

President Jimmy Carter Speaks at Carter Center Dedication Ceremony for The American Chestnut Foundation

President Jimmy Carter, Honorary Director at The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) addressed guests in the gardens of the Carter Center in Atlanta, GA on Wednesday, July 19, 2017. Celebrating the dedication of The American Chestnut Tree Demonstration Orchard, Carter spoke of his life commitment to help restore and reintroduce the American chestnut back into its native eastern forests.



Attendee's pose for a group picture with President Carter.

“My heart’s been in [American chestnut restoration efforts] from the beginning. We are grateful for what The American Chestnut Foundation has done. This is an exciting experiment in bringing back some of the heritage we enjoyed once. Every week I check on the trees we have planted here. For the rest of my life, I will be a part of it,” President Carter shared.

The Carter Center Demonstration Orchard exhibits the success of the backcross breeding program, intended to build blight resistance in the American chestnut tree. The program will breed five generations, or backcrosses, of Chinese and American chestnut trees.

“Restoring a species is a hopeful and ambitious undertaking. We are thankful and honored that President Carter is so supportive of our mission to restore a blight-resistant American chestnut tree, once one of the most important hardwood trees in the eastern forests,” said TACF President and CEO, Lisa Thomson.



President Carter greets guests following the dedication ceremony.



Dr. Martin Cipollini, Georgia Chapter member and Dana Professor of Biology at Berry College, speaks about restoration efforts in the Georgia Chapter.