



Kentucky's Timber Industry—Timber Product Output and Use, 2015

Introduction

This science update contains the findings of a 2015 canvass of all primary wood-using plants in Kentucky, and presents changes in product output and residue use since 2013. It complements the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) annual inventory of volume and removals from the State's timberland. The canvass was conducted to determine the amount and source of wood receipts and annual timber product drain, by county, in 2015 and to determine interstate and cross-regional movement of industrial roundwood. Only primary wood-using mills were canvassed. Primary mills are those that process roundwood in log or bolt form or as chipped roundwood. Examples of industrial roundwood products are saw logs, pulpwood, veneer logs, poles, and logs used for composite board products. Mills producing products from residues generated at primary and secondary processors were not canvassed. Trees chipped in the woods were included in the estimate of timber drain only if they were delivered to a primary domestic manufacturer.

A 100-percent canvass of all wood processors in Kentucky was conducted in 2016 to obtain information for 2015. In addition, roundwood from out-of-State mills known to be using logs or bolts harvested from Kentucky timberland was incorporated into Kentucky production estimates. Each mill was canvassed by mail or through personal contact at plant locations. Telephone contacts followed mailed questionnaire responses when additional information or clarification of a response was necessary. In the event of a nonresponse, data collected in previous surveys were updated using current data collected for mills of similar size, product type, and location. Surveys for all timber products other than pulpwood began in 1948, and are currently conducted every 2 years.

Pulpwood production data were taken from an annual canvass of all southern pulpmills. Medium density fiberboard, insulating board, and hardboard plants were included in this survey.

The Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) Research Work Unit of the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture developed the Timber Product Output (TPO) Database Retrieval System to help customers answer questions about timber harvesting and use in the Southern region. This system acts as an interface to a standard set of consistently coded TPO data for each State and county in the region and Nation.

The database is well documented and easy to use. The retrieval system allows the user to select the TPO variables of interest and generate a standard set of timber products, removals, and mill residue tables for the specified resource area, State, or region. The system is available through the FIA Web site: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/srsfia/>. The Excel® core tables and figures that complement this science update are available on the TPO database.

The SRS gratefully acknowledges the tremendous cooperation and assistance provided by the Kentucky Division of Forestry in collecting mill data. Appreciation is also extended to forest industry and mill managers for providing timber products information.

Table 1—Output of industrial products by product and species group, Kentucky, 2013 and 2015

Product and species group	Year		Change	Change
	2013	2015		
<i>---- thousand cubic feet ---- percent</i>				
Saw logs				
Softwood	11,611	3,809	-7,802	-67.2
Hardwood	116,050	117,803	1,753	1.5
Total	127,661	121,612	-6,049	-4.7
Other industrial				
Softwood	3,480	14,598	11,118	319.5
Hardwood	21,205	12,973	-8,232	-38.8
Total	24,685	27,571	2,886	11.7
All industrial				
Softwood	15,091	18,407	3,316	22.0
Hardwood	137,255	130,776	-6,479	-4.7
Total	152,346	149,183	-3,163	-2.1

All Products

Industrial timber product output from roundwood decreased 3.1 million cubic feet, or 2 percent, to 149.2 million cubic feet.

Output of industrial hardwood roundwood products decreased 5 percent to 130.8 million cubic feet, while output of industrial softwood roundwood products increased 22 percent to 18.4 million cubic feet (fig. 1).

Saw logs and other industrial were the only roundwood products in 2015. Saw log output totaled 121.6 million cubic feet and accounted for 82 percent of the State's total industrial roundwood output (fig. 2).

Total receipts at Kentucky mills, which included roundwood harvested and retained in the State and roundwood imported from other States decreased 24 percent from 191.8 million cubic feet to 146.6 million cubic feet.

In 2015, the number of primary roundwood-using plants in Kentucky was 210, down from 219 in 2013 (fig. 3, see next page). The number of sawmills decreased by 16, while the number of pulpmills, veneer, and composite panel remained stable and other miscellaneous mills decreased by 3.

Across all products, 92 percent of roundwood harvested was retained for processing at Kentucky mills. Exports of roundwood to other States amounted to 12.1 million cubic feet, while imports of roundwood amounted to 9.5 million cubic feet making the State a net exporter of roundwood.

