

## Nursery Networks

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### Cooperatives

In our continuing effort to keep FNN readers informed of the various nursery networks and services we are highlighting the **Southern Forest Nursery Cooperative**, which is headquartered at Auburn University in Auburn, AL (**Figure 11**).

**Mission:** To develop and disseminate technologies for the production and utilization of forest tree seedlings in the southeastern United States.

**Brief Historical Background and Current Programs:** The Nursery Cooperative was formed in the early 1970's when a task force recognized that nursery managers in the Southeast were facing severe pest management issues. Following this emphasis, the Coop initially devoted considerable research effort to developing effective weed and disease control technologies and to transfer this knowledge to nursery managers. During the 1980's, the Coop program moved more into the area of seedling quality as research showed that nursery related factors such as seedling size, fertility, and health had a significant affect on seedling performance after outplanting. In recent years, Coop programs have become even more diverse.

**Staff:** Several School of Forestry faculty work with the Coop on research, technology transfer, and development activities, including:

Ken Mc Nabb,  
*Associate Professor and Coop Director*

David South,  
*Professor (Nursery Management)*

Scott Enebak,  
*Assistant Professor (Pathology)*

Lisa Samuelson,  
*Assistant Professor (Physiology)*

Mark Dubois,  
*Assistant Professor (Economics)*

The Coop also employs two full time Research Associates; Dr. Bill Carey in Forest Pathology, and Allan Bradley, M.S. in Forest Economics; two full-time technicians and a half-time secretary. The coop currently has six Masters level graduate students and has a position for one more in the area of nutsedge control.



*Figure 11.  
The Southern Forest  
Nursery Cooperative  
is headquartered at  
Auburn University, AL  
and serves forest and  
conservation  
nurseries in the  
southeastern states.*

**Cooperators:** The Nursery Management Cooperative currently has 26 full members consisting of 13 forest industries, 10 state forestry organizations, two private nurseries, and the USDA Forest Service. There is one Associate Member, which is a separate membership category with different responsibilities and privileges.

**Research:** The Coop has a very active research program that includes at least 25 individual research projects covering four general areas:

1. Evaluating new pesticides
2. Refining cultural practices
3. Minimizing environmental impacts
4. Defining the "optimal" seedling

Examples of individual projects include: testing new hardwood nursery herbicides, methyl-bromide substitution, slow-release fertilization, plant growth promoting rhizobacteria, chlorophyll fluorescence, nitrate modeling, seedling quality interactions with silvicultural options, and seedling storage.

**Technology Transfer:** Technology transfer is an essential component of the Coop program. Not only are there periodic Research Reports and Technical Notes which are distributed to the membership, but the Coop also has a biennial newsletter and special publications such as a recently completed "Nursery Herbicide Label Book" which contains current labels for nursery herbicides. Each year, a "Contact Meeting" is conducted where nursery managers learn of recent Coop accomplishments along with special presentations by invited speakers. In 1996, they offered a basic nursery management shortcourse for the first time. **One of the most important benefits the Coop provides to the membership is a diagnostic service which helps identify nursery pests at the request of individual members.**

**Program Development:** The Coop develops a plan of work during the annual Advisory Committee meeting which is used as a basis for the following year's activities. This plan of work is based on the Coop's Strategic Plan and addresses the three basic components of the Coop program—research, technology transfer, and coop development. Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in regional, national, and international meetings to further their own knowledge base, communicate with others and highlight the role of the Auburn Coop in the development of nursery science.

For more information on the Southern Forest Nursery Cooperative, contact:

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