IFA Exhibits, Offers Special Session at Illinois Arborist Association's Fall Conference



"You're going to need a bigger room next year" That was the reaction of IAA's Fall Conference hosts after 90+ attendees were drawn to our special session "Healthy Forests on the Edge," featuring Chris Evans and Dr. Fredric Miller speaking on invasive plant and insect threats. We also enjoyed visiting with many IAA members at our booth.



## IFA Board Prepares for the Year Ahead



IFA Board Directors and Officers from across the state converged on Springfield for a planning retreat on December 8th. After a brief review of the 5-year strategic plan and a summary of current activities underway or on the near-term horizon, board members engaged in four concurrent discussions, all the while contemplating their individual roles in moving IFA forward in the coming year.

**Planning to Connect** delved into linkages and partnerships that could further the IFA mission in strategic ways (without spreading our resources too thin). We were fortunate to have Brian Sprinkle in attendance, representing the Illinois Arborist Association.

**Planning to Grow** focused on our need to beef up member recruitment efforts, using methods that make the best use of our limited resources. IFA's Membership Committee will lead the charge.

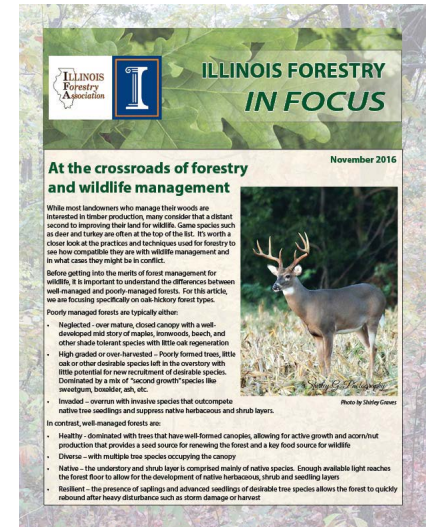
**Planning to Stand** focused on the urgent need to defend and supplement the IDNR Forestry Division's budget. Identifying income sources, justifying the Division's critical role, and revisiting the IFA position on FDA fees and the Fund's best use will be front-burner issues for the IFA's Legislative-Policy Committee.

**Planning to Serve** examined the current benefits provided to IFA members, and the challenge of engaging members at the local level with planned events. An approach called Fireside Forestry is one solution that could make it possible to ripple out. Stay tuned for more on that.

It was a lot to digest in one day. Progress will continue as committees and board members interact and ultimately *act* on the plans made. Every single member of the IFA Board is planning to contribute something unique to their perspective, interests and abilities in the coming year.



**Planning to Connect, Grow, Stand, and Serve.** IFA Board Directors engaged in concurrent discussions about the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing the IFA and forestry in Illinois during their recent planning retreat in Springfield.



## IFA and Illinois Extension Forestry Team Up on New Outreach Effort

A new electronic publication will be making its way into your inbox approximately once a month. [Illinois Forestry in Focus](#) is a joint effort between the IFA and IL Extension Forestry, with Extension Forester Chris Evans providing the content and IFA Executive Director Stephanie Brown assisting with design, layout, and distribution to IFA members via email blast. A separate PDF version will be shared beyond our membership, with the goal of reaching as many people as possible. Each issue will cover a single topic, similar to a featured article in our regular and more extensive quarterly newsletter that goes to IFA members-only. By casting a broad net, our hope is that more people will discover and join the Illinois Forestry Association. Meanwhile, Chris gets to do his job on behalf of all Illinois citizens. A win-win for forestry!



# State Forester Update

by Tom Wilson



The Division of Forest Resources (DFR) continues to provide technical and professional forestry assistance to forest owners statewide. Our field staff demonstrate, assist and guide landowners with forestry knowledge, forest assessment, care and management. Program Managers in Springfield continually provide guidance and structure for Forest Health, Private Forest Stewardship, State Forests, Timber and Wood Utilization, Urban and Community Forestry, Forest Legacy, Forest Inventory, Fire and others.

### Current DFR Field Staff (State-wide)

- 14 District Foresters
- One Regional Forester (also covers a District)
- 2 Forest Technicians
- 5 Nursery Staff
- 3 Clerical Staff

### Springfield Staff:

- 1 State Forester (also covers a District *and* functions as a Program Manager)
- 3 Program Managers
- 2 Clerical Staff

Between now and the next 5 years, 22 of the existing forestry staff will be eligible for retirement.

Existing state budget concerns continue to hamper forestry grant opportunities including, but not limited to:

- Volunteer Fire Grants
- Urban Forestry Community Assistance Grants
- IL Forestry Development Act (IFDA) Cost-Share Funds

The future status of the Mason State Tree Nursery remains unclear at this time. All nursery staff were given layoff notices in August 2015, but legal hurdles have, so far, prevented this outcome.

The nursery continues to attempt normal operations under Dave Horvath's leadership, but the lack of a state budget resulted in reduced seed purchase for planting in 2015 and 2016.

