

FOREST BASED ENTERPRISES: *TIMBER AND NON-TIMBER CROPS*

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Overview:

Options for forest based enterprises are numerous and you have a wide range of choices. Your choice will depend on your requirements for “time to economic returns”, and the time you have for a particular enterprise. Walk your woods in all seasons and look at what resources you already have available. Think about personal interests, the skills you have, the amount of work you wish to do, your financial position, and your family interests. Some forest and non-timber based enterprises to increase your income include: *exotic mushroom production, bee products, christmas trees, forest medicinal- ginseng and other forest herbs, maple syrup, craft materials, fruit and nut production, firewood, and high value timber*. Based on your choice, you may need to return to your woodland to do more inventories at this stage. For example, if you have developed an interest in forest medicinals you may want to go back and prepare a more detailed list of what is already growing on your land. Or if you have decided on timber harvesting, you will need to prepare a detailed timber inventory or hire a consultant to do so. (If selling timber hiring a consultant can in many cases triple or double an offer!) Think about combining different enterprises for long and short-term economic gain. For example, growing high value timber for retirement and children’s education and growing ginseng or goldenseal or mushrooms for “short-term” income (4-10 years).

Timber products

High value timber crops: Black walnut: (vener), white oak sawtimber, cherry sawtimber.

Time involved: minimal investment in your time and returns are very high (\$20,000 to \$30,000 per acre), but period to harvest is long and 50 years. For additional information contact: Division of Forestry: 502-564-4496 or Dr. Jeff Stringer: 859-257-5994. E-mail: jstringe@ca.uky.edu.

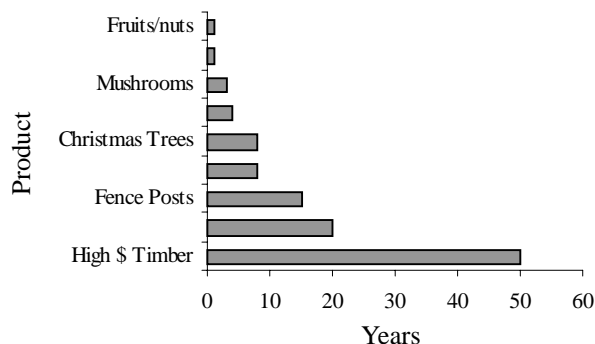


Fig. 1.Length of time to reach first harvest.

Firewood: Generally wood with a high density has the highest heat content: oaks, Black locust, hickory, and dogwood are some very good species for firewood production. Labor involved is seasonal. Packaged firewood sold in urban areas can be an excellent high dollar market.

Fenceposts: Black locust is excellent for fence post material due to its rot resistant characteristics.

Christmas trees: Scots pine and eastern white pine is most frequently harvested. Must take some care in pruning the trees; vegetation and pest management must be done throughout the growing season. Price for trees vary ~ \$2-3/foot. Must market during year.

For more resource information contact: Dr. Deborah Hill: 859-257-7610. E-mail: dhill@ca.uky.edu

Crafts- grapevines, grasses, wood (dogwood, osage orange-wood with burls or interesting patterns). Wood is used by carvers interested in color, pattern of ring, or burls. This is a good option for single trees to sell. Time investment is low.

Non-timber products

Ginseng- The quality of ginseng is related to management with a clear price differentiation seen between types of management (artificial/shade: \$15-20/lb, woods grown/beds: \$90-180/lb, wild simulated: \$180-300lb, wild: \$300-\$500lb). Buyers for raw ginseng are numerous. Time involved is not large if wild or wild simulated, but theft protection of investment can be a major concern. For additional resource information contact: Dr. Terry Jones: 606-666-2438, ext. 234. E-mail: tjones@ca.uky.edu

Other Medicinals: Goldenseal: The current market price for a pound of dried goldenseal is approximately \$40/lb with no price differentiation existing between the wild and artificially grown product. Because of its endangered species status goldenseal is an ideal forest product that can be grown in artificial shade with no negative affects to quality. Production on an acre basis is 1,500-2,000/lbs, dried weight with a 4-5 year cycle. One additional forest herb that may have increasing market potential is Black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemosa*). Black cohosh is a perennial herbaceous plant whose active chemicals are considered good for menopausal symptoms and is believed will have

increasing market potential as the “baby boomer” generation ages. Time investment is low to moderate. For additional resource information contact: Dr. Terry Jones: 606-666-2438, ext. 234. E-mail: tjones@ca.uky.edu

Shiitake Mushrooms: Excellent use of small diameter logs taken out of woodlot for timber stand improvement. Different types of markets and price differentials: wholesale: \$4.50/lb, restaurant/grocery: \$6.50-\$8.00/lb, end user direct to individual: \$9-\$10.50. Marketing considerations should occur before operations are undertaken. Time is involved is seasonal.

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Fruits/Nutcrops: Persimmon, paw paw, walnuts(nuts & hulls). Crop often are already existing on your land-serendipitous crops (an unexpected benefit.)

Maple syrup-Best producers for sugar content and sap production time: Sugar maple and Black maple. Must have 25 to 40 maple trees /acre larger than 10 inches.

(Mszymanski (1/2001)

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