

FOR TREE FARM INSPECTORS: Frequently Asked Tree Farm Questions

What is the Vermont Tree Farm (VTF) program?

- 🌲 Mission is to promote **thoughtful stewardship** of Vermont's privately-owned working forests
- 🌲 Part of American Tree Farm System (ATFS), third party certified by Programme to Endorse Forest Certification (PEFC), and sponsored nationally by American Forest Foundation (AFF)

What values does VTF offer landowners?

- 🌲 **Educational woodland workshops**, such as woodland tours and Walks in the Woods, in person and online
- 🌲 Access to variety of landowner **resources**
- 🌲 **Advocacy** for forest landowners at State and National level
- 🌲 **Representation** in all issues of importance to woodland owners, such as Forests in the Farm Bill
- 🌲 Quarterly **printed newsletter** with relevant information, in coordination with VT Woodlands Association
- 🌲 **Weekly e-news** (if email available) with current topics of interest, articles, webinars, and other resources
- 🌲 **Networking and learning opportunities** with a community of like-minded land stewards
- 🌲 **Legacy planning** services for landowners and families
- 🌲 **Access** to foresters and natural resource professionals
- 🌲 Right to display green and white **Tree Farm sign**, a symbol of pride in **stewardship** and **sustainable woodland management**

Do Tree Farmers need to harvest timber?

- 🌲 No. The four tenets of Tree Farm are **Wood, Water, Wildlife, and Recreation**, allowing Tree Farmers to have varied objectives and manage for diverse outcomes.

Are Tree Farmers paid a premium for timber harvested?

- 🌲 Not usually, however some mills offer **preferential purchasing** of certified wood, depending on demand.

How often is a Tree Farm inspected, and who does it?

- 🌲 **Required** inspections happen statewide every year, and about 20 Tree Farms are **randomly selected** by ATFS.
- 🌲 **Monitoring** (optional) inspections are not required but suggested **every 5-10 years**.
- 🌲 Any **certified Tree Farm Inspector** may complete inspections.
- 🌲 During regional assessments that occur on a 3- to 5-year cycle, an independent auditing body will visit properties with the landowner and the forester.

How much does it cost to be a Vermont Tree Farmer?

- 🌲 Vermont has an annual administrative **fee of \$30** to help cover the cost of program administration. The fee is billed by VT Woodlands Association.



VT TREE FARM ENROLLMENT PROCESS: Questions To Ask

🌲 If this is a prospective new tree farmer,

- ✓ Does the landowner have **at least 10 and not more than 10,000 acres?**
- ✓ Is the landowner a **non-industrial private** forest owner?
- ✓ Does the landowner have a **forest management plan?**

🌲 If you answered “yes” to those questions,

- ✓ Does the plan meet the Tree Farm **2021 Standards of Sustainability?**
- ✓ If not, has the landowner filled out an **Addendum** to address missing items in the plan?
- ✓ Have you completed an **on-the-ground inspection** of the property to validate conformance to the plan?

🌲 If you answered “yes” to those questions,

- ✓ **Contact the Tree Farm office** (802-747-7900) or email info@vermontwoodlands.org to get a **Tree Farm number** assigned.
- ✓ Fill out the **inspection report** form 021.
- ✓ **Email electronic 021** to Tree Farm office.

Once 021 is submitted, landowner will receive **welcome packet and certificate** from ATFS. Vermont Tree Farm committee provides one **free Certified Tree Farm or Certified Family Forest sign**, available at County Forester offices upon request to administrative office. Additional signs are available for \$8 each. Please note: Electronic forms never need signatures!

🌲 Is this an existing Tree Farm Reinspection?

- ✓ **Download Inspection 021** from atfsdatabase.org, fill out, and email to inspectors@forestfoundation.org with subject line upload021. Nothing else required.

🌲 What if there are changes in ownership?

- ✓ If property remains **within family**, update contact info in database and retain Tree Farm number and history.
- ✓ If property changed hands **outside family**, assign new number and submit as initial inspection.

How can you help landowners make the most of enrolling in the Vermont Tree Farm Program?

Encourage them to:

- 🌲 **Tell** their Tree Farm story
- 🌲 **Display** their Tree Farm sign, visibly and with pride
- 🌲 **Attend** workshops and tours
- 🌲 **Host** workshops and tours
- 🌲 **Visit** Tree Farm website for resources and webinars
- 🌲 **Read** eNews and newsletter
- 🌲 **Contact** Forester or Tree Farm Committee with questions
- 🌲 **Stay informed** about new opportunities in Family Forest Carbon Project and **climate adaptive** forestry