Plans and efforts to expand nursery operations have been occurring for several years and continue, including:

- Production of potted trees
- Sale of liner stock to private nurseries
- Expansion of prairie seed production
- Expansion of potted prairie plants
- New and increased production of pollinator seed
- Reduced costs and increased revenue by providing prairie seed cleaning services and sales to surrounding states
- Expanding on the ability to sell native trees, plants and seed

Continuing budget uncertainty impacts the nursery's ability to purchase needed commodities for optimum production levels.

**Plant materials can be ordered from the Mason State Nursery by contacting the nursery at (309) 535-2185.**

In other news, the Illinois Forest Action Plan is currently being edited and will soon be released throughout the IDNR. (Paul Deizman)

As reported in February, the web application for real-time reporting of Ginseng sales between harvesters and ginseng dealers is still underway. These efforts will assist with enforcement of Illinois ginseng conservation laws. Specifications and project structure are in place but completion is being held up by lack of budget. (Paul Deizman)

The IFDA forest stewardship program continues to undergo a full-scale monitoring and update of records. (Chris Whittom)

- A new database for the program is undergoing final testing at this time.
- The last time any major upgrades were completed was approximately 2007.
- Renewal letters for IFDA participants are scheduled to be sent out in 2017.

Illinois was well represented at the Arbor Day Foundation's partnership Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana in November. Several Illinois Urban and Community Forestry participants were also presenters. Representatives were from IDNR, Trees Forever, TCU communities, Morton Arboretum, and Openlands. (Reinee Hildebrandt)

The IDNR Urban and Community Forestry Website is being updated with a Map to show the community outreach throughout Illinois that results from the State program and its partners outreach to communities. Graduate Public Service Intern Sravya Pamulapati has worked with Reinee Hildebrandt, State Urban Forester and Charles Good, ORC to create this transparent communication vehicle for sharing accomplishments from the federal Urban and Community Forestry funds.

IDNR Urban and Community Forestry continues to assist communities in the development of their local municipal forestry programs by reviewing tree ordinances, providing management advise, and sending out a weekly to bi-weekly TCU NEWSBITS news brief to urban and community forestry constituents.

IDNR took a significant role in upgrading the Urban and Community Forestry Sections of the Illinois Forest Action Plan and trying to integrate the urban aspect into the overall plan. (Reinee Hildebrandt)

The 41st year of the Tree City USA program is underway. Applications for Tree City USA and Growth Awards, Tree Line USA and Tree Campus USA all due December 31st.

For more information about Illinois' Urban and Community Forestry Program, visit <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/Forestry/UrbanForestry/Pages/default.aspx>.

For more information about IDNR Forestry Resources, including the most recent [timber prices report](#), or the latest [Wooden Dollars Monthly](#), go to <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/Forestry/Pages/default.aspx>.



# Please DO Disturb!

by Jeff Harris, IDNR District Forester

Illinois oak forests are dependent on disturbance for regeneration. Acorns need fire to expose bare mineral soil for establishment, and young oak seedlings need full sun that can be found in large openings caused by disturbances like tornado damage (referred to as windthrow) or a tree harvest. Did you know that the mature oak forests we have today are a legacy of pre-historic disturbance regimes, natural and human caused? For example, an event like windthrow cleared the overstory trees and a young forest grew in the opening. Indigenous peoples would then use fire to manage for oaks - acorns being an important part of their diet - because presumably they understood that oaks are more tolerant of fire than other species. Disturbance events reset forests on a cyclical basis, and research has shown that indigenous peoples used fire in a given stand of trees every 10-30 years. As a result, humans and wildlife today enjoy mature oak forests across Illinois but the future of oak forests is very much in question perhaps because of a modern societal view that taking a hands-off approach to management is best for nature. When a hands-off approach is taken, oak forests transition to a maple dominated "climax" forest or "old growth" forest as it is commonly referred. An acceptable amount of the Illinois landscape can be climax forest at a given point in time, but currently the majority of our forests are maple dominated or trending in that direction. This is a red flag for resource managers because maple dominated forests cast dense shade in the understory and exclude young oaks from establishing. Oak forests represent our natural heritage, are important to the wood products industry, and are considered a keystone species in that their health is a barometer for the health of other plants and wildlife. Illinois forests are at a very important crossroads, and timber owners are encouraged to work with resource professionals to manage for and regenerate oak.

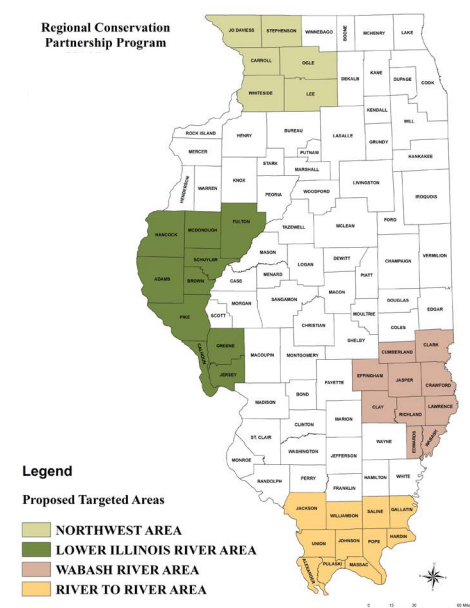
It can be very challenging to explain to timber owners why and how to manage for oak while easing their valid concerns about resource degradation in the wake of active management. Why manage for oak? Because the disturbances that were pervasive on the prehistoric landscape are much less frequent now, and taking a hands-off approach is tantamount with losing oak altogether. Furthermore, oak forest communities are healthy and robust with plant and wildlife diversity. Remember, maple climax forests cast dense shade that not only shades out oak, but associated native flora. Most wildlife have little to no use for these areas as habitat.

