



THOMAS JEFFERSON'S *Poplar Forest*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Poplar Forest To Host The American Chestnut Foundation  
April 13<sup>th</sup> Event will Emphasize Restoration Efforts**

**Forest, VA** – On Thomas Jefferson's birthday, Sunday April 13<sup>th</sup>, Poplar Forest will host The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) for a talk and ceremonial planting on Poplar Forest grounds. The talk will begin at 12:30 p.m.

Kathy Marmet, Vice President for Education for the Virginia Chapter of TACF will present "American Chestnut Restoration in Virginia: Returning a Giant to our Forests." Her presentation will be followed by a ceremonial planting of American chestnut trees on Poplar Forest grounds with remarks by Jay Mills, Vice Chairman for Development for TACF's board of directors.

Mr. Mills said, "We are honored to be part of a celebration that recognizes both Mr. Jefferson as well as his deep attachment to a tree known as the 'King of the Forest' – the American chestnut."

The American chestnut was blighted in the 20th century and nearly lost. Native to this area, American chestnuts would have historically been at Poplar Forest. Chestnuts were an essential component of the entire eastern US ecosystem. A late-flowering, reliable, and productive tree, unaffected by seasonal frosts, it was the single most important food source for a wide variety of wildlife from bears to birds.

Additionally, chestnut was used in the construction of Poplar Forest. In 1820 Thomas Jefferson asked his overseer to prepare 500 to 1000 chestnut shingles to repair the roof of the house.

“We are pleased to support TACF in their preservation and restoration efforts,” said Lynn Beebe, Poplar Forest’s president. “Chestnut was an important component in the construction of the house at Poplar Forest and this event enables us to further open the landscape at Poplar Forest to visitors.”

This event is free and open to the public. Regular admission will be charged for those interested in a house tour. The talk will take place in the Hands on History Pavilion and then visitors will have to walk approximately 0.5 mile to the ceremony site on the grounds.

Poplar Forest will celebrate Jefferson’s birthday throughout the day on Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>. Other activities include a chamber music concert by **The Léya String Quartet** (ticket purchase required). Birthday cake will be served!

#### **About The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF)**

The goal of TACF is to restore a blight-resistant American chestnut tree to its native range within the woodlands of the eastern United States, using a scientific research and breeding program. Virtually wiped out in the first half of the 20th century by a blight imported from Asia, the American chestnut tree was an essential component of the entire eastern U.S. ecosystem. TACF is a non-profit organization with nearly 6,000 members and chapters in 17 states. Call (802) 447-0110 or visit [www.acf.org](http://www.acf.org) for more information.

#### **About Poplar Forest**

Poplar Forest is Thomas Jefferson's secluded plantation and retreat home, now a National Historic Landmark. Undergoing award-winning restoration and archaeology, Poplar Forest offers tours, special events, and outreach programs. Call (434) 525-1806 or visit [www.poplarforest.org](http://www.poplarforest.org) for additional information.

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