



IFCO
SEEDLINGS

Georgia Forestry Association
10/17/2019



IFCO

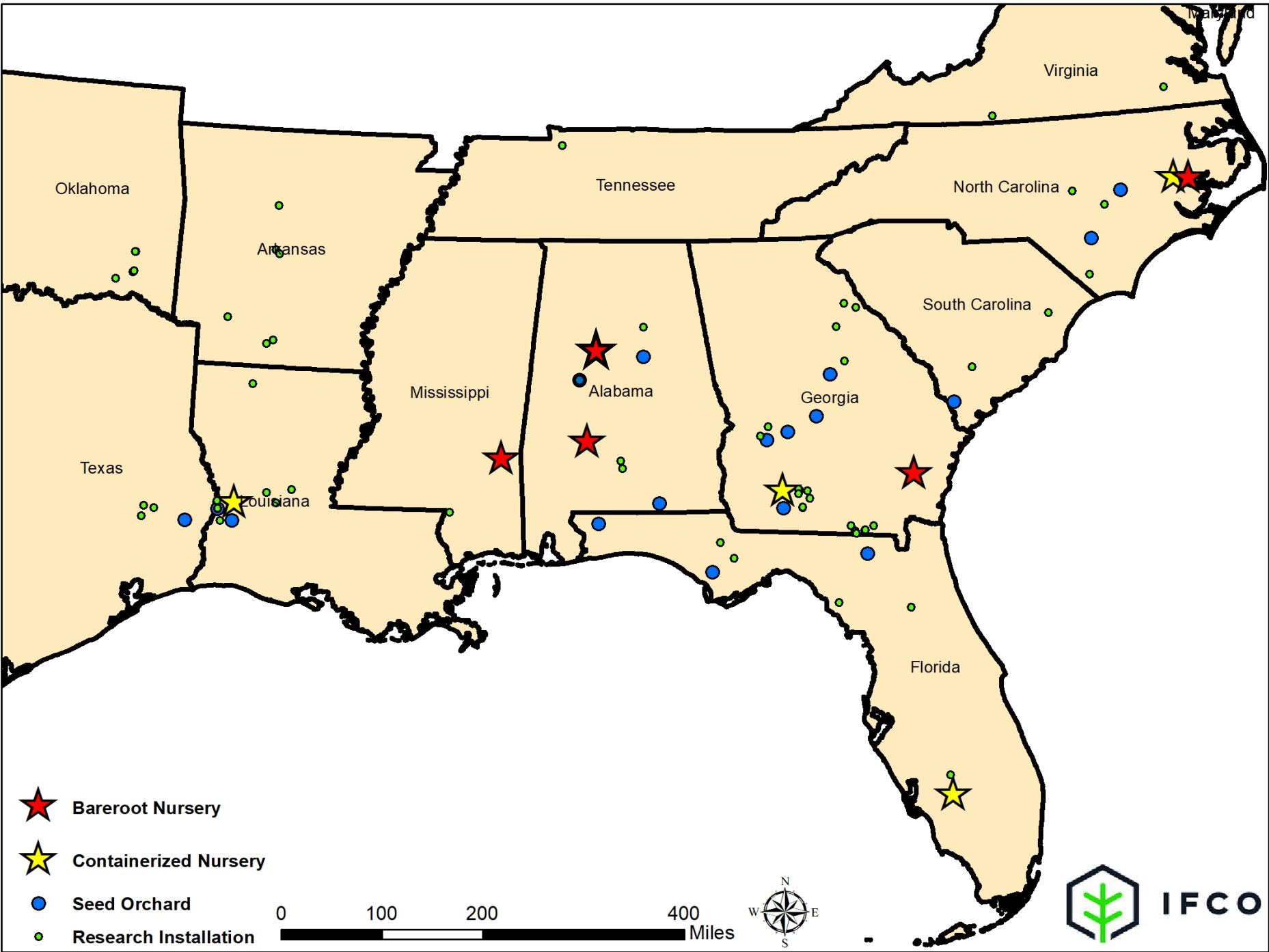
SEEDLINGS

To serve landowners by being the premier producer of superior quality forestry seedlings that maximize the landowner's financial returns and meets their forest management objectives. IFCO's products are produced and supported by professional staff that are eager to assist, educate, and problem solve to insure our customers' success.

