Unit: Forestry

***Lesson: Introduction to Agroforestry***

# **Purpose:** Imagine for a moment you are taking a drive through the country side. What do you see? You are likely see fields with growing corn, soybeans, wheat, or even cotton. There may be cattle grazing or horses running. You will see livestock buildings, farmer’s houses. These are the things commonly thought of as making up our agricultural countryside, but there is an important piece that is often overlooked. Trees and shrubs interworked throughout the countryside serve a variety of purposes unknown to many people.

**Directions**: Access the commodities and products tab on the AgMRC website (http://www.agmrc.org) and find the link to agroforestry. Utilize information located here to answer the questions below:

1. Brainstorm with a partner to make a list of the ways trees and shrubs can be combined with livestock or crop systems to be useful.
2. Use the AgMRC website to research Agroforestry. What is Agroforestry?
3. How could ‘forest farming’ add value to an existing agricultural enterprise?
4. What is a riparian buffer? What might trees planted in a riparian buffer need to be able to tolerate?
5. Some of the main types of Agroforestry practices are alley cropping, forest farming, riparian forest buffers, silvo pasture, windbreaks and wildlife habitat areas. In groups of 3 or 4, discuss which you think has the most value. You will first need to research all the practices on your own, write your thoughts, and report to your thoughts to your group.