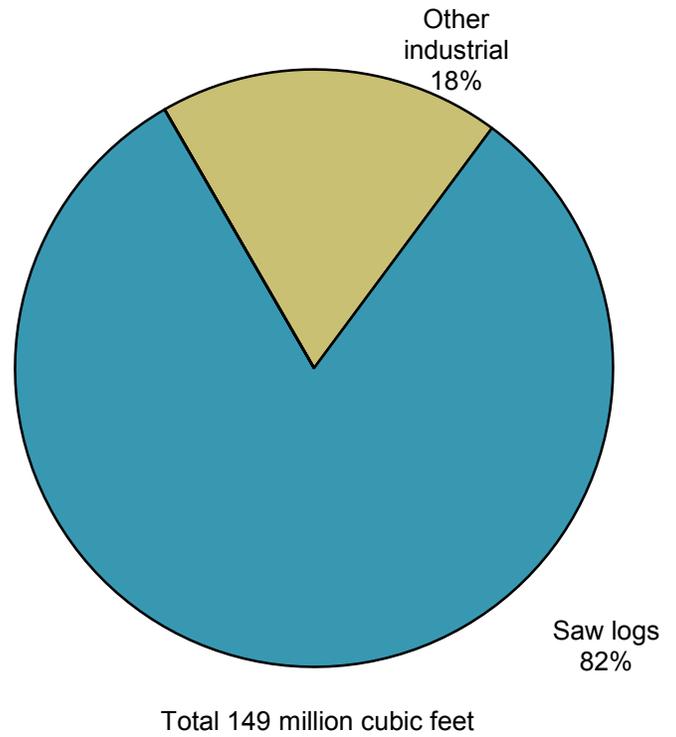


Figure 2 — Roundwood production by type of product, Kentucky, 2015.

