

Forest Farming Quick Guide

Shiitake Mushroom (*Lentinula edodes*)

Native to Japan, the Shiitake mushroom's widespread popularity stems from its numerous culinary uses and medicinal properties. As global demand for Shiitake grows, its cultivation on private land can provide economic opportunities for landowners. Suitable substrate for Shiitakes—such as oak and maple logs—are plentiful in eastern deciduous forests.

Log and Site Selection:

For spring inoculation on bolts (logs):

- Cut logs during the dormant season before buds swell in the spring and inoculate in March.
- Grows best on Oak, Sugar Maple, American Beech logs.
- Logs can be 3-4 feet long and 3 to 8 inches in diameter.
- Obtain Shiitake spawn through a mushroom spawn supplier.
- Site logs in an area with good air circulation and under a forest canopy or shade cloth with 80% shade and proximity to a water source.

Log Preparation:

- Drill a row of holes 3 inches apart with 3 to 4 inches between rows, beginning one inch from the end of the log, creating a diamond pattern.
- Immediately place spawn into drilled holes and seal with food-grade hot wax or insert foam plugs into holes.
- Mark logs to record date of inoculation and spawn strain.
- Stack inoculated logs off the ground to allow airflow and space for mushroom growth and collection.

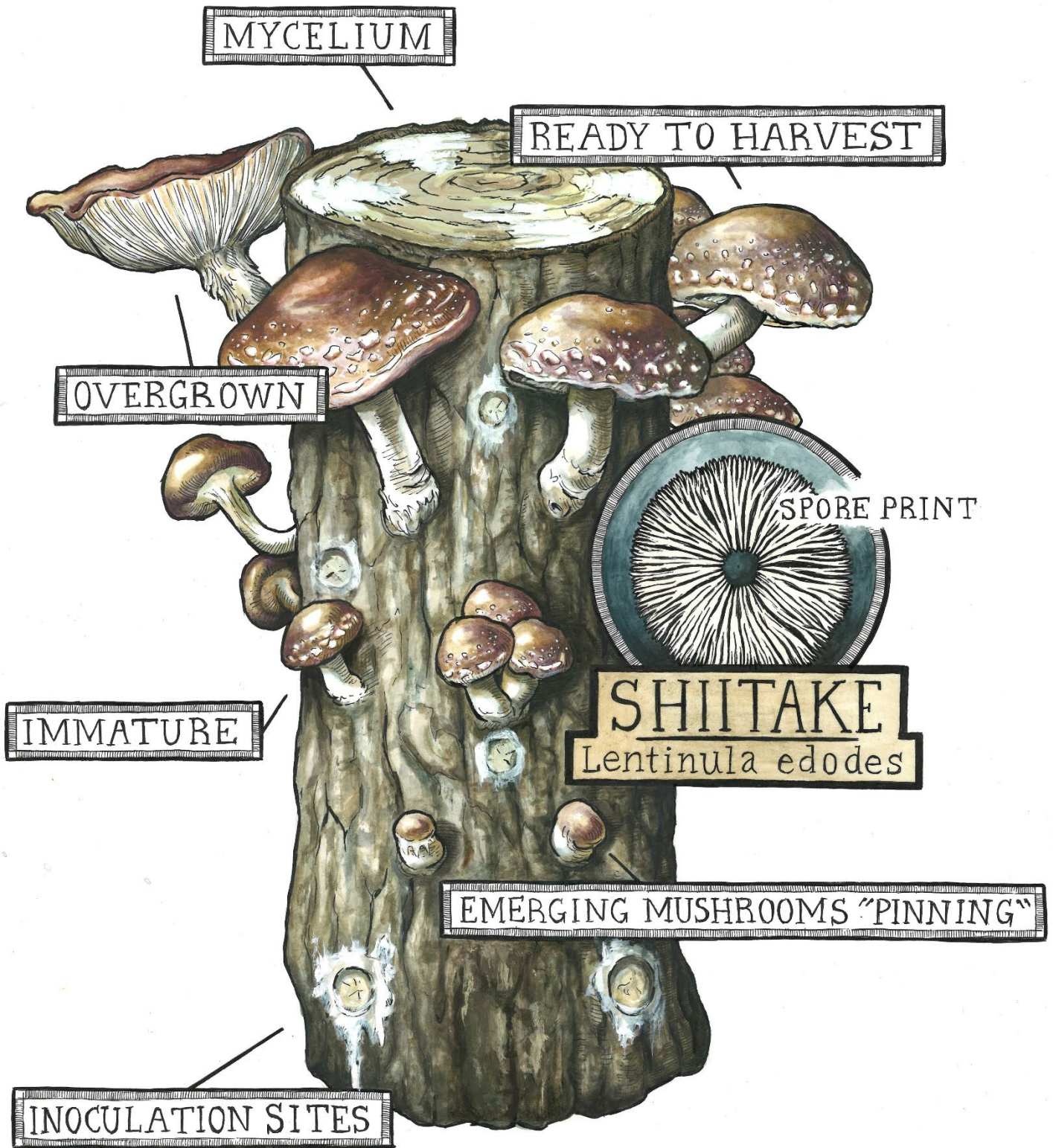
Log Maintenance:

- Maintain log moisture between 35%-55%. Logs can be irrigated or soaked.
- Maintain shade over logs during summer and snow-covered during winter.
- Protect logs from strong winds and extreme cold with burlap or humidity blankets.
- Regularly inspect logs for pests such as slugs, insects, and fungal competitors.
- Logs that are contaminated should be removed.
- It will take around 6 to 12 months for the log to incubate and mycelium to colonize the log.

Harvesting:

- When conditions are right, mushrooms will start “pinning” (emerging) from the bark and after 6-10 days will be fully grown and ready to harvest.
- Harvest mushrooms when gills are visible and the cap is slightly curled.
- Collect mushrooms without damaging bark by twisting and pulling or cutting off at the base.





MYCELIUM

READY TO HARVEST

OVERGROWN



SPORE PRINT

IMMATURE

SHIITAKE
Lentinula edodes

EMERGING MUSHROOMS "PINNING"

INOCULATION SITES