How do you manage for oak without degrading the resource? Simply involve a professional forester to assist you with best management practices while mimicking natural disturbances like windthrow and/or implementing prescribed fire. This is the part that makes people uncomfortable because imitating windthrow really means aggressive cutting using sustainable forestry practices to remove the canopy all at once or over a progression of cuttings to create a high light environment for oak seedlings and saplings. The result is a "mess" that may break the heart of an untrained eye. For a resource manager, these messy areas are a beautiful rebirth of the forest and prime wildlife habitat of which we do not have enough. Try thinking about it this way, it may begin to feel more comfortable with time.

There are many scenarios for oak management depending on the condition of your timber but the following is a real world example. A family has 15 acres of mature oak forest and is interested in good stewardship practices and managing for oak over the long term. They work with a professional forester to create a forest management plan. The management prescription calls for a combination of prescription burning and timber stand improvement across all

15 acres over the next 10 years. Though, on 3 acres, after the next heavy acorn seed crop, all of the merchantable trees will be harvested and the remaining unwanted trees will be flush cut with the goal of creating a high light environment for oak seedlings and saplings and providing young forest habitat for birds that require it for breeding and cover. The forestry practices are done utilizing best management practices (BMPs) to mitigate erosion concerns, and the result is responsible and sustainable forest management that creates a diversity of oak forest structure (young and mature) across all 15 acres. Now picture a majority of timber owners across Illinois doing a similar style of management, our oak forests would be much healthier and so would the wildlife requiring this habitat.

Contact your local IL Dept. of Natural Resources [forester](#) for more information on oak management and getting a new or updated forest management plan. You may be eligible for funding to offset the cost of implementing oak management activities through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), a joint partnership between Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the IL Forestry Development Council as the lead sponsor. Timber owners in the RCPP project area, see shaded regions below, should go to their local NRCS field office for more information. However, those outside the project area can still sign up for forestry implementation through Environmental Quality Incentives Program.





# Maple Syrup in Illinois:

## A sweet option for landowners to pursue

by Chris Evans, University of Illinois Extension Forestry



*A grove of maples used for syrup production is often called a 'sugarbush'*

Illinois forests have a lot of maples. In fact, in many of our forests we have way too many maples. Managing oak-hickory forests through thinning maples is an important part of forest management, but let's not forget that maples are also a native part of our forested ecosystems and can provide us with an opportunity to participate in one of the oldest forms of American agriculture, syrup production!

You don't need to be in Canada, Vermont, or Wisconsin to make maple syrup. This is an option for forest landowners across Illinois. Maple syrup production can be everything from a fun, easy hobby project to do with your kids or grandkids to a source of supplemental non-timber income from your forests. All you need to get started are some basic supplies, a method of boiling the sap into syrup, and some maple trees.

Maple syrup is simply just the sap from maple trees, which naturally has some sugar in it, boiled to concentrate the sugars, making it thicker and sweeter. On average, it takes about 40 gallons of sap to produce 1 gallon of finished syrup. The sap from any species of maple can be used to make syrup, but sugar maples typically have bigger yields of sap and higher sugar content. Some people say there are slight differences in flavor between the different maple species but others will testify that you cannot tell the difference between the species when tasting the finished syrup.

Syrup can even be produced from other tree species, such as birch, walnut, and even sycamore, though the author has never tried making syrup from those species and cannot comment on their taste.

Late winter is syrup season. Trees store their energy as sugars and transport that energy through their sap. As the weather warms, the dormant maples start moving sap up out of their roots in preparation for spring green-up. The sap runs best when nighttime temperatures are below freezing and daytime temperatures are lightly above freezing. This freeze/thaw action stimulates the sap to flow, allowing us to collect some to use for syrup. When the sap reaches the buds and initiates bud growth, the chemical makeup of sap changes, as does the flavor and it should no longer be used for syrup. The sap will taste and smell different. It is often described as a 'twiggy' or 'buddy' flavor. In Illinois, the syrup season is typically 4-6 weeks long.

### Tapping Trees

Sap is collected by tapping trees. To do this, you'll need spiles. These are really the only specialized piece of equipment needed to start syrup production. Spiles are tubes or spouts that are inserted into a hole drilled into the tree and connected to something to hold the sap. Different spiles require different size holes, so pay attention to the ones you buy and get a sharp drill bit of the right size to use. Drill

the hole such that it slopes down out of the tree slightly to help with sap flow from the tree. These holes do not need to be deep, just a couple inches.

