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# Timber Tales

No. 156 News and Ideas for Forest Landowners from Ricky Kilpatrick, Area Forestry Agent 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2016

**First Quarter 2016 Louisiana Timber Market Report<sup>1</sup>**  
 By Dr. Shaun Tanger, LSU AgCenter Forest Economist

Louisiana Stumpage Prices	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2016	Change from prior Quarter
Timber Class	Price Per Ton	% Change
Pine Sawtimber	27.00	-2.04
Pine Chip-N-Saw	17.00	-10.84
Pine Pulpwood	12.00	16.53
Oak Sawtimber	42.50	1.65
Mixed Hardwood Sawtimber	34.00	3.07
Hardwood Pulpwood	11.00	-4.32

Price Conversions:

Pine Sawtimber/ MBF= Tons \* 8

Hardwood Sawtimber/ MBF = Tons \* 9.5

CNS and Pine Pulpwood Cords = Tons \* 2.7

Hardwood Pulpwood = Tons \* 2.8

<sup>1</sup> This document is intended for use by owners of forested land in Louisiana. The source of these prices is proprietary in nature and are therefore rounded per agreements to disseminate to the general public. The prices I report are also state averages and the LDAF numbers are by specific regions. I recommend using both to aid in decisions about purchases, sales, and determining harvesting schedules. As always, communicate with a consultant forester on prices before executing contracted agreements with wood buyers. For more details, check Stumpage Speak at <http://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/blogs/stumpagespeak>.

For additional information, call Area Code 318 and . . .					
BIENVILLE	263-7400	BOSSIER	965-2326	CADDO	226-6805
CLAIBORNE	927-3110	DESOTO	872-0533	NATCHITOCHE	357-2224
RED RIVER	932-4342	SABINE	256-3406	WEBSTER	371-1317

## **Prices**

- Hard to read too much into the prices over one quarter but most of the volatility can be attributed to weather concerns and, in some cases, related mill closures (temporary) for maintenance or damage from the recent bad weather seen in state. Certainly, we can make the case that pine pulpwood prices are artificially high due to these disruptions. Despite high mill inventories in the prior quarter, we've seen the tables turned (temporarily) in this quarter's prices.
- Timber Mart South reported that "Throughout the region, many manufacturers were expecting these types of conditions and were holding significant inventory levels in anticipation of supply shortages. As such, a weather-related bump in stumpage prices did not occur for Softwood Sawtimber and CNS prices, but they certainly impacted pulpwood across the south (up 0.50 cents).
- Softwood Sawtimber prices were down slightly. Perhaps this is due to the increased Canadian supply entering the country. From February 2015 to February this year, we've seen a 68% increase in imports from Canadian suppliers. The first two months of this year with respect to the first two months of last year?...A 49% increase! As far as the cause of this phenomena? Well, we spend a lot of time focusing on exchange rates, but often that is already captured in the price of the products entering the country from foreign markets. The expired SLA (softwood lumber agreement) could be the culprit, but I outlined last October that we've officially not had a binding constraint from this legislation for some time now anyway, due to the depressed prices for lumber.
- As far as Louisiana specifically, it may just be an impact from the mill activity with scheduled maintenance (decreased demand) and unexpected damage interfering with operations (decreased demand).
- The March monthly average Random Lengths Southern Pine Composite at \$371 per thousand board feet (mbf) is up \$18 per mbf from the 4th Quarter of 2015, and down \$22 per mbf from a year ago.

## **Does Fertilizing Pine Trees Pay Off?**

I'm sure many landowners would like to know the answer to this question. Here are a few factors to help you determine the answer.

1. First, the soil must be deficient in one or more nutrients. Usually phosphorus and/or nitrogen are the nutrients of concern. However, if other soil properties are limiting growth, pine trees still may not respond to adding nutrients to a deficient soil. Soils that have shallow rooting due to rocky or heavy clay subsoils may not respond to fertilization.
2. The stand must be properly stocked. An understocked stand won't be able get the full benefit of fertilizing, and may, in fact, create a problem with the increased growth of the competing vegetation. Likewise, an overstocked stand will be limited by the competition for light among the pine trees.
3. Other silvicultural practices must also be used. Good planting practices, competition control and thinning are very important. If money can't be spent to do a good job of these practices, then fertilizing shouldn't be considered.
4. A final consideration has to do with your management objectives. Your trees must be considered a financial investment. Your forest land may be primarily used for hunting, other wildlife use, aesthetics or other recreational use. If making money isn't a high priority objective, fertilization would not be recommended.

A good starting point is a soil sample. At least one sample per 40 acres should be taken. Remove the top thatch and sample from the soil surface to a depth of about six inches. Take soil from 1-20 places in the forest, mix these into a bucket, then remove about one pint for the sample.