IFCO Seedlings Production

The background features a large, light gray watermark of the IFCO logo, which consists of a stylized tree with a hexagonal canopy and a vertical trunk with horizontal branches. The bottom of the slide has a solid green horizontal bar.

BAREROOT	170 MILLION
CONTAINER	120 MILLION
GRAND TOTAL	290 MILLION



Brownlee Nursery Moultrie, GA 56 million capacity



Jesup, Georgia 35 million capacity





What does it take to run these operations?















Labor Challenges for IFCO in GA and Throughout the SE

1. Professional Hiring (Full time Employees)
2. Information Technology
3. Local Workforce
4. H2B labor to H2A
5. Using Technology to Overcome Workforce Limitations

Professional Hiring



- Office Staff

- We have had difficulty hiring competent office staff to help with billing and other home office needs.
- I believe this is in part due to the rural area in which our home office is located.
- At this point this is no longer an issue for IFCO but could be in the future.

- Nursery managers

- Hiring Nursery Managers is especially hard. This is due to the uniqueness of the conifer nursery industry.
- We have estimated that there are only about 30 conifer nursery managers nationwide.
- There is no degree one can receive to begin managing a pine nursery.
- To combat the issues of finding Nursery managers IFCO has made a point to train all nursery supervisors and technicians to be ready to move up when the time arises. We train ourselves

Information Technology

- Recent trouble with IT. IFCO had to move from local IT force to outsourcing to a larger operation.
 - There was no one suitable for hire in the local area for the job.
 - The new operation is not located in rural Georgia
 - We had become too large and sophisticated for a local small business to handle, and we needed more expertise.
- Internet speed has also been a large issue.
 - IFCO had to pay to get High Speed Internet to existing home office.
 - Many nursery offices still have internet issues from time to time.
 - This discouraged young IT professionals from working with us.

Local Workforce

- Much of IFCOs labor is seasonal.
 - Peak times occurring from late fall through late spring.
- Like many we have tried to use local labor as best we could, but the local workforce in most towns where our nurseries are located isn't the best.
 - It becomes hard to hire those who can pass drug test and be reliable, Especially when it is only seasonal work.
 - In our LA location to maintain a seasonal crew of 30-45 individuals we would go through 100+ workers.
- To combat this problem we have been able to contract in H2A labor in our Container nurseries and H2B labor in our Bareroot nurseries.
 - H2A labor has been steady in our Moultrie, GA location.
 - H2A in our LA location was hard to find but now we have a steady contractor
 - H2B labor is much harder to get for Bareroot nurseries. Still struggle with this yearly.
- The over all quality of local workforces as well as contract/migrant labor has decreased significantly in recent years.

H2B Labor to H2A

- It is IFCOs understanding that Tree planting, as well as Bareroot Pine Seedling operations will move from being classified under H2B labor to H2A.
 - This proposes benefits as well as disadvantage to the IFCO team.
- Benefits
 - It will be very beneficial to bareroot nurseries that we have located near agriculture and large H2A worker populations. (South GA and Eastern NC.)
 - The wage rate would decrease. H2A does not require overtime pay.
- Disadvantages
 - H2A requires that workers remain within what is considered a normal commuting distance for work
 - No Cost Housing for H2A workers, and are hotels acceptable to OSHA and ETA standards.
 - These are both big issues for tree planters which could inherently hurt our sales and production.

Using Technology to Overcome Workforce Limitations

- Automated Top Pruner
 - What used to take one week and 5 workers to do, now only takes 1 worker one day.



Using Technology to Overcome Workforce Limitations Cont.

- Packing Trailer that has allowed us to go from packing 500,000 seedlings per day to 1.5 Million.