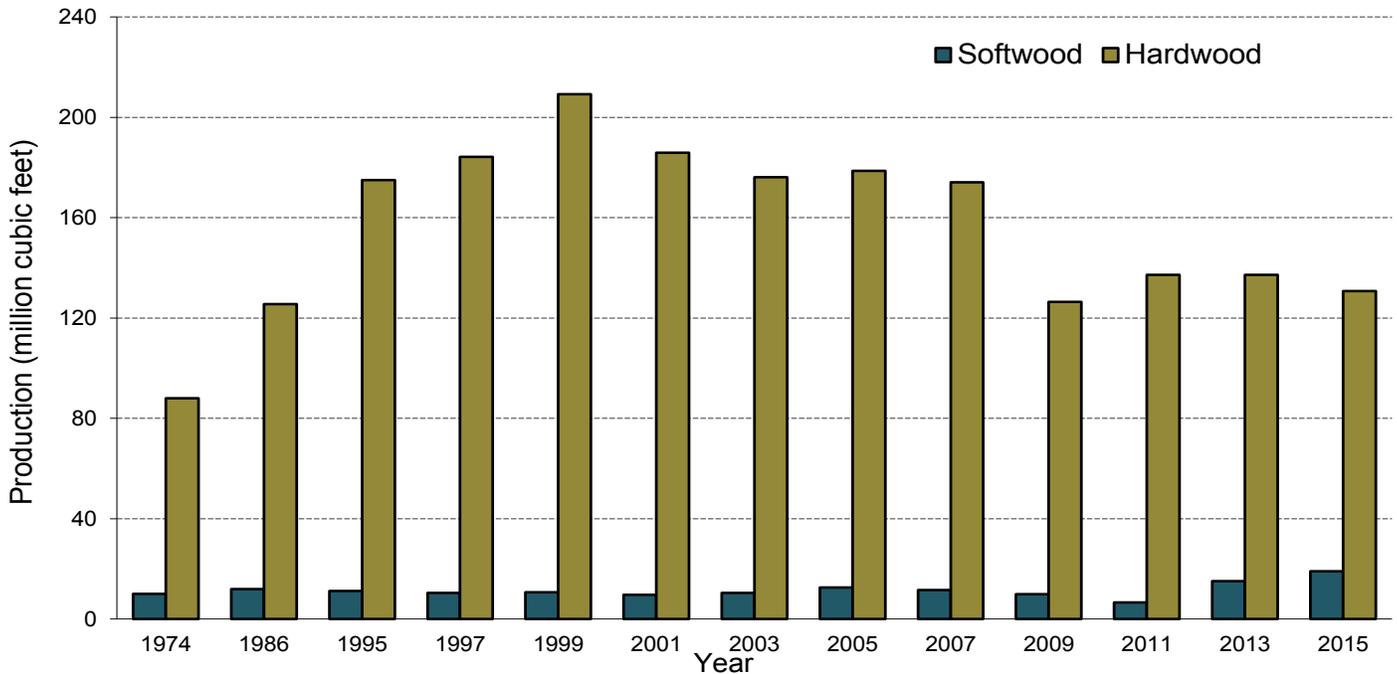


Figure 1 — Roundwood production for all products by species group and year, Kentucky, 2015.

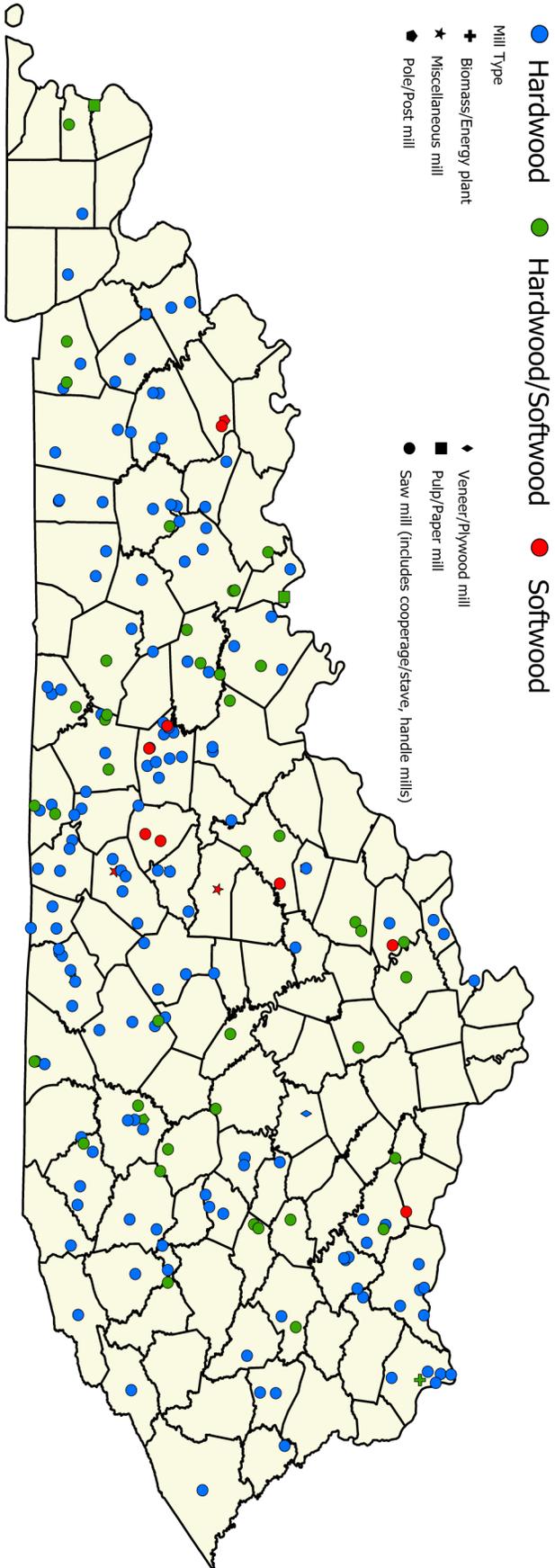


Figure 3 — Primary wood-using mills, Kentucky, 2015.

Saw Logs

Saw logs accounted for 82 percent of the State's total roundwood products. Output of hardwood saw logs increased 2 percent to 117.8 million cubic feet, while that of softwood saw logs decreased 67 percent to 3.8 million cubic feet (fig. 4).

In 2015, Kentucky had 198 sawmills, 10 fewer mills than in 2013. Total saw-log receipts were down 8 million cubic feet to 129 million cubic feet. Hardwood saw-log receipts experienced no change, while those of softwoods increased 92 percent to 4.6 million cubic feet.