Another option is to assess nutrient needs by taking needle samples. This could be helpful if you're considering fertilization during the mid or later part of a stand rotation, thus carrying the cost for a shorter period of time. Needles should be collected in December, January or February. Use a shotgun to shoot out branches from the upper third of the tree crown. Pick 10-20 needles from the lower part of that branch. To get a good representation of the stand, pick trees of good height from each corner of the stand, then pick a few trees randomly from the center of the stand. Put all the needles in a bag or bucket and randomly pull out 100-200 needles. Pack the needles in a paper bag and ship them overnight in an icepack-filled cooler to a laboratory for analysis.

For more information on fertilizing, contact me, [rkilpatrick@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:rkilpatrick@agcenter.lsu.edu) or Mike Blazier, [mblazier@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:mblazier@agcenter.lsu.edu) for a copy of LSU AgCenter publication 3058, *Fertilizing Southern Pine Plantations to Improve Growth and Financial Performance*.

### **Is Your Pond Water Muddy?**

Thanks to LSU AgCenter Aquaculture Specialists Greg Lutz and Mark Shirley for the following information.

Muddy ponds are a continuous problem in some parts of the state, due to the soil characteristics. Often, however, the turbidity is due to run-off from exposed soil or sometimes it is due to the activity of fish in the pond, especially when there are large catfish present. If you have a muddy pond, you first have to figure out if it is due to the soil runoff or the fish or if it is a chemical problem. To determine the cause of the muddy water, try this. First, get two identical glass jars. Fill one with pond water and put the lid on loosely – then put it in a closet or cabinet in the dark for 4 or 5 days. Then use the other jar to get a fresh sample, and compare the two samples. If the turbidity has settled out, something is keeping the water stirred up (fish, run-off, wind action on exposed banks during low water periods, etc.). You may or may not be able to eliminate the source of water stirring. If the turbidity has NOT settled out, then you have a problem that is chemical in nature. There are treatments for this chemical turbidity. Texas A & M scientists have developed an excellent publication on this topic that addresses these issues and provides information on how to prevent or correct the problem. You can get the publication at the following website: <http://soiltesting.tamu.edu/publications/SCS-2013-02.pdf>

### **Tanger Wins Award for Forestry Blog**

LSU AgCenter forestry economist Shaun Tanger received a Southern Regional Extension Forest Resources Award for Excellence. Awards were announced at the Southern Region Extension Forestry and Natural Resources Coordinators meeting held January 20-21 in Athens, Georgia.

Tanger's award was for his forestry market blog, Stumpage Speak, which details price reports, market trend analysis and the economic outlook for the forestry industry.

"Many landowners, foresters and forestry groups use it to get market information," Tanger said of his blog.

Tanger has been writing his blog for nearly two years, and he said landowners often use it as a benchmark for negotiating prices.

Southern Region Extension Forestry and Natural Resources Coordinators gave out 18 awards to 68 individuals from seven states. Innovation, ability to show impact and ability to be replicated are among the criteria for these awards.

You get a taste of Dr. Tanger in each edition of *Timber Tales* and, of course, the link to his blog and entire timber market report. Congratulations, Dr. Tanger, for your award!

## Outdoor Recreation Economy<sup>2</sup>

In 2011, over 90 million people in the United States, 38% of the U.S. population 16 years old and older, enjoyed some form of fishing, hunting or wildlife-associated recreation, according to the 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. This survey has been conducted every five years since 1955. The most recent survey available is from 2011.

Outdoor recreation is a huge contributor to our nation's economy. Avid hunters and fishermen spend more than wildlife recreationists. The combined total spent in the U.S. in 2011 on outdoor recreation was \$646 billion. These expenditures include gear, vehicles, trips, and the expenses related to travel.

Just as important, over 6.1 million direct American jobs were created as a result of outdoor recreation. Another \$39.7 billion dollars was paid in state and local tax revenues. Creation of jobs supports communities and helps to drive the economy in rural areas of our state.

The survey provides information to natural resource agencies, conservation organizations, academic researchers and wildlife-related recreation industries so they can estimate demand, evaluate impacts of expenditures on national and state economies, and identify trends in wildlife-related recreation. In 2006, 87.5 million Americans participated in outdoor recreation; in 2012 the number rose to 91 million. From 2006 to 2011, 28 States had increases in the number of wildlife-related recreationists from 2006 to 2011, with the biggest percentage increases in Alaska (47%) and Louisiana (40%).