Trees over 10" in diameter can be tapped. A general rule of thumb is one tap for trees 10-15 inches in diameter, 2 taps for 16-20 inch trees, 3 taps for 21-25 inch trees, and four taps for trees larger than 25 inches in diameter. Each tap will, on average, yield somewhere between 10 and 20 gallons of sap, though this is quite variable and highly dependent upon the health and vigor of the tree and the local climatic conditions. You can tap the same trees year after year, just move the tap location for next year a few inches over and a few inches up or down. Depending on the type of spile you have, you'll then either hang a bucket or sap sack or connect a tube to collect the sap.



*Many different kind of spiles are available. This is the most common spile, designed to hang a bucket on to collect the sap.*

It is important to treat the sap like the perishable food item it is. Keep it cold, only use clean containers for storing it, and try to boil it down into syrup relatively quickly so it will not spoil. This means that you'll usually boil syrup several times over the course of a syrup season.

*continued on page 11*



## Maple Syrup, continued -

At the end of the season remove the spiles from the trees and do not plug or treat the holes with anything. The tree will do a good job of healing over the hole. Wash all of the spiles and equipment in a light bleach solution and store it for next year.



*A simple homemade wood-fired boiler. Commercial evaporators are also available for purchase.*

## Boiling Sap into Syrup

When boiling sap into syrup, it is best to do it mostly outside since it produces a lot of steam and moisture and will make your kitchen really sticky. This is not surprising considering to make one gallon of syrup you have to release 39 gallons of steam into the air! Using an evaporator or boiler and heating it with wood is a fun and inexpensive way to make maple syrup. These boilers can be homemade or bought from a manufacturer.



Sap, straight out of the tree is typically somewhere between 1% and 4% sugar content. Finished syrup is 66% sugar content. It is important when boiling to finish the syrup as close to 66% as you can. Much less and the syrup can spoil. Much more and it can crystalize. There are a couple pieces of equipment available to help determine when your syrup is finished boiling. A syrup hydrometer is a glass instrument that is floated in the syrup to measure its density and is calibrated to determine sugar content. A refractometer is an instrument that typically uses a thin film of syrup on a glass plate to measure sugar content. Both of these tools are precise and very useful for anyone wanting to produce a lot of syrup. A simpler, but less precise, way to determine sugar content is by boiling temperature. Water, as we all know, boils at 212° F. Sap, in its raw form, also boils close to 212° F. As you boil the water off of the sap and concentrate the sugars, the sap will boil at higher and higher temperatures. Finished syrup with a 66% sugar content should boil about 7.5° F higher than water. So using a basic candy thermometer, your syrup is ready when it boils somewhere between 219° and 220° F.

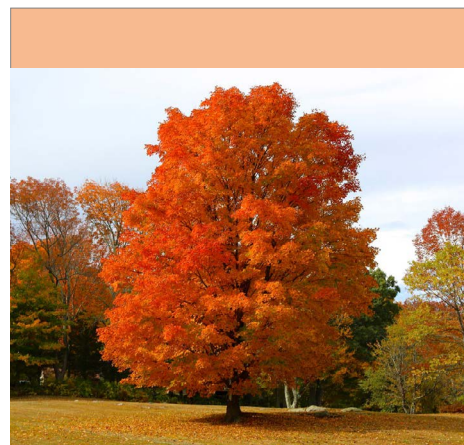
As the sugar content rises, risk of boiling over and losing the syrup you've worked hard for increases. As the syrup gets closer to being finished, either use less heat and watch it closely or consider finishing it inside on a stove, where you have more control of heat.



## Storing Syrup

Hot syrup should be filtered to remove any particulates. Syrup, as it is being made, produces 'sugar sand' which is harmless but gives the syrup a gritty feel if it is not filtered out. Put the hot syrup into clean containers and seal the container. If sealed, syrup should not need to be refrigerated until opened. Syrup stored in glass jars will darken over time, especially if exposed to the light. To prevent this, either store your syrup in a cool dark place or use opaque containers.

Maple syrup production is truly an American pastime and one that any forest landowner in Illinois can participate in as long as they have a few maples.



## Maples in Illinois

Illinois is the native home to seven different types of maple trees. Three species - the sugar maple, silver maple, and boxelder - are found through the state. One, the black maple, is found primarily in the northern half and red maples are primarily in the southern half of the state, though scattered elsewhere. Two maples, the Florida maple and Drummond maple, are only found in isolated areas of far southern Illinois.

*Large trees can have multiple taps without harm.*





# IDNR's Public Access Program Offers Landowners Many Benefits

*By Tammy Miller, IRAP Program Manager*

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has a gem of a program in its Illinois Recreational Access Program (IRAP). Began just a few years ago with a Voluntary Public Access – Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP) grant from U.S. Department of Agriculture, the IRAP program has more than 15,000 acres leased for public access. However, it's not your "typical" public access program; landowners and habitat appear to benefit greatly.

