



*Dr. David Mercker*, UT Extension Forester  
dmercker@utk.edu, (731) 425-4703

For Forestry Assistance contact:  
*Division of Forestry* (615) 837-5520

## Extension Insights into Forestry

# FORESTRY *footnotes*

current topics >>>

## Events

### *Timber Sale Workshops*

Details on attached fliers  
July 22: Decatur County  
July 23: Morgan County

The details for the below events will follow.

### *Tennessee Forestry Association Convention*

Sept. 3-5: Chattanooga, TN

### *UT Woods and Wildlife Field Day*

Oct. 23: Tullahoma, TN

## Market Highlights

### *Overview of Hardwood Markets*

“Mostly sideways” - the best way to describe the current hardwood lumber markets. Mills and secondary manufacturers are holding out on major log and lumber purchases until the trade war and budget bill are satisfied, and interest rates soften. Tight supply has pushed the upper grades of poplar up (a trend that will likely continue), with red oak mostly holding steady, and upper grades of white oak off marginally.

## *Considerations for a Successful Timber Sale*

Before a doctor prescribes treatment, before a lawyer argues a case, before a realtor lists a new residence, there are number of considerations and steps to be taken in order to ensure that all necessary information is gathered and to patient/client/customer’s unique requirements are met. In the same way, a timber sale should only be conducted when the landowner’s unique objectives have been taken into account and all of the necessary information has been gathered. The average patient knows little about medicine; the average legal client is ill-informed about the law; the average home buyer has limited access to the housing market nor is conversant of the closing process. Coincidentally, the average woodland owner usually understands very little about timber and the details involved in a timber sale. For instance

- What are your woodland objectives?
- How will you set-up your sale to protect soil, water, aesthetics, residual trees, etc?
- Which trees are financially mature vs. those that need to continue developing?
- What are the species and number of trees to be sold?
- What is the board foot volume and value of the timber selected for sale?
- Which timber buyers and wood industries in the region have the best markets for your type of trees?
- How will they pay for the trees?
- What are forestry best management practices (BMPs) and will loggers follow them?
- What liabilities are landowners exposed to when timber is harvested?
- What should be included in a timber sale contract and who will oversee the logging to ensure compliance with the contract?
- What recourse is available if the timber sale contract is breached?
- How is timber income treated for taxes? What is depletion allowance? What is a timber tax basis?.

Can you answer these questions? Did you even know which questions to ask? Chances are good that you will need medicine, legal, or realty assistance several times during your lifetime. Due to the nature of woodland management, you may only harvest trees once or twice. Don’t your trees and woodland deserve the best service available? Seeking the assistance of a professional forester, or several, will help make you money, save you money, or preserve your money!

## Herbicide Application for Small-Scale Forestry

Many forest landowners enjoy the hands-on, active approach to managing their forests, seeking to achieve both timber and wildlife objectives. And many are quick to realize that using herbicides has numerous benefits, including: better results, less expense, and far less time than manual labor.

“Some choose to work hard; others choose to work smart.”

Herbicides are often applied on small-scale basis to release desirable crop trees, to deaden unwanted invasive plants, to control weeds around seedlings or in food plots, and for site preparation (plus more). Virtually all herbicides applied by landowners for these uses are classified as “general use,” meaning there’s no requirement to be a certified pesticide applicator for use. Further, most herbicides that might be applied are labeled only as “Caution,” as opposed to Warning or Danger. The latter two require more precautions.

Given the above, the following is a summary of five methods to deaden woody plants commonly used by landowners:

1. **Girdling** – use of a chainsaw to sever tree phloem and sapwood for disrupting food and water transport; often herbicide is sprayed into the girdle to expedite mortality; girdles must be continuous and meet at both ends; sometimes with trees < 12” in diameter, rather than using herbicide, a second girdle is made about 6” from the first;
2. **Hack-and-squirt** – spaced cuts are made with a hatchet or machete around the trunk to which herbicide is then applied; cuts are generally 1 – 3” apart and are deep enough to reach the sapwood.
3. **Cut-stump treatments** – once cut down, trees and vines often resprout; to avoid this, herbicide is applied to the outer inch (or so) of the cut stump.
4. **Basal Spray** – on smaller, smooth and thin-barked trees and shrubs, labeled herbicide can be sprayed directly onto the lower 12-18” of the trunk surrounding the trunk; herbicide then penetrates into the bark to cause mortality; care should be taken so that the herbicide is not applied to the point of run-off; this method does not work for all species nor on trees where the bark has become thick or “corky.”
5. **Thin Line Application** – a type of basal spray where the herbicide is more concentrated and is applied on trees and shrubs with trunk diameter of 2” or less; a thin band of concentrated herbicide with penetrant is applied encircling the stem, high enough so that the herbicide won’t run-off onto the soil.

