

November 14, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

David Dugan

OSU Extension Educator, Agriculture and Natural Resources

Adams/Brown/Highland Counties

Ohio Valley Extension Education Research Area

## Do You Have Timber to Sell?

If you drive up and down the road very often you will most likely see a truck hauling logs. That might make you think about how valuable those logs might be. It might even make you think, I have trees, wonder if they are valuable or just good for firewood. In any case you probably know about as much as I know when it comes to what a standing tree may be worth. I know roughly how to estimate the amount of board feet through measuring, but the value of a log is much more than that. The market for logs is ever changing. A few years ago Cherry was more valuable than it is today, according to friend of mine who should know. Oak seems to be valuable most always, but others do fluctuate in value. It is most likely supply and demand.

The thought of a timber harvest should be well thought out. It should be a plan. A plan that considers the possibility of another cut in a few years. A plan to allow young trees to become part of the next cut. There should also be a plan to get as much as you can out of your trees. This would involve getting others involved for most of us. The Ohio Division of Forestry might be the best place to start. They offer a service to help inform you about your woodlot at no charge.

The next step might be to hire someone that will oversee the entire process from taking bids to the cleanup once the harvest is complete and everything in between. Hiring a consultant might seem unnecessary, but it might be the best money you ever spend. Consider what you know about trees, about harvesting trees, the value of trees and how things should go during a timber harvest and how a third party can assist you with all of the above.

Here is an example that was shared with me about a tree harvest a few years ago. Think about this before you agree to letting someone harvest your timber. There was a landowner with a woodlot with some pretty desirable trees. The landowner was approached by a logger and offered \$28,000 for the trees. Luckily the landowner was made aware of getting a consultant involved. He called the consultant before he cut. That, by the way, is the little catch phrase, Call Before You Cut.

With the consultant involved the put the wood lot up for bids. The logger who made the original bid put in a bid of \$28,000. Another bid came in at \$40,000. Now this does not mean to say that the first logger was trying to make a huge amount more, but maybe the second bidder had a better market for the same trees. Whichever was the case, it did not matter because there was a third bid. The third bid was for \$75,000.

Would the landowner have been satisfied with the \$28,000? Most likely yes if the bid had been accepted. Without the bidding process how would the landowner have known that \$28,000 wasn't the maximum the trees were worth? Call Before You Cut!

I can't stress the clean up enough. A good harvest should include cleaning up the tree tops, removing



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

CFAES provides research and extension programs to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis. For more information: [go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity](http://go.osu.edu/cfaesdiversity)

damaged trees, removing “junk trees” that will never be harvestable timber, fixing the roads used to remove the timber and so on. These are some of the things a consultant can do for you.

Here is an actual email that was sent to me with a good experience of a timber harvest. The names do not matter and this is not promoting any one consultant, but the experience with a consultant. Oh, and one more time, Call Before You Cut.

In 2009 I contracted with Walter Saaranen, ACF of Saaranen’s Forestry Consulting, LLC to do an inventory of the woods on my farm. He did an itemized list of the trees and gave me the value in 2004 when I acquired the property. This information was very useful when doing the taxes after the sale of the trees.

Of the trees located on 41 acres of the farm 333 were ash. In 2014 as the emerald ash borer was getting closer to my location I contacted Walt to consider doing a cutting to harvest the ash while it still had market value.

In February 2014 he marked and prepared a list of timber to offer for sale. We had discussed and agreed that we would offer all of the ash and the timber of other species that was ready to be harvested. A total of 485 trees including the 333 ash trees were marked. The trees offered were Northern Red Oak, Black Oak, White Oak, Chinquapin Oak, Burr Oak, Walnut, Sugar Maple, Red Maple Cherry Hickory Elm, Hackberry, Sycamore, Black Locust, Honey Locust, and Elm. They were divided into two groups, saw timber and Grade 3 saw timber.

Saaranen’s Consulting prepared information on the sale location and content. It was sent to loggers in the area asking for bids. The companies had the opportunity to come walk the property and view the marked trees. Four logging companies submitted bids by the deadline. We selected the top bidder and I entered into a contract with the Logging Company. At the signing of the contract the company paid 20% of the agreed purchase price. The company had eighteen months to do the cutting. When the Logging Company was ready to cut the timber he delivered a check for the remaining 80% of the purchase price before he cut the first tree.

The Forestry Consultant over saw the project from the time they started to cut trees until the last cleanup was completed. In the process of the cutting four unmarked trees were damaged. Walt put a value on the damaged trees and the logger cut them and paid me.

The use of a Consultant in this process made it well worth the small percent that I paid the firm for all of his work. His services provided me with the opportunity to do an educated harvest of the mature trees. With the smaller trees now having room to continue growing I should be ready to do another harvest of mature trees in 15 years.

## **Dates to Remember**

Dec. 11                      Pesticide Testing at the Old Y Restaurant at noon. Pre-register by calling ODA at 800-282-1955 or online at <http://pested.osu.edu>