



USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework

“Enriching Our Lives With Trees That Work”



What Is Agroforestry?

Agroforestry is a unique land management approach that intentionally blends agriculture and forestry to enhance productivity, profitability, and environmental stewardship. Agroforestry can be a key tool for farmers, ranchers, woodland owners, communities, and others who want to use sustainable strategies that enhance agricultural practices and protect natural resources.

Agroforestry opens new opportunities to create prosperity while providing vital protection to natural resources by supporting:

- sustainable farms, ranches, and woodlands
- diversified income on farms and ranches
- clean air and water
- habitat for wildlife
- improved soil health
- safe and healthy food
- energy conservation
- bioenergy production
- increased wealth in rural communities

Agroforestry practices can resemble a living patchwork quilt across entire watersheds. For instance, managed forest canopies in a woodland can protect a range of crops grown for food, landscaping, and medicinal use—plants such as shiitake mushrooms, ramps, ginseng, goldenseal, curly willow, and sword fern. Additionally, farmers and ranchers who plant pine trees on land used for livestock and forage production can add to their profits by selling pine straw and high-value sawlogs.

This is agroforestry...combining trees and agriculture to enhance long-term production of food and other useful products while protecting the soil and water, diversifying and expanding local economies, providing wildlife habitat, and ensuring a more pleasing and healthy place to work and live.

The Future of Agroforestry—

The *USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework* provides new direction on how U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies, partners, and landowners together can significantly expand agroforestry to balance agricultural production with natural resource conservation. The agroforestry community is provided an opportunity to positively influence the long-term health and sustainability of all lands for future generations.

The key concept in agroforestry is **working trees** – *putting the right tree, in the right place, for the right purpose.*



USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework



The **USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework** was developed by the following USDA agencies :

Forest Service

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Agricultural Research Service

National Institute of Food and Agriculture

Farm Service Agency

Partner Organizations

National Association of State Foresters

National Association of Conservation Districts

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

What Is the USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework?

An Interagency Agroforestry Team, with input from diverse stakeholders, developed the *USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework* to increase awareness and support for expanding agroforestry and help USDA focus its agroforestry research and technology transfer efforts. The framework supports the Secretary of Agriculture's priorities in the USDA Strategic Plan (FY 2010-2015), which include: (1) rural prosperity, (2) preservation and maintenance of forests and working lands, (3) sustainable agricultural production, (4) global food security, and (5) safe and nutritious foods for Americans.

The framework guides advancement of agroforestry knowledge, tools, and assistance which benefit landowners, communities, and the Nation.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Adoption—USDA aims to help and encourage landowners, managers, Tribes, and communities widely adopt and apply agroforestry practices.

- **Develop Partnerships:** Sharing information through new agroforestry partnerships and networks will address emerging needs and continue to encourage wider participation by Tribes and underserved and minority audiences.
- **Educate Professionals:** Natural resource professionals will gain the education and training necessary to provide technical, educational, financial, and marketing assistance to help landowners consider agroforestry as an opportunity.
- **Engage Globally:** The United States and the international agroforestry community will exchange information about agroforestry's role in supporting sustainable food, feed, and fiber production in light of global issues such as climate change and population growth.

Science—USDA will create and design more science-based agroforestry tools to address complex environmental, economic, and social conditions and customize those tools for targeted audiences and locations.

- **Plan:** Scientists and land managers will work together to identify effective agroforestry tools and technologies for multiple users.
- **Discover:** Partnering agencies and organizations will conduct research beyond traditional agroforestry practices to develop state-of-the-art tools and technologies.
- **Translate:** Agroforestry science will be interpreted and tools tailored to accommodate diverse users.

Integration—USDA will integrate agroforestry into agency programs and policies to maximize and highlight economic, social, and conservation benefits.

- **Institutionalize:** USDA will take a collaborative approach to emphasize agroforestry's value and contribution to agriculture, conservation, and the American public.
- **Assess Performance:** Monitoring and evaluating agroforestry practices will help determine impacts, benefits, and outcomes and guide future development and delivery.
- **Communicate Results:** Greater awareness and understanding will highlight agroforestry benefits and encourage acceptance and use of new technologies.

For Additional Information

Please visit http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=FOREST_FORESTRY or contact the USDA National Agroforestry Center, Lincoln, NE, at (402) 437-5178.