What makes IRAP so successful? For the landowner who enrolls in IRAP, they receive an annual payment (calculated by acre for each activity enrolled in), liability insurance coverage, property boundaries marked with purple paint (no trespassing law), development of a forest/habitat management plan, and assistance with plan implementation. The habitat management assistance is, in itself, worth being enrolled in the program. IRAP is one of the few programs in Illinois with the funding to implement the management plan on private property.

Some of IRAP's habitat work that has been provided through cost-sharing (up to 90% in some cases) with the landowner have been: prairie/pollinator plantings, invasive species removal, timber stand improvement, timber harvests, wetland restorations, and prescribed burns, to name a few.

Recently, IRAP received its third VPA-HIP grant and partnered with the National Great Rivers Research and Educational Center (NGRREC) and Pheasants and Quail Forever to develop two habitat strike teams to work on private land leased to IRAP throughout most of Illinois. Other partners IRAP has been working with are local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the National Wild Turkey Federation and several land trusts.



*Bob Caveny, with the IRAP team, is foliar spraying bush honeysuckle and autumn olive in southern Illinois.*

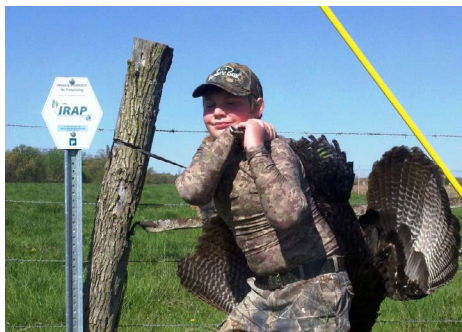


Activities landowners can choose to sign up and the public access are:

- Archery Deer Hunting during the month of October
- Youth and/or Adult Spring Turkey Hunting (only seasons 3 & 4)
- Upland Game Hunting in December
- Waterfowl hunting in November and December
- Small game (Rabbit, Squirrel and Dove)
- Fishing from April to September (only Friday – Monday)
- Outdoor Naturalist for birding, hiking, outdoor photography, from May 15th -September 15th (only Friday – Monday).



IRAP, continued -



*Young Gordon Kiesgen IV with his 1st turkey taken on IRAP leased property in Fulton County, Illinois*

For all of IRAP's activities, each person wanting to participate must be a registered IRAP applicant and have a reservation to use the site. For the major hunting activities, such as turkey, deer and waterfowl, participants must mail in their application and be a successful lottery winner. They will then be assigned a site and mailed their permit and other information about the site.

What makes IRAP unique to most other public access programs in other states is that each site has a limited number of users and participants must be registered and have a reservation to use the site and a signed liability waiver on file, making Illinois' public access program semi-controlled.

Since 2013, IRAP has accomplished the following on leased private property:

Non-Native Invasive Species (NNIS) removal on 4,725 acres; Aerial Spraying (NNIS) on 1,811 acres; Site Prep/ Grassland management on 72 acres; Prescribed Burning on 1,146 acres; Timber Stand Improvement on 253 acres; and Prairie Plantings on 245 acres.

IRAP is making a difference on private land! If you or anyone you know might be interested in learning more about IRAP's benefits, please visit the program's website at [www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/IRAP](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/conservation/IRAP).

*Tammy Miller is Manager, Illinois Recreational Access Program, Illinois Department of Natural Resources in Springfield.*

## Invasive Species Workshops Train First Detectors in Illinois

CHAMPAIGN, Ill. – The 2017 Illinois First Detector Workshop on invasive plants, diseases, and insects will be offered at eight Illinois sites beginning in January 2017.

In its fifth year, the workshop is being offered through University of Illinois Extension and coordinated in conjunction with the Illinois Natural History Survey's Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey (CAPS), the Illinois Department of Agriculture, and the Morton Arboretum. The one-day course teaches participants how to report potential invasive threats. Topics this year include invasive plants and human health, oak tree diseases, and emerging invasive forest insects.

The program focuses on current and new invasive pests, but also provides updates on previously covered topics, according to Kelly Estes, CAPS coordinator. The popular hands-on portion of the workshop allows participants to examine invasive species samples in detail and learn identification techniques that will help them to distinguish these invasive pests in the field. Workshop participants take the knowledge they acquire to their own communities.

"This program increases the eyes and ears in the field," Estes said. "The threat of invasive species is large, and we can't get to every corner of the state. Having many people take an interest in learning more about invasive species and how to report them is fantastic."

In four years, 900 people have taken the workshop, and an estimated 108,000 additional people have become more aware of invasive species indirectly through the dissemination of information by the workshop participants.

