Dear ESF Community,

Exciting changes are coming to the Lafayette Road Experiment Station (LRES). A new $3.2 million Templeton World Charity Foundation grant has more than doubled the size of ESF’s American Chestnut Research & Restoration project and will kick-off new research and outreach opportunities on ESF’s doorstep. These initiatives include:

- Removal of an understory of mostly invasive buckthorn (along with poison ivy control) to test two shelterwood restoration prescriptions using the blight-tolerant American chestnut trees developed at ESF.
- Removal of an old Norway spruce plantation to establish a new chestnut/oak/hickory forest restoration demonstration, with paths and signage to facilitate public tours, in addition to the research.
- Expansion of the current chestnut research plots to continually make improvements to the American chestnut and other threatened tree species.

In addition, there will be agroforestry demonstrations that include dual cropping with chestnut trees and grape vines and American chestnut and American/European hybrid chestnut orchards.

Below is a map marking the areas targeted for these improvements. Please watch for updates on our unique efforts to restore a valuable keystone tree species. With respect to the American chestnut, 2020 will be a year to remember.
Someday the ESF community and the public will be able to celebrate chestnutting again in these orchards.

Sincerely,

Dave Amberg
Interim President