



# RI Agro-Forestry Project

## Info

## What is forest farming?

# Working Trees



Photo: University of Vermont Center for Agricultural Sustainability

Shiitake mushrooms, a culinary specialty crop, are among the many crops that can be grown in the forest.

**F**orest Farming, or Multi-Story Cropping, is a distinctive approach to land management that combines management practices of conventional forestry with those of small-scale farming or gardening to attain an environmentally and economically sustainable land-use system.

Typically, a Forest Farming system is established by thinning an existing woodland or plantation to leave the best canopy trees for continued timber production and to create the appropriate conditions that favor the understory crop.

Although some woodland owners pursue Forest Farming as a source of income, many people

enjoy collecting or growing non-timber forest products as part of their cultural and family tradition, or as a recreational outing.

In Forest Farming, high-value specialty crops or special forest products are cultivated or grown under the protection of a managed forest canopy.

Crops like ginseng, shiitake mushrooms and decorative ferns are sold for medicinal, culinary or ornamental uses.

Forest Farming provides added income while the canopy trees are growing and developing into timber, veneer, and other solid wood products.

## Crops from the forest

### Fruit:

- pawpaw
- currants
- elderberry
- serviceberry
- blackberry
- huckleberry

### Other food crops:

- ramps (wild leeks)
- syrups
- honey
- mushrooms
- other edible roots

### Other products: (mulch, decoratives, crafts, dyes):

- pine straw
- willow twigs
- vines
- beargrass
- ferns
- pine cones
- moss

### Native ornamentals:

- rhododendron
- forsythia
- flowering dogwood

### Medicinal herbs:

- ginseng
- black cohosh
- goldenseal
- bloodroot
- Pacific yew
- mayapple
- saw palmetto

### Nuts:

- black walnut
- hazelnut
- hickory
- beechnut