### Illinois locations, dates, and contact information include:

January 25 – Waterloo  
Sarah Ruth (618-939-3434)

January 26 – Makanda  
Maggie Rose (618-687-1727)

February 9 – Bloomington  
Kelly Allsup (309-663-8306)

February 10 – Sterling  
Bruce Black (815-632-3611)

February 14 – Lisle  
Sarah Navrotski (630-955-1123)

February 15 – Orland Park  
Margaret Burns-Westmeyer  
(708-679-6894)

February 22 – Pekin  
Jason Haupt or Christine Belless  
(309-547-3711)

February 23 – Taylorville  
Andrew Holsinger (217-532-3941)

### Follow this link to register online:

<http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/research/caps/first-detector/>. The \$40 registration fee includes instruction, an on-site lunch, and training materials. This year, a student rate of \$25 is offered. Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are also available. The workshop runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Media contact: Kelly Estes  
(217) 333-1005; [kcook8@illinois.edu](mailto:kcook8@illinois.edu)

*This program and materials are based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture and coordinated by Kelly Estes, state survey coordinator, IL CAPS Program at the Illinois Natural History Survey, Prairie Research Institute, and Diane Plewa, Plant Clinic diagnostician and outreach coordinator, Department of Crop Sciences. Additional support for this program will be provided by Christopher Evans, extension forester, University of Illinois, Scott Schirmer, plant and pesticide specialist supervisor, Illinois Department of Agriculture, and Tricia Bethke, forest pest outreach coordinator, Morton Arboretum.*





*Consultant's Corner is a recurring feature, available to ICF/IFA member consultants who would like to contribute an article.*

High volume basal bark is simply applying a basal bark mix with a high volume sprayer, like a skid sprayer. The mix is applied from about 36" up the stem to the ground, 360°. This by itself is not an original idea, but the reason no one would apply basal bark mix at high volume is because the cost of the mix would be very high. Therefore, the magic of the high volume basal bark technique is in the chemical mix.



# High Volume Basal Bark Applications for Autumn Olive: What It Is and Why You Would Use It

*by Chris Long, Long Forestry Consultation*



## Why and Where to Use It

But first things first, why and where would you use this technique. Picture a field, either an old CRP field, wildlife opening, or pasture. Now scatter mature autumn olive plants, 8' to 10' tall, throughout the field. Don't forget to put the old growth plants coming out of the forest edges, and you have an invasive species project. There are several ways to manage this field of autumn olive. Traditionally we have used high volume foliar sprays, basal bark with a backpack sprayer, and cut stump treatments. Foliar spraying this field will use a lot of chemical mix to get the job done; basal bark with a backpack sprayer is extremely time consuming; cut stump treatments are dangerous because they require the use of a chainsaw. The high volume basal bark application technique has the potential to eliminate or significantly decrease all of the negatives of the previous techniques. Less chemical mix is used over the foliar spray; the application is faster than a basal bark or cut stump application; and finally using a skid sprayer over a chainsaw is much safer.

## The Chemical Mix

The high volume basal bark technique is similar to low volume basal bark in that it is a basal bark application and triclopyr 4 is the chemical used in the treatment. Oils are also used in both mixes as the penetrant to get the chemical into the plant. The difference between the 2 techniques and their mixes, and what makes high volume basal bark possible, is that in low volume the carrier is 100% oil based, but in high volume the carrier is 80% water.

But this is counterintuitive, because in a basal bark application it is the oil that acts as the penetrant to carry the chemical into the plant.



*continued on the next page -*



Basal Bark Application - continued -

In a high volume situation, a pre-mixed emulsion, which includes oil, a surfactant, and the chemical, is added to the water. The pre-emulsion must be made separately and added to the water in order for the oil to mix with the water.

The pre-emulsion mix contains the following materials: Tryclopyr 4, non-ionic surfactant, basal oil, and blue dye. The non-ionic surfactant goes in at 1.5 quarts per 50 gallons, the basal oil goes in at 5% of the mix, with the tryclopyr going in between 2% and 6%. Remember, this application is still being tested. We have had great results at 8% and 10% tryclopyr, and reports of positive results as low as 2%.

The Results

On our project we treated about 40 acres of autumn olive on 4 different units in late fall of 2015. The plants varies in size. The following spring many of the autumn olive plants had an initial leaf flush, however the leaves were skinny and discolored and they were shed shortly after. Other plants, particularly the plants closer to the forest edge where there was less sunlight, held their leaves into May, but when we returned in July every plant we inspected had died. We found no re-sprouts and no damage to neighboring trees and shrubs.



Conclusion

In conclusion, high volume basal bark applications show a lot of promise. The application technique is safer over the use of chainsaws, faster over the use of back pack sprayers and chainsaws, and uses less chemicals than high volume foliar spraying. The technique is water based as opposed to oil based and uses less chemicals than traditional basal bark mix, making it a better environmental option.

| Application Technique  | Chemical Mix Use Rate | Safety      | Time spent |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|
| Foliar Spray           | High                  | Fairly Safe | Medium     |
| Basal Bark             | Low                   | Safest      | High       |
| Cut Stump              | Very Low              | Dangerous   | High       |
| High Volume Basal Bark | Medium                | Fairly Safe | Lowest     |

| Application Technique  | Carrier      | % of Chemical | Use Rate |
|------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------|
| Foliar Spray           | Water        | 1 – 4%        | High     |
| Basal Bark             | Oil          | 20%           | Low      |
| Cut Stump              | Oil or Water | 50- 100%      | Very Low |
| High Volume Basal Bark | Water        | 2 – 6%        | Medium   |







## Walnuts & Acorns

by Lee M. Rife

At the time this little essay is being written, it is mid-November and we still have not experienced any really cold weather. Fall has been both kind and unusual in that most days have been ten to twelve degrees above normal and as a result we have had a rather tepid display of fall colors. Some trees in the neighborhood are now bare, others have changed color and still others have remained mostly green. In addition, I have noticed some plants flowering and my grass needs cutting about once a week. It appears that Georgia may have moved a few hundred miles north as our weather certainly is not like I usually experience here in Central Illinois.

