

**A Word From the Virginia Tree Farm Committee**  
**by Rob Wait, Vice Chairman, Virginia Tree Farm Committee**

**A Day at the Old Farm Day**

One of the primary objectives for the Tree Farm Committee is outreach and interaction with landowners. Many of the committee members give their time on weekends, and sometimes take time away from their primary jobs, to advance the goals of the American Forest Foundation. During the third quarter of 2005, the Tree Farm display traveled to six different locations. The Tree Farm message was presented at the Albemarle County Fair, Fluvanna County's Old Farm Day, Gloucester County's Dragon Run Day, the Southampton County Fair, the Louisa County Fair, and Down on the Farm Day in Essex County. Committee members Dennis Bridge, Scott Detar, Rob Wait, Chuck Wright and Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOP) Forester Warren Coburn all took the display along with brochures, magazines and applications to at least one of the locations to promote the Tree Farm message of sustainable forestry and best management practices to all that were attracted to the booth.

There was no official count of the number of people stopping at the Tree Farm booth at Fluvanna County's Old Farm Day, but everyone that did stop was introduced to the importance of Tree Farms through the message presented in the display. They also could experience all things central to forest management. Chuck Wright and Denny Bridge set up the booth with the a table showing insects that can infect a forest, instruments used in a timber cruise, and samples of about 17 different tree species. To add a bit of energy to the stop at the Tree Farm Committee booth each person was encouraged to enter the contest of identifying the different trees, the type of insects, and the forestry tools. On this recent Old Farm Day many just simply identified one or two tree species, but in a few cases visitors did identify all 17 species. As for the insects, few

knew the identities of the five samples and everyone could identify the compass, but were not too familiar with other items used by foresters almost daily.

The booth also sponsored a crosscut saw competition. Robert Coleman Lumber provided two poplar cants for use in this educational as well as friendly competition. Billy Hall, a VDOF Technician in Buckingham County, managed this area giving instruction on the proper sawing method to all the contestants. An estimated 10 to 20 people actually joined in the competition, challenging their friends to a timed race.

The efforts made by these committee members and volunteers is an example of the commitment the Virginia Tree Farm Committee makes to further the mission of long-term stewardship of the environment and natural resources of all of Virginia's family-owned forest resources. Anyone wanting more information about the Tree Farm Committee should visit the Virginia Forestry Association Web site [www.veforestry.org](http://www.veforestry.org) and go to Resource/Links. The Virginia Tree Farm Web page can be found on this link, which will contain names of the committee members in each of the particular regions of Virginia. The committee is eager to assist forest landowners in Virginia with the goals of ensuring that family-owned forests continue to provide clean water, fertile soil, recreation, home for wildlife, and a continuing supply of wood products.