

TACF Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013

The mission of The American Chestnut Foundation is to restore the American chestnut tree to its native range within the woodlands of eastern North America.

The goals of The American Chestnut Foundation are:

1. to breed or develop genetically diverse, blight-resistant trees,
2. to evaluate various approaches to the management of chestnut pests and pathogens,
3. to reintroduce the trees into the forest in an ecologically acceptable manner,
4. to expand our ability to accomplish our mission by growing our Foundation,
5. to achieve a coordinated system of state chapters with good lines of communication between chapters and between the national office, regional offices, and state chapters,
6. to educate members and the public, and school children, about American chestnut and to increase awareness of and visibility for our organization, and
7. to generate scientific knowledge by conducting research, fostering science-based learning, and sharing with other disciplines.

Goal 1 – To breed or develop genetically diverse, blight-resistant trees.

- A. Continue implementing the 2004 Ten-Year Plan (see <http://www.acf.org/pdfs/board/tenyear.pdf>).
- B. Strengthen the core research facility in Meadowview by building a laboratory and office complex (2009), continuing efforts to acquire the Wagner Research Farm, adding staff as needed, starting with a foreman (2009) and research scientist (2009).
- C. Continue state breeding programs as outlined.*
- D. State chapters should continue to develop new state level cooperators to help with their breeding programs.*
- E. Maintain regional coordinators to assist state chapter programs.*
- F. TACF forms ad hoc committee of Science Cabinet to prepare a paper setting out positions for TACF on genetic engineering (2008) and then adopts a formal position (2010).
- G. TACF, TACF-NY, and their partners plan and implement forest testing of genetically transformed American Chestnut seedlings (2010 – 2013).

*As state chapters work toward the end of the current breeding program they should coordinate with national to determine new efforts that may include additional backcrosses or the development of new lines of resistance.

Goal 2 – To evaluate various approaches to the management of chestnut pests and pathogens.

- A. Continue to foster research on the roles virulence and hypovirulence play in the management of chestnut blight.
- B. Develop complementary strategies for releasing chestnut germplasm with improved resistance, in concert with hypovirulence, to optimally manage chestnut blight.
- C. Continue to support and optimize strategies that involve genetic manipulation and molecular transformations.
- D. Work with state chapters in deploying and evaluating hypovirulence field trials.
- E. Develop additional biological control strategies that involve genetic manipulation and molecular transformations.
- F. Evaluate chestnut populations and sites for their Phytophthora root disease risk and continue studies of resistance to this pathogen.
- G. Continue to monitor populations of the chestnut gall wasp and evaluate the threat posed by this insect.

Goal 3 - To reintroduce the trees into the forest in an ecologically acceptable manner.

- A. Develop a national reintroduction plan, to be used as a template for state plans (2008).
- B. State Chapters develop reintroduction plans for their state or region (2009).
- C. Begin deployment of reintroduction plans, which may include pure American trees and the establishment of cooperators and infrastructure needed (2009).
- D. Continue effort with coalmine reclamation opportunities.
- E. Continue efforts to establish silviculture practices needed to reintroduce the tree.
- F. Continue efforts to establish commercial values and uses of the tree.

Goal 4 - To expand our ability to accomplish our mission by growing our Foundation.

- A. Diversify and strengthen our board and the leadership it provides.
- B. Keep current members and secure new ones and expand the roles of current members.
- C. Develop funds and acquire assets from a variety of sources.
- D. Maintain or expand our paid staff of scientists, regional coordinators, support staff.
- E. Add a new state chapter in West Virginia (2008 – 2009).
- F. Establish a new state chapter in New Jersey (2009-2010).
- G. Establish a new national office in coordination with the new executive director/president, CEO (2008 – 2009).
- H. Aggressive planned giving.

Goal 5 – To strengthen our Foundation to achieve a coordinated system of state chapters with good lines of communication across chapters and among the national office, regional offices, and state chapters.

- A. Maintain a staff of regional coordinators
- B. Have a designated national office staff member in charge of chapter affairs and communications (2008/09)

Goal 6 - To educate members, the public, and school children, about the American chestnut and to increase awareness of and visibility for our organization.

- A. National office should aggressively try to get our story told by the national media such as television, radio, magazines, and news papers.
- B. National office chapters' staff member should work with chapters to increase TV, News papers, and state magazine stories and articles.
- C. A national speakers' bureau with a few qualified speakers should be established that would target national conventions of groups that might be interested in what we are doing.
- D. Promote our "Mighty Giants" book and begin an effort to publish a book of stories and memories.
- E. Promote and revive, if needed, Charlie Chestnut and other school-based efforts.
- F. Maintain a state-of-the-art and up-to-date TACF Web site.

Goal 7 – To generate scientific knowledge by conducting research, fostering science-based learning, and sharing with other disciplines.

- A. Keep science grants program funded and active.
- B. Establish and maintain college and university and other science based cooperators at national and state levels.
- C. Encourage our staff scientists to publish their results and lessons learned.
- D. Develop stronger working relationships with members of the USDA Regional Project NE-1033 (Biological improvement of chestnut through technologies that address the Management of populations, pathogens and pests).

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