Kentucky retained 99 percent of its saw-log production for within State manufacture, with saw-log imports exceeding exports by 7.4 million cubic feet in 2015.

Other Industrial Products

Roundwood harvested for other industrial uses such as pulpwood, poles, posts, mulch, residential firewood, industrial fuel, logs for log homes, veneer, and all other industrial products totaled 27.6 million cubic feet. Hardwood made up 47 percent of the other industrial products volume.

The number of plants producing other industrial products totaled 11 in 2015, same as 2013. Combined receipts of other industrial and miscellaneous products from softwood and hardwood totaled 17.6 million cubic feet.

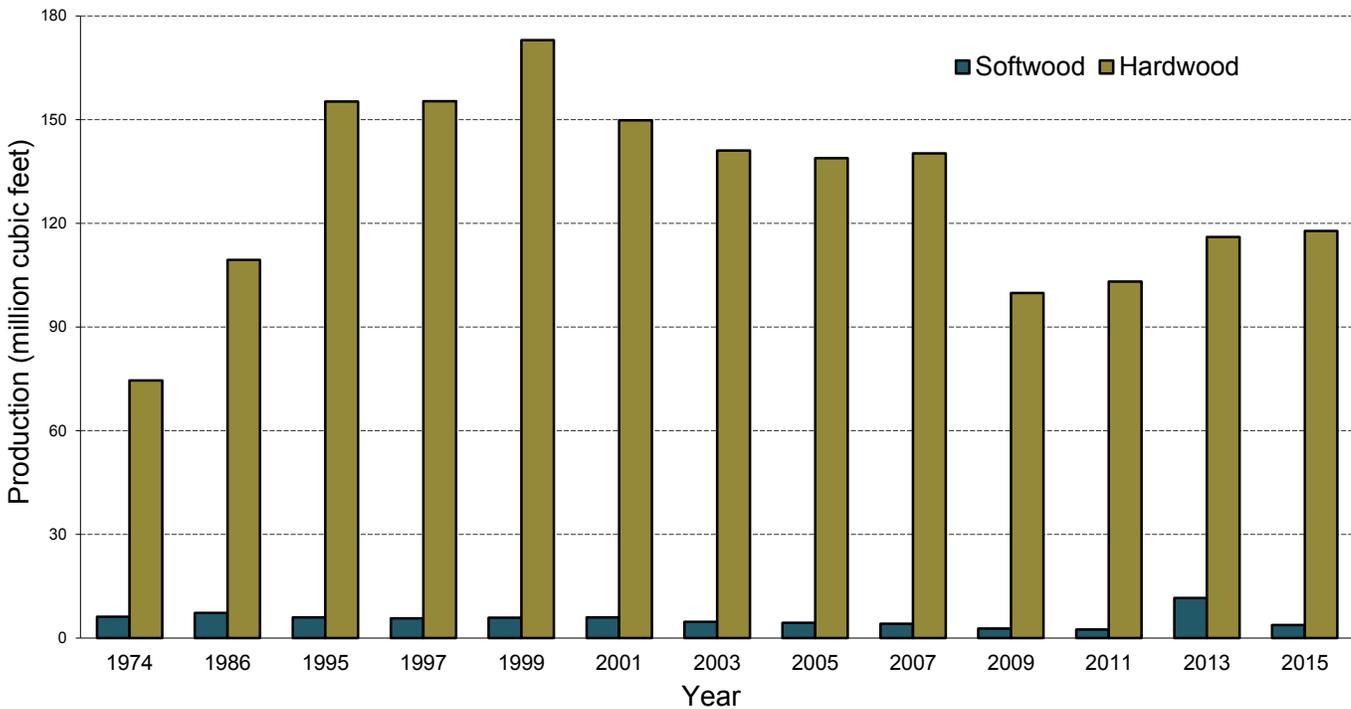


Figure 4 — Roundwood saw-log production by species group and year, Kentucky, 2015.

Plant Byproducts

In 2015, processing of primary products in Kentucky mills generated 75.6 million cubic feet of wood and bark residues. Coarse residues from all primary products amounted to 35.3 million cubic feet, while bark volume totaled 17.4 million cubic feet. Collectively, sawdust and shavings made up 30 percent of total residues, or 22.6 million cubic feet (fig. 5).

