

Branching out

from the Canadian Forest Service

Laurentian Forestry Centre

FOREST TENANT FARMING

Forest tenant farming is a management model that consists in allocating a parcel of land (tenant farm) to an individual (tenant farmer) who agrees to manage and operate it in a sustainable manner. In exchange, the tenant farmer shares the land's usufruct with the landowner, for example, by paying cutting rights for each square meter of wood that is sold.



Final cutting area. (BSLMF - Seigneurie Nicolas-Riou)
Photo: Jacques Robert

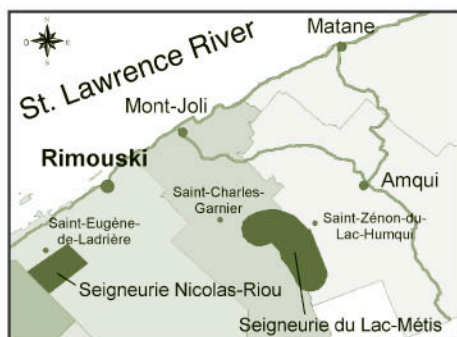
The forest tenant farming model has been tested since 1994 as part of the Bas-Saint-Laurent Model Forest (BSLMF) on two seigneuries owned by Abitibi-Consolidated.

The forest tenant farming model provides an effective way of promoting the stability of rural communities by helping to:

- create wealth in the communities;
- promote entrepreneurship;
- increase the value of forestry work;
- encourage young people to stay in the region;
- ensure fairer distribution of the profits generated by the development of various forest resources.

with an average allowable cut of 1,600 solid cubic metres per year. Long-term operations are governed by 10-year agreements between the BSLMF and tenant farmers, stipulating that their main occupation is to develop their tenant farm. Tenant farm activities are based on an integrated resource development plan. The income generated by tenant farms comes primarily from timber sales, the Financial Assistance Program for the Development of Private Woodlots, and vacationing, hunting and fishing activities².

The average area of the 25 BSLMF forest tenant farms¹ is 1,000 hectares,



¹ The number of BSLMF tenant farms varies slightly from one year to the next. As of March 31, 2003, there were 22 tenant farms in operation.
² Activities are organized collectively among all forest tenant farmers to benefit from an economy of scale.



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FOREST TENANT FARMING

CANADA'S MODEL FOREST PROGRAM

Canada's Model Forest Program was established by the Canadian Forest Service (CFS) to encourage the building of local, national and international partnerships in order to generate new ideas and practical solutions to sustainable forest management issues.

In 2001, an evaluation³ was carried out that made it possible to identify several challenges related to forest tenant farming, but the conclusions were that:

- Tenant farms are viable businesses that will continue to derive their profits primarily from wood production in the medium term.
- The costs of general supervision and technical support are similar to those incurred by forestry group ventures in Quebec.
- The socio-economic impacts of tenant farming are tangible and concentrated at the local and regional levels.
- The potential for extending the formula is good, particularly in Crown forests located near municipalities.

SOME DATA ON ACTIVE TENANT FARMERS

- Number of tenant farmers at the time of the evaluation: 25 (2/3 already worked in forest management)
- Average age of the tenant farmers: 39 years old (same as that of forestry workers in Quebec)
- Average number of weeks of work per year in tenant farming: 36
- Average net profit of tenant farms before taxes: \$31,000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Tenant farmers benefit from technical assistance provided by BSLMF forestry advisors.
Photo: Jacques Robert

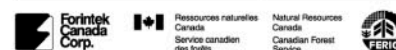
The tenant farming management approach helps to overcome the difficulty of acquiring enough land to ensure an adequate standard of living for individuals interested in becoming forest tenant farmers. The establishment of tenant farms in a variety of contexts would make it possible to determine the potential for expanding tenant farming.

USEFUL LINKS

**Forest Tenant Farms
(Bas-Saint-Laurent Model Forest)**
www.foret.fmodbsl.qc.ca/english/ferme/a/index_ferme.html

**Canada's Model Forest Program
(Canadian Forest Service)**
www.nrcan-nrcan.gc.ca/cfs-scf/national/what-quoi/modelforest_e.html

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³ Masse, S. 2001. Socio-economic viability of forest tenant farming. Evaluation report. Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service, Laurentian Forestry Centre. 79 p.