



# NATIONAL COALITION FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

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## **FARMING IN THE FOREST? YES INDEED!**

*Woodland Cultivation of Non-Timber Crops*

**Washington, DC**—December 12, 2017, for Immediate Release – The exciting work by forest owners, managers, and researchers to increase cultivation of non-timber products in woodlands will be the subject of NCFAR’s seminar on Friday, December 15, at noon in 1302 Longworth House Office Building, and again at 2:30 in 328A Russell Senate Office Building. The presenter is Dr. John Munsell, Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation, Virginia Tech.

"For generations, people have collected edible, medicinal, and decorative woodland crops from the wild, but more so than ever before consumers and manufacturers seek sustainable and high quality products that have been cultivated in native forest habitats," says Munsell. "Forest farming research and producer networking is gaining momentum as a result and exciting things are happening across the US that will help sustain working woodlands, benefit forest owners, and support growth in the non-timber forest product industries."

"This presentation provides an excellent example of the value of federally funded food and agricultural research, extension, and education in producing the scientific outcomes and outreach needed to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges and opportunities," says Andy LaVigne, President of the National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research (NCFAR).

**Highlights:** Forest farming is an agroforestry practice where woodland medicinal, edible, decorative, and handicraft crops are cultivated under a forest canopy that is managed to provide desirable conditions for production. Landowners and woodland lessees can generate income through forest farming and help conserve native plant populations which leads to healthier woodlands. Forest farming is gaining a foothold among non-timber products industries, such as herbal products companies, and some are selling verified forest grown merchandise at higher price points to discriminating consumers who demand sustainable and high-quality retail products. This presentation will cover the history and recent momentum of forest farming research and capacity building in the temperate regions of the US and present plans for future initiatives focused on market development and precision farming technology.

The seminar is open to the public and the media.

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**NCFAR** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, consensus-based, and *customer-led* coalition that brings food, agriculture, nutrition, conservation, and natural resource stakeholders together with the food and agriculture research and Extension community, serving as a forum and a unified voice in support of sustaining and increasing public investment at the national level in food and agricultural research, Extension, and education. NCFAR’s Hill Seminar Series, now in its tenth year, regularly presents leading-edge researchers working to provide answers to pressing issues confronting the public and Congress. The Hill Seminar Series helps demonstrate the value of public investment in food and agricultural research—investment that returns 45 percent per year on average, and \$20 in economic benefit from every \$1 investment in food and ag research.

Go to [http://www.ncfar.org/Hill\\_Seminar\\_Series.asp](http://www.ncfar.org/Hill_Seminar_Series.asp) for more information about the seminar series and past topics. Interviews with National C-FAR President Andy LaVigne are available by request. For additional information, go to [www.ncfar.org](http://www.ncfar.org); or contact Tom Van Arsdall, Executive Director, at [tom@vanarsdall.com](mailto:tom@vanarsdall.com) or (703) 509-4746.