

Massachusetts Forest Update
December 2016

Christmas Trees – 2016 Crop is Good, Future Crops Hurt by Drought

Christmas tree purchasers will find plenty of good mature trees to use this holiday season, but the ongoing drought has made it difficult for growers to get replacement seedlings to survive.

About 400 farms around Massachusetts grow Christmas trees, primarily for retail sale during the 5 week season from Thanksgiving to Christmas. Christmas tree sales add about \$1.4 million to the Massachusetts economy, according to the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. Trees take between 7 and 12 years to grow to maturity here, so trees being harvested this year were planted between 2004 and 2009. To ensure a sustainable harvest, growers need to replace trees harvested each year with new seedlings.

The severe drought which has affected Massachusetts for the past two years has not greatly reduced the number of trees available for sale now as mature trees have well-established root systems, but growers have reported near total mortality of new seedlings planted in the last two years.

Donate to MFA's Annual Fund Drive

By now, you have probably received a request from MFA to help support our work. Really, it's very simple. Our operating budget is over \$600 per member. To be inclusive, we keep our dues very low – most of our members pay \$75, and even those that pay at the highest levels only pay \$150 for their *membership*. But \$75 - or even \$150 – doesn't come close to paying for the cost of our activities. We hope that you consider our efforts worthwhile, and ask that you give a bit (or a lot!) more. For individuals, donations to our 501(c) 3 sister organization, the Massachusetts Forest Trust, are fully tax deductible as charitable contributions. Every dollar you give is an investment in the forest economy of Massachusetts. To make a donation, simply mail your check to the Massachusetts Forest Alliance at 249 Lakeside Avenue, Marlborough, MA 01752-4503. *If you plan to claim a charitable contribution, make the check payable to the Massachusetts Forest Trust.* To pay by credit card, give us a call at 617-455-9918.

New State Contract will Promote Sales of Locally Produced Wood

The DCR 728 Contract is an opportunity for businesses to sell local wood products from sustainably managed forests within Massachusetts directly to the Commonwealth, municipalities, and other eligible organizations. Its main role is to set up the framework

for businesses to connect with local public entities to meet resource needs with products sourced from local forests.

Products eligible to be sold under the contract include, but are not limited to: lumber, structural lumber under either the Massachusetts Native Lumber Program or NELMA, as well as manufactured goods like bowls, flooring, millwork, and sheds.

In addition, the contract allows for businesses to play a role in processing wood for the Commonwealth for services such as portable milling, kiln drying, and other forms of value adding.

To learn more, see www.massforestalliance.org

New Study Shows Greenhouse Gas Benefits of Switching to Pellet Heat

A study released by the Northern Forest Center in October shows that switching to burning wood pellets for heat cuts greenhouse gas emissions by 50 to 60 percent over oil and natural gas.

The study, conducted by the Spatial Informatics Group—Natural Assets Laboratory, used data specific to the region's forest composition and harvesting practices, and assumed that pellets were sourced from and manufactured in the Northeast.

The life cycle study found that burning wood pellets for heat reduces greenhouse gas emissions immediately by 54 percent compared with burning oil, and by 59 percent compared with burning natural gas. The study also found that, over a 50 year time period, greenhouse gas reductions from burning pellets would cut emissions 62 percent over oil and 67 percent over natural gas.

To learn more, see www.massforestalliance.org

Jay Healy's Sawmill Featured in Article

The Greenfield *Recorder* featured an article about Jay Healy's Hall Tavern Farm sawmill operation in Charlemont in its November 18th edition.

To read the article, go to <http://www.recorder.com/Jay-Healy-forestry-business-6159183>

MFA Members get 7% Discount on Forestry Supplies & Equipment

Looking for supplies for your forestry business? If so, a recent agreement between the Forest Alliance and Forestry Suppliers may help you save money.

Under the new agreement, Forest Alliance members can get a 7 percent discount on any supplies or equipment purchased from the Mississippi-based Forestry Suppliers, Inc.. Forestry Suppliers sells a wide variety of forestry equipment and supplies by phone or online at www.forestry-suppliers.com

To use the discount, you simply phone in your order through the Bid/Contract Department at 800-752-8461 and give the discount code of “KMA”.

Maine Pellet Company Opens Showroom, Distribution Center in Oxford

Maine Energy Systems (MES), a Maine wood pellet manufacturer and dealer in pellet heating systems, has recently opened a showroom and pellet distribution facility in Worcester County.

The facility, located at 20 Boulder Park Way in North Oxford, will serve as a showroom for wood pellet central heating equipment and bulk residential and commercial distribution location for Maine Energy System's wood pellets.

Based in Bethel, Maine, MES manufactures pellet fueled boilers and furnaces for residential and commercial applications, as well as wood pellets. The Oxford facility will allow MES to serve their Massachusetts customers from a central location.

For more information, see www.maineenergysystems.org

New Publication Highlights Forest Resiliency for a Changing Climate

How will our woodlands change over the next 100 years? Will they be transformed by warming temperatures, or lose species to invasion by non-native plants or insects? Will they become more susceptible to weather events or lost to development?

Those are questions addressed by a new publication developed by researchers from the Universities of Massachusetts, Vermont and the U.S. Forest Service called, *Increasing Forest Resiliency for an Uncertain Future*. In the 32 page publication, Paul Catanzaro of UMass, Anthony D'Amato of UVM, and Emily Silver Huff from the Forest Service discuss the likely impacts of climate change, invasive pests, and development on our woodlands and ways to lessen their impacts.

The publication may be downloaded at www.masswoods.net/caring-your-land/forest-resiliency

MFA Forest Update: Now accepting ads, both graphic and text based!

Upcoming in December

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| December 3 | Mass/RI Chapter American Chestnut Foundation Annual Meeting – Wakefield, RI |
| December 7 | Forester Licensing Board – Amherst |
| December 8 | Getting Funds to Help Birds – Shelburne Falls |
| December 13 | Creating Early Successional Habitat for Warblers – webinar |
| December 14 | Cross Laminated Timber in School Construction -- webinar |

For information about these events, and more, go to www.massforestalliance.org