

Forest Mushroom Growers Cooperative

Article by Joe Lehn

One of the realities of the Virginia Urban Wood Program is the realization that not every tree, nor obviously all the parts of trees removed from the built environment are going to make beautiful conference tables. The urban wood program is always seeking opportunities for alternative forest products that can use some of the smaller tree parts from our urban trees. An emerging outlet for these smaller tree parts is as growing medium for the ever-increasing mushroom markets.

The Forest Mushroom Growers Association (FMGA), located in the Northern Neck Counties of Middlesex, Gloucester and Matthews, grows all of their mushrooms in the forest understory at various locations. The FMGA has approximately 20,000 smaller logs in production with 24 different species of mushrooms. These growers are seeing exponential growth in the mushroom industry, primarily from value-added products such as mushroom teas, jerky, powder, tinctures and freeze-dried products. In



November, DOF staffers including Joe Lehn, Lisa Deaton, and Communications Specialist Cory Swift-Turner spent a day with the FMGA members for an upcoming DOF YouTube video about their cooperative.

Christian Brown, one of the leaders of the FMGA, can be followed on his Mush Love Fb page > <https://www.facebook.com/p/Mush-Love-in-Mathews-VA-61556185017724/>