According to the Outdoor Industry Association, at least 64% of Louisiana residents participate in outdoor recreation each year. Residents take advantage of private and public lands for hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing within the state. Louisianans spend \$15.1 billion which helps to sustain the big box stores and privately owned businesses selling all forms of hunting and fishing gear. Added to that, 146,000 jobs are directly created generating \$4.6 billion in wages and salaries; and \$1.1 billion in state and local revenue.

Realizing the potential from outdoor recreation, the LSU AgCenter's agritourism program has worked with Mississippi State's Natural Resource Enterprises Program since 2011 to provide educational workshops on how landowners can include outdoor recreation on their privately owned lands to receive supplemental income. Mississippi State has been a leader in this area assisting people throughout the United States to realize their goals of outdoor recreation revenue on their lands.

In Louisiana, hunting, fishing, birding, wildlife viewing, hiking, biking and paddling are all included in the 2008 Agritourism Limited Liability Law. This law requires a plan of operation to be completed by the landowner listing possible safety issues on the property. The plan is submitted to the LSU AgCenter for review and then forwarded to the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry for certification. Once certified the landowner can post warning signs on his property to let people know that they are at their own risk. The signs are similar in language to other activities covered in the Louisiana Recreational Use Statutes. In Louisiana there is no fee for certification.

To learn more about starting an agritourism operation that includes outdoor recreation, log onto our website at [www.lsuagcenter.com/agritourism](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/agritourism) or contact Dora Ann Hatch at (318) 927-9654 x229 or e-mail her at [dhatch@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:dhatch@agcenter.lsu.edu)

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<sup>2</sup> Dora Ann Hatch, Agritourism Coordinator, LSU AgCenter

## Events, Thoughts and Tidbits

\*\*\*Last spring, defoliation of hardwoods was really bad in some areas of the Ark-La-Tex. I saw newly planted seedlings, young trees and even fully matured hardwoods that were defoliated. One good thing is that with it being early in the growing season, the defoliating insects will generally be gone in a couple of weeks and the trees will put out new foliage. The bad thing is that it does reduce growth and it stresses the trees, and this could lead to other insect or disease problems that could be more serious. One of the key culprits of defoliation is the June bug, which often shows up at this time of the year. If something is defoliating your tree, but you can't find the bugs and aren't sure if it's June bugs, try this. Turn on a nearby light at night and within a couple of hours you'll know if June bugs are around! If you do have a June bug problem, you can spray with liquid Sevin XLR or Merit. You can spray the tree's crown, but also need to spray the ground under the canopy to kill the larval grubs in the soil.

\*\*\* As you have probably seen by now, the Emerald Ash Borer was recently found in Union Parish joining Bossier, Claiborne and Webster.

\*\*\*Got Beavers? Look out and keep an eye on your creeks. According to the Clean Water Act, if a previously dry area stays flooded due to beavers for five years, it becomes a wetland! So keep those creeks flowing!!

\*\*\*In addition to the market conditions reported in the first of this newsletter, you may want to take a look at the March 2016 housing report, released in May, 2016 by **Urs Buehlmann**, Virginia Tech-Department of Sustainable Biomaterials and **Al Schuler**, Economist (Retired). The report is 46 easy-to-read-and-understand slides of graphs, charts, commentary, and summaries that help sort out and explain why the housing market is what it is. It describes all of the global and U.S. economic, employment trends, investments, and GDP factors that are important in understanding housing starts. You can find the report at: <http://woodproducts.sbio.vt.edu/housing-report/casa-2016-03-march.pdf>

\*\*\*A Commercial Pesticide Applicators Certification/Recertification Conference will be held July 6-7, 2016, in Alexandria. Training will be provided to certify or recertify commercial applicators in these subcategories:  
Subcategory 2a: Commercial applicators using or supervising restricted pesticides in the regeneration, management and production of forest stands  
Subcategory 2b: Commercial applicators using or supervising restricted pesticides in the production of forest tree seed, seedlings and cuttings  
Subcategory 2c: Commercial applicators using or supervising restricted pesticides in sawmills, veneer plants, plywood plants, wood preservation plants and pulping facilities in the manufacturing process of wood products

The event will be held at the C. Woodrow Dewitt, Sr. Livestock Show Facility, located on the south end of the LSU-A Campus. For details and information on registration and costs, contact Kim Pope Brown, [kpope@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:kpope@agcenter.lsu.edu). Study manuals can be ordered online at <https://store.lsuagcenter.com/c-7-pesticide-applicators.aspx>.  
[http://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our\\_offices/departments/wa-callegari-environmental-center/pesticide\\_ed/commercialapplicatorrecertificationcertificationconferences](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our_offices/departments/wa-callegari-environmental-center/pesticide_ed/commercialapplicatorrecertificationcertificationconferences).

Sincerely,



Ricky Kilpatrick  
Area Forestry Agent

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Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Red River and Webster Parishes**

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