



EARLY TREE PLANTINGS STARTING TO PAY
IN VIRGINIA

KEEP VIRGINIA GREEN



PREVENT FOREST FIRES

DIVISION OF FORESTRY
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

EARLY TREE PLANTINGS STARTING TO PAY

IN VIRGINIA

Those persons interested in tree planting usually ask how long will I have to wait before the trees will be big enough to cut and how much money can I expect at that time? These are both reasonable questions and are questions any thinking landowner should consider before planting trees.

In 1954 the Virginia Division of Forestry made a survey of some of the older tree plantings in Virginia (Publication #67, "Tree Planting Pays Well"), the results of which are obtainable upon request. This survey revealed that most of these tree plantings had been successful, that these tree plantings have grown well and that many of them were ready now or would be ready for thinning in the near future.

In order to provide more factual information the Virginia Division of Forestry followed up the tree planting survey with a study on some of these tree plantings which were in the process of being thinned or had been thinned in recent years. The study is not all inclusive nor does it indicate the large number of tree plantings in Virginia yet to be thinned or otherwise cut in the near future. It does reveal, however, a trend and indicates how old the tree plantings were when first thinned and also how much money was received as a result of this thinning.

Some of the tree plantings listed below could have been thinned at an earlier age but as sometimes happens in actual practice the thinnings were delayed. It is interesting to note that included in the following list is a tree planting of only 0.6-acre in size and yet was thinned with an operable cut made. Other tree plantings thinned ranged up to areas of 30 acres or more.

The following information is a matter of record and pertains to actual tree plantings already thinned (all the cases below are loblolly pine plantings):

Summary of Tree Plantings Thinned and Incomes Received

<u>County</u>	<u>Year Planted</u>	<u>Age when Thinned (Years)</u>	PER ACRE				<u>**Income Received</u>	<u>***Avg. Annual Income</u>
			<u>Volume Before Thinning *(Cords)</u>	<u>Volume Removed (Cords)</u>	<u>Volume left Standing (Cords)</u>			
Gloucester	1925	28	53.6	12.4	41.2	\$ 39.68	\$ 1.42	
Prince George	1929	25	39.2	11.6	27.6	52.20	2.09	
Albemarle	1929	22	42.2	12.0	30.2	30.00	1.36	
Wittoway	1931	24	28.5	13.5	15.0	74.25	3.09	
Orange	1933	20	47.5	12.5	35.0	62.50	3.12	
Chesterfield	1934	20	45.0	19.0	26.0	114.00	5.70	
Accomack	1936	19	38.8	8.4	30.4	22.34	1.17	
Nelson	1937	18	41.4	13.5	27.9	40.50	2.25	
Mecklenburg	1937	18	40.0	17.0	23.0	102.00	5.67	
Average		21.5	41.8	13.3	28.5	\$ 59.72	\$ 2.87	

*Standard cords, 128 cubic feet.

**Stumpage values, price per cord varies ranging from a low of \$2.50 per cord to a high of \$6.00 per cord.

***Up to year when thinned and includes only the income received from the thinning. It does not include the value of the volume left standing.

Some of the volume left standing in the older tree plantings, in the above tabulation, could have been expressed in terms of board feet because the trees are of a large enough size for sawtimber at the present time. However, for the sake of uniformity all residual volumes are expressed in cords.

The type of thinning given the tree plantings listed above was from "below". In other words, only the poorer, suppressed trees were cut with the possible exception of trees cut so as to provide a better spacing in the residual stand. The residual stands are composed of the better trees within the stand and should develop into good quality sawtimber.

Summary: The Virginia Division of Forestry has compiled a partial list of some earlier tree plantings in Virginia which have already been thinned. The list is not complete but does include those plantings of which the Division has marked and those of which more detailed information is available.

The average gross income per acre per year received from the tree plantings (dated back to the year when thinned) was \$2.87. The average gross sum received per acre at time of thinning was \$59.72. The study also revealed that the average age when the tree plantings were first thinned was 21.5 years of age. This indicates that the plantations may be thinned at a comparatively early age and a substantial income per acre received at that time.

It is important to note that the incomes derived resulted from cutting mostly suppressed trees or the poorer trees, leaving the better trees for future growth.

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