All of this brings up certain issues. For example, if this is really the result of global warming, what does it mean for exotic plant control? Do we now have a longer window to cut brush and apply herbicide? What about insect problems? Will be facing another hatch of harmful insects in the future? It appears that we have plenty of questions needing answers and that is why many of us lean on the people in the Illinois Forestry Association for advice.

Still, I know that winter will soon make itself known, and cold weather will come. Whether we will have a lot of snow or ice remains to be seen. I am sure that the ground will eventually freeze and hopefully remain frozen long enough to lower the insect population. In addition frozen ground makes timber harvest much easier, since machinery can be moved over the ground without making deep ruts that will have to be repaired.

Finally, my last thought about wintertime is that, if nothing else, winter and the cold weather makes one appreciate the other three seasons. I could not imagine living in Florida or on a Caribbean island where there is only one season all year long.

# History of Conservation in Illinois

by Dave Gillespie, IFA Secretary

*This account of the history of conservation in Illinois was written by Joseph P. Schavilje in 1941. This 18th installment begins where #17 ended, in Part II - History of Forest Conservation*

The population of Illinois is reported as 55,211 in 1820, practically all settled within the forest area. Migration came along the navigable streams and the pioneers settled near the streams and in the forest where water and material for fuel and shelter were available. Prairies were then considered waste land. About 1830 it was discovered that prairie land was good agricultural land and between 1820 and 1870, the population of the State increased forty-six times.

The settlement of the treeless prairie created a demand for building and fuel and prairie could not be sold without timberland. Prairie land commonly sold for five dollars per acre and woodland sold for thirty-five dollars. The early prairie settlers realized the value of the forest and the early tendency was toward fire protection and upbuilding of the forests. In the 1850's the railroads began bringing in lumber from the Lake States region and the coal stove was developed. Soon values of prairie and forest land were reversed, accompanied by a reversal of attitude toward the local forests.

(To be continued in the next issue)

## Recent Publications...

The "[Recommended Silviculture and Management Practices for Illinois Hardwood Forest Types](#)"

manual was recently updated by Eric Holzmüller, John Groninger, and Jesse Riechman at Southern Illinois University. The manual is intended to serve as a guide for consulting foresters and agency professionals assisting Illinois private forest landowners committed to sustainable timber production on their property. Funding for the manual was awarded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forest Resources, with additional assistance and comments from the Illinois Forestry Development Council.

Meanwhile, University of Illinois Extension Forestry has released the [2016 Illinois Directory of Professional Consulting Foresters](#), along with a brand new publication: [2016 Forestry Contractors List](#), which provides landowners with contact information for contractors that have the capability to do the practices recommended within forest management plans. Excellent resources!



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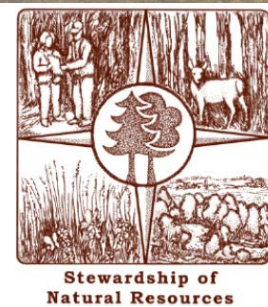




# Save the Date: March 11, 2017

## 23rd Annual Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference

Sinsinawa Mound Center - Sinsinawa, Wisconsin



Each year this conference, organized by Iowa State University and University of Illinois Extension Forestry Specialists, attracts 450-550 woodland owners from Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and beyond.

### For more information:

Contact Jay Hayek ([jhayek@illinois.edu](mailto:jhayek@illinois.edu)) or

Dr. Jesse Randall ([randallj@iastate.edu](mailto:randallj@iastate.edu))

Or, monitor the event website for the latest:

[www.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/tri\\_state/introduction.html](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/forestry/tri_state/introduction.html)



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Stan Sipp  
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P.O. Box 111  
Mansfield, IL 61854

Signs are shipped via U.S. Postal Service  
Invoice will be included with signs

Questions? Contact  
Stan by email at  
[skipp@illinois.edu](mailto:skipp@illinois.edu)



# FIRST DETECTOR WORKSHOP

HOSTED BY UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

**E**arly detection and response is key to managing invasive pests. The Illinois First Detector Workshops are aimed at improving first detector training and invasive species awareness. Topics will take a closer look at oak diseases such as sudden oak death, bur oak blight, and oak wilt as well as insect invaders of Illinois trees. Learn more about invasive plants and how they may affect human health. Back by popular demand is the Q & A lunch session where speakers update participants on previous topics and open the floor to your questions. These in-depth training sessions also give participants the opportunity to take part in hands-on activities to learn about the topics in more detail and how to become involved in reporting potential invasive threats. Plan on joining us at one of these locations—more information on how to register will be available soon.

