

WELCOME AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS

John Datena 1/

I would like to welcome each of you to the 1979 Northeastern Nurserymen's conference. I would also like to welcome all of you to Indiana.

With this group, I am especially proud to give the keynote address. I mean this sincerely, because I have always felt that our nurseries program is probably the most important and useful contact we in forestry have with the public.

As Steve will tell you, I have many times said that reforestation is our "bread-and-butter" program. It is a program that the landowner can see and identify with readily. Tree planting goes right to the hearts of most people, and with such a good talking point as this, it becomes much easier to sell the landowner on other forest management practices needed to assure a continued abundance of forest products.

Now, we in the Division of Forestry, have worked for the opportunity to host this conference for some time now. We feel that our nurseries program is fairly progressive and that hopefully, we can offer a learning experience for other nurserymen. We are certainly going to try during this conference.

I would like to briefly summarize some of our past nursery program activities:

- First, and foremost, we are aiming at expansion. We are adding bed space at every opportunity. We are also working toward a major expansion project for the Vallonia Nursery. This is in the order of a one to one and a half million dollar capitol project and we almost succeeded this year in getting this request through the legislature. We will keep trying for this expansion and feel our chances of getting approval are good. If reclamation, wildlife, and forestry interests need more seedlings, we want to be able to furnish them.
- Secondly, we have had an extensive program of rehabilitation and repair on all of our state properties over the past three years, and we intend to continue such programs, especially on our nurseries.

So this is, in a nutshell, the policy we are currently pursuing in our nurseries program, and as you can probably guess by now, reforestation is one area that I personally feel should not be allowed to backslide and I hope all other states have this same attitude. Tree planting is a symbol of conservation we could never afford to lose.

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I am going to conclude now and let the program begin. But first, I must tell you that Steve and I had one other reason for wanting the nurserymen's conference in Indiana this year, and that reason is this:

As I look before me I see that we have most of the expertise of the northeast nurseries captured right here in this room. We consider this an excellent opportunity for our reforestation program to benefit and learn.

You gentlemen have more knowledge about nurseries than any book could ever hold and we would like for you to share these ideas during this conference.

Let's work hard to make this conference mutually beneficial to everyone present.

And let's work hard to significantly improve the northeast's ability to continue to produce fine reforestation stock.

Have a good conference.