The processing of saw logs generated 66.2 million cubic feet of mill residues, accounting for 88 percent of the total residues produced (fig. 6).

Ninety-seven percent, or 73.5 million cubic feet, of the wood and bark residues were used for a product. While 3 percent of the residues were not used for a product, 26 percent of the residues were used for industrial fuel, 18 percent were used for charcoal/chemical wood, and 27 percent were used for fiber products (fig. 7). Fifty-three percent, or 18.6 million cubic feet, of the coarse residues were used for fiber products. Forty-seven percent of the bark was used for industrial fuel, while 36 percent of the sawdust and shavings were used for industrial fuel.

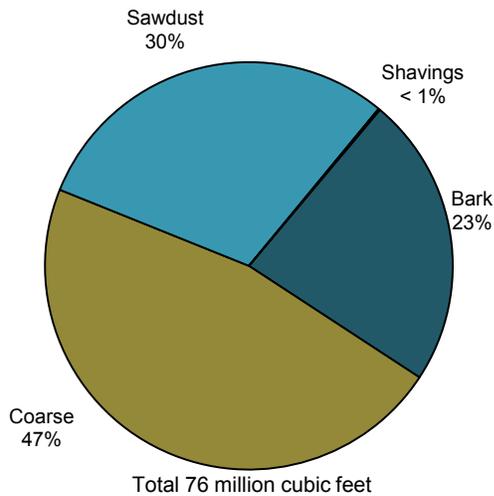


Figure 5 — Primary mill residue by residue type, Kentucky, 2015.

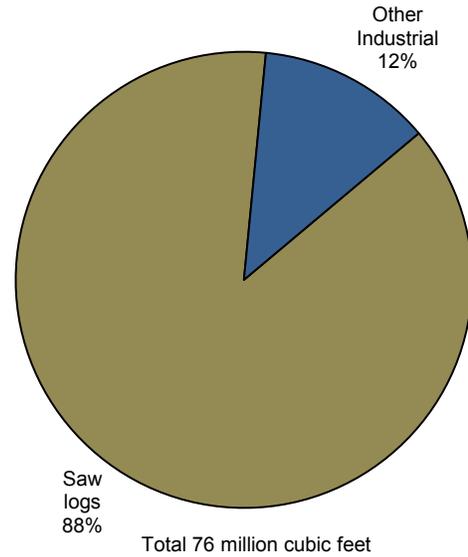


Figure 6 — Primary mill residue produced by roundwood type, Kentucky, 2015.

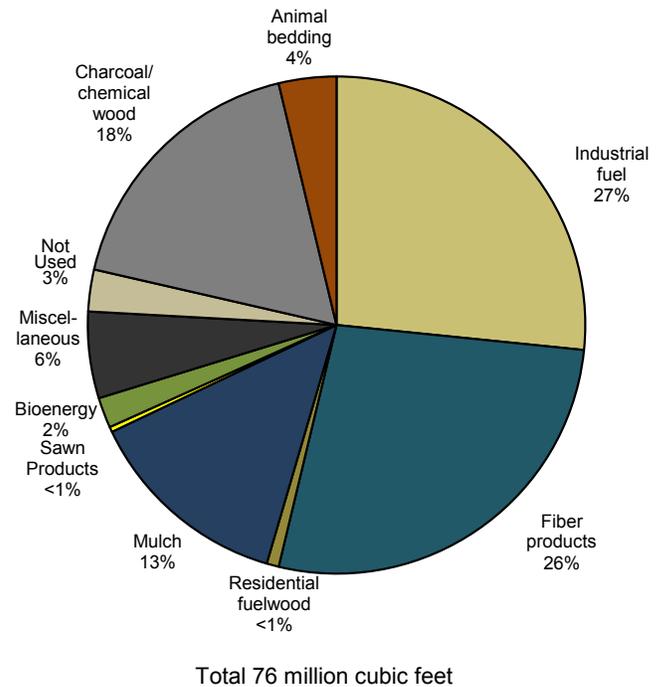


Figure 7 — Disposal of residue by product, Kentucky, 2015.

How to Cite This Publication

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