*Continuing Education Credits  
Applied for: IAA Certified Arborists,  
Society of American Foresters,  
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JAN  
26

Makanda

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9

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10

Sterling

FEB  
14

Lisle

FEB  
15

Orland Park

FEB  
22

Pekin

FEB  
23

Taylorville

## 2017 SCHEDULE · 9AM-4PM

- 9:00-9:30 Illinois First Detectors: Eyes and Ears of Invasive Species Detection
- 9:30-10:15 Invasive Plants and Human Health
- 10:15-10:30 Break
- 10:30-11:15 Oak Diseases: Exotic, Emerging, and Endemic
- 11:15-12:00 Gypsy Moth and Thousand Cankers Disease; IL Forest Pests on the Rise
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch with opportunity for Open Discussion/Questions
- 1:00-1:45 Halt the Spread: Report and Respond to Invasions
- 1:45-2:00 Break
- 2:00-3:30 Hands-On Exercises
- 3:30-4:00 Evaluations/Wrap Up



## REGISTRATION

Registration will be handled by each University of Illinois Extension host site. A \$40 registration fee covers instruction, on-site lunch, and training materials. Register early as space is limited. If you do not cancel prior to the workshop, and do not attend, there is no refund.

*For more information on the Illinois First Detector Program, please contact: Kelly Estes (kcook8@illinois.edu, 217.333.1005)*

University of Illinois • U.S. Department of Agriculture • Local Extension Councils Cooperating. University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, please call 217.333.1005. This program and materials are based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, USDA, under the Illinois CPPM-EIPM Coordination Program Agreement No. 2014-70006-22557.





# Backyard Maple Syrup Production Workshop February 4th, 2017 10:00am

The second annual backyard maple syrup production workshop will be held on Saturday, February 4, 2017 from 10am-noon at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center, located at 354 State Highway 145 N, Simpson, IL 62985. This program is free and open to the public.

Chris Evans, University of Illinois Extension Forester, will cover tree identification, equipment needs, tree tapping, sap collection, boiling, and finishing maple syrup. Participants will see firsthand the processes involved in making maple syrup. New this year is a demonstration of a syrup evaporator and an optional tour of a sugarbush forest, managed for maple syrup production and utilizing a pipeline system of sap collection.

The University of Illinois Extension will provide some activities for kids.

**Come see firsthand the entire process of maple syrup production!**

If you are interested in attending this workshop, please RSVP by February 3, 2017 by calling the Ag Center office at 618-695-2441, please indicate if you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program.

**For more information:**

Chris Evans— [cwevans@illinois.edu](mailto:cwevans@illinois.edu), 618-695-3383

Bronwyn Aly— [baly@illinois.edu](mailto:baly@illinois.edu), 618-252-8391



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
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**Dixon Springs Ag Center**

**354 State Hwy 145 North  
Simpson, IL 62985**

**Saturday, Feb 4, 2017**

**10:00am to 12:00p.m.**

University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences— United States Department of Agriculture.—Local Extension Councils Cooperating provides equal opportunities in programming and employment.

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, contact Dixon Springs Ag Center at 618-695-2441.





## Membership Registration Form

Privacy matters to us. We will not sell or share this information.



Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Representative, if business or group: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home County: \_\_\_\_\_ Land County: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category: \_\_\_\_\_ Term: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Due: \_\_\_\_\_

*See below for categories and term options*

Would you be interested in a volunteer role of any kind? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

*(We are always on the lookout for potential committee or board members, and occasionally need help with events, mailings and other tasks. If you have special skills or interests that might fit – forestry, clerical, legal, real estate, marketing, IT, etc., please let us know!)*

Please return this form and your payment to: (or join and pay online at <http://ilforestry.org/join>)

Illinois Forestry Association  
P. O. Box 224  
Chatham, IL 62629

*For IFA Administrative Use (01/2016)*

ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_

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*Clip and Save This Portion for Your Records...*

*Questions? Call Dave Gillespie at 217/494-6982*

### Membership Category

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| IFE - Basic Membership – with email address     | \$25  |
| IFE3 - Advantage Basic – 3-year member w/ email | \$70  |
| IFM - Basic Membership – newsletter via US Mail | \$35  |
| IFS - Supporting Membership                     | \$50  |
| IFX - Sustaining Membership                     | \$100 |
| IFL - Life Membership *                         | \$500 |
| BUS - Business Membership                       | \$50  |
| STU - Student (non-voting, email only)          | \$10  |

IFA is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization. Dues may be tax deductible as a business expense, and donations counted toward charitable contributions. We encourage you to explore the tax benefits of IFA membership with your accountant. Welcome, and thanks for your support!

\* Lifetime membership dues can be paid in two installments, up to 6 months apart

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Category Selected: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Due: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_