



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SFI Grant Supports Manual to Assist American Chestnut Restoration

ASHEVILLE, NC – The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) has released an easy-to-read [best management practices manual](#) for all landowners, including orchard managers, professional growers, forest landowners, or amateur enthusiasts, so they can help restore American chestnut trees. The manual is an easy-to-read guide that outlines best practices for planting and raising chestnut trees, including site preparation, fertilization, deer and pest management, identifying and treating diseases, and more. The goal of the guide is to help planters of all types significantly improve the success rate of their chestnut plantings.

The manual is part of a project funded through the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI®) Conservation and Community Partnerships Grant Program, which led to the first plantings of some of the most advanced blight-resistant American chestnuts in the southeastern United States. Earlier this year, seedlings were planted on lands owned by SFI program participants MeadWestvaco and Georgia Pacific. Quality Deer Management Association and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources also helped with the manual production.

The American chestnut once produced high-value wood products, such as furniture and rail ties, and was a valuable food source in the Appalachian hardwood forest ecosystem for a wide variety of wildlife from bears to birds. An estimated four billion trees were lost to an exotic, Asian, fungal disease (chestnut blight) during the first half of the 20th century.

“We will need to plant a lot of trees if we are to eventually restore the American chestnut to its former range,” TACF President and CEO Bryan J. Burhans said today. “The manual provides advice so landowners can work with us, and the SFI grant also lets us create a web-based database so volunteers and partners can track their progress.”

“Through projects like this, our conservation grant program is bringing together partners to advance knowledge about forest management and improve natural biodiversity and wildlife habitat,” said SFI President and CEO Kathy Abusow. “SFI is the only forest certification program in North America that requires support for forest research activities.”

SFI Inc., an independent third-party forest certification program, has invested \$1.2 million to date through its grant program to foster partnerships between organizations interested in improving forest management in the United States and Canada, and responsible procurement globally. TACF will receive a total of \$60,000 over two years.

-30-

About Sustainable Forestry Initiative Inc.

SFI Inc. (www.sfiprogram.org) is an independent non-profit charitable organization, and is solely responsible for maintaining, overseeing and improving the internationally recognized Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) program. Across North America, about 198 million acres/80 million hectares are certified to the SFI forest management standard. SFI Inc. is governed by a three-chamber board of directors representing environmental, social and economic sectors equally.

About The American Chestnut Foundation

TACF (www.acf.org) is a non-profit organization founded in 1983 by a group of prominent plant scientists. Its mission is to restore the American chestnut tree to our eastern woodlands to benefit our environment, our wildlife, and our society.

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