

INTRODUCTION

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We of the Regeneration Branch of the Division of State and Private Forestry join Mr. Stauffer in welcoming all of you to the Western Regional Forest Nurserymen's Conference. We are particularly desirous for each of you to have an enjoyable and profitable time at the Conference.

Several years have passed since your last nurserymen's conference. During that time, some drastic changes have taken place in nursery programs. Notable among these is the great reduction in the total number of seedlings grown. This change is a good one, however, since it provides us with an opportunity to establish our new hallmark. Yes, quality rather than Quantity production is now our objective! This can and will result most assuredly in a substantial gain for our forest economy.

Throughout the South an increased interest in the harvesting and utilization of various hardwood species is also noted. Attending this increased activity of harvesting and utilizing these hardwoods is the need for increased forest nursery production of field-plantable hardwood seedling stock. For some species, nursery production methods are known. The results are generally satisfactory. For many species, "by guess and by gosh" is the rule. Perhaps nursery management practices which gave a good seedling crop this year will fail miserably next year. When do we collect our seed, how do we clean it, how should it be stored, stratified, sowed, etc.? Answers to these and many other questions may be available. WHERE --Well, some answers have been documented, some are written invisibly in the minds of you nurserymen, and other are yet to be found! The years ahead may be troublesome ones for many of you in the production of hardwood forest tree seedlings. You can be sure, however, that from meetings such as this one, from research efforts at both the applied and at the basic levels, and from concerted cooperative efforts, answers to these problems will be found!

The theme of your Conference is HARDWOOD SEEDLING PRODUCTION IN FOREST NURSERIES. This theme is the result of your general wishes. The various topics scheduled for discussion also reflect your comments and suggestions for a conference program. Although the presentations will follow a formal schedule, an overtone of informality and free discussion must prevail. If you've got something to say, let's hear it! As we mentioned at our Eastern Meeting, nurserymen are a breed alone. Often they are slow to get started talking but when they do it takes a strong hand and a sound gavel to shut 'em up! And this is good! Incidentally, this comment should serve as a reminder to the Program Moderators for your sessions. You moderators must be BRUTAL when it comes to starting and stopping speakers on time! There is an old saying that "the mind can absorb only as much as the seat can endure." This Conference must not be an exception to that rule!