



RESEARCH NOTES

SOUTHEASTERN FOREST EXPERIMENT STATION

Asheville, North Carolina

Number 35

May 1953

86 PERCENT OF TOPS AND 54 PERCENT OF SLABS AND EDGINGS UNUSED IN CENTRAL PIEDMONT OF SOUTH CAROLINA

In the West, 30 percent of pulpwood requirements are supplied by logging and mill residues. Most of this material is obtained from large lumber operations. In the Southeast, where portable sawmills and small and scattered timber tracts are characteristic, salvage is more difficult. However, the tremendous volume of available material stimulates considerable interest in its possible use for paper or fibre board. For this reason, it may be helpful to know how much is now being used and for what purposes in one typical area.

This area is a circle of 30-mile radius in the South Carolina Piedmont. Lumbering within the circle produces nearly 100,000 cords of tops, broken trees, slabs, and edging strips annually. As of May 1, 1952, 104 operations were in progress. At 55 sites randomly selected from this number, 4000 cords of tops and broken trees and 3000 cords of slabs and edgings were left unused by mill operators and landowners.

Tops are seldom utilized by loggers, and consequently became the property of the landowners in nearly all cases studied. On 32 percent of the tracts, some tops were sold for pulpwood or railroad-car stakes, but there were very few instances of complete salvage. As a rule, pulpwood producers who might come in behind the loggers say they can make money only if they cut standing trees as well as tops. Thus, only 14 percent of the tops were used. Usable logging residues from the 55 sample tracts were disposed of as follows:

	<u>Cords</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Sold as pulpwood stumpage	377	7.7
Sold as cut pulpwood	261	5.3
Sold as car stakes	12	0.3
Used as home fuel	50	1.0
Unused	4,202	85.7
Total	4,902	100.0

In comparison with tops, 46 percent of the slabs and edgings on the sample tracts were used, though only as fuel. Before gasoline and diesel power units were introduced in the thirties, a considerable quantity went to generate steam to drive sawmills. Now, the only use is home fuel. However, with the extension of electricity to rural areas

and increased use of oil and bottled gas for heating and cooking, even this demand has declined greatly. For example, no slabs or edgings were sold at 49 percent of the mill sets examined, the price of uncut slabs at the mill site averaged only \$1 a cord, and the highest price received was only \$3. How the sawmill operators and landowners disposed of this material is shown below:

	<u>Cords</u>	<u>Percent</u>
By the sawmill operators:		
Sold as fuel	468	8.4
Used as home fuel	137	2.4
Given away	146	2.6
By the landowners:		
Sold as fuel	1,051	18.8
Used as home fuel	641	11.5
Given away	132	2.4
Unused	<u>3,012</u>	<u>53.9</u>
Total	5,587	100.0

William H. B. Haines
Division of Forest Economics