

# South Eastern Agroforestry Decision Support System

*Eddie Ellis and Nicole Strong, University of Florida*

*The Southeastern Agroforestry Decision Support System (SEADSS) integrates county-level Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data, a tree and shrub database, and expert knowledge to allow users to access site-specific information on-line and select suitable tree and shrub species for a variety of purposes.*

Site evaluation and species selection of trees and shrubs is central to agroforestry planning and establishment. CSTAF has developed access to an online GIS program that allows landowners, extension agents, and other stakeholders to obtain valuable information on soils, vegetation, land use, property information and more. SEADSS is being developed at the county level, starting with Florida.

## **WHAT SEADSS CAN DO:**

*Let you know which species are appropriate for your specific site*

*Help you find the ideal agroforestry practice and species for your site and land management objectives*

## **What is a Decision Support System?**

Successful agroforestry planning depends on collecting and using a variety of information. Decision Support Systems (DSS) integrate computer-based tools and



information to facilitate the decision-making process. Computer based tools include databases, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and expert systems..

Databases help us access and query large quantities of data and information. In a GIS, a database is associated with geographically referenced features, so resource managers can spatially represent relevant information such as soil types or plant communities. Expert systems are computer programs that incorporate and utilize expert knowledge in the form of “rules of thumb” or “good judgement” to help make sound decisions. SEADSS integrates these computer-based tools to provide a DSS to help evaluate suitable areas for different agroforestry systems as well as good trees or shrubs for these systems.

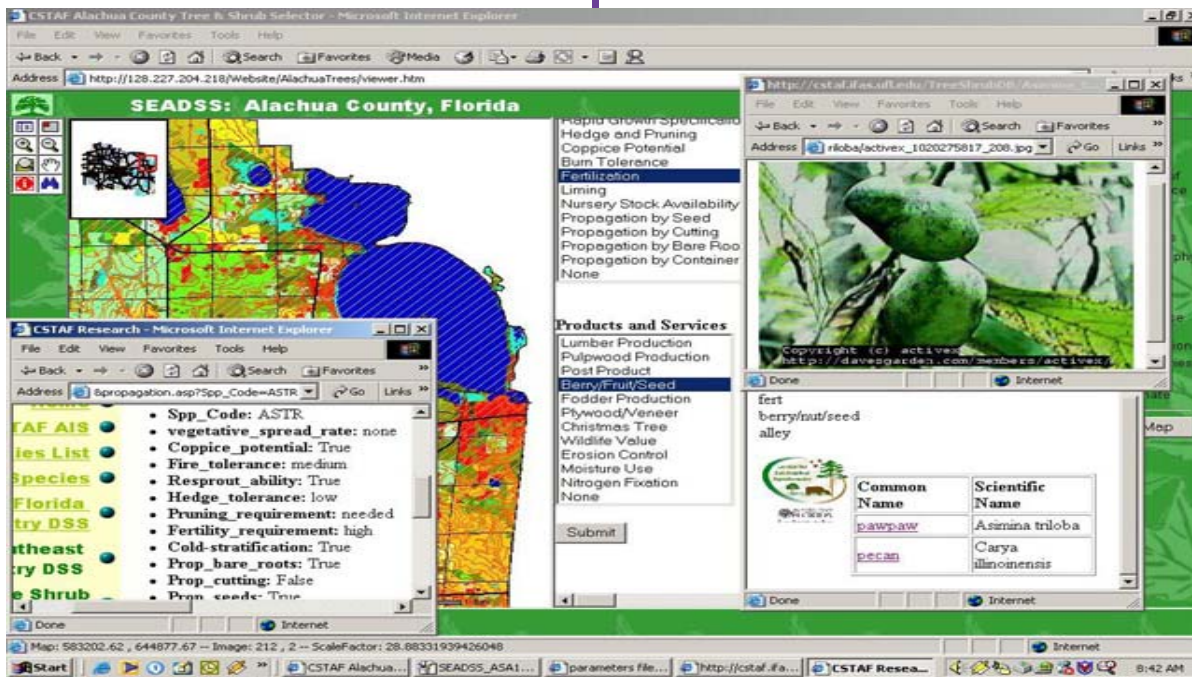
## How to Use SEADSS

SEADSS can be accessed on the internet via the CSTAF website:

<http://cstaf.ifas.ufl.edu>

Once on the website, click on Agroforestry Information Systems, and then on the SEADSS link.

- 4) Then move the cursor to the region of interest and click on it.
- 5) Soil and climate parameters of this region should appear in a table record in a frame next to the map
- 6) Click the "SUBMIT" button below the data records on the frame to the right of the map.
- 7) The tree selector program will output the results in the frame next to the map giving a list of potential trees for the site.



Once on the SEADSS link you can click on your state and the available county.

- 1) When the Map loads you can zoom in or out any area with the magnifying glass tool buttons on the left frame (other tools available too).
- 2) When you zoom in close the soils layer will appear
- 3) You can use the binocular tool on the left frame to search for a specific item corresponding to a layer marked ACTIVE. Use all CAPS. (e.g. search the Landuse and Vegetation layer while marked active for "IMPROVED PASTURE")
- 3) Once you find a location click and activate the red "i" button on the left tool bar area.

- 8) You can narrow your search after that by selecting specific agroforestry systems and management and production options
- 9) click on the link of the tree to get further information on the trees.

**Contact us!**  
**Center for Subtropical Agroforestry**  
**Building 191, Mowry Road**  
**Po Box 110831**  
**Gainesville, FL 32611-0831**  
**Phone:(352) 846-3496**  
**<http://cstaf.ifas.ufl.edu/>**