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HOW TO MARKET TREES

In agriculture it is not easy to get or find a weekly price for alfalfa or prairie hay, even harder to know what the value of trees are on a farm. If price is not the concern to a landowner, they may take a first offer for selling trees, as there are always buyers out there willing to purchase at large discounts. This is an area where landowners can get taken advantage of. In some cases an absentee landowner may not be aware what was taken.

Marketing timber can mean selling trees in what can be a very competitive market. Most landowners are going to want a fair price and need help in determining what that means. They will want to have trees removed in a way that does not damage younger trees and do minimal damage to the site.

A good approach to consider is to have trees marked and offered for sale following a plan working with UNL Forester Steve Karloff at 402-472-3645. If I am not mistaken, this is still a free service. Steve has a wealth of experience in working directly with landowners and can also give you a listing of buyers for the area and will list the offering in the Nebraska *Timber Talk* newsletter. This newsletter is available online at: nfs.unl.edu/timber-talk. The most recent newsletter has 22 walnut trees listed for sale in the Beaver Crossing area. This sale is a salvage sale from a tornado damaged woodlot this spring. Timber buyers can be found on the Internet listed by the Nebraska Forestry at: nfs.unl.edu/timber-buyers-nebraska.

Timber management can be done in a way to favor growth of more valuable tree species for the future too. Trees are often marketed to improve current and future growing conditions for higher quality and higher value species. This practice may be referred to as a selective harvest or timber stand improvement. It involves removing slow growing and less valuable trees. The better trees are left in the stand with more room to grow. Thinnings may also give the woodland owner an early return on his land investment.

Trees should be marketed when they reach maturity. Maturity has two meanings. Trees beginning to decline in value due to disease, weathering or old age are physiologically mature. The other maturity, financial maturity, occurs when the rate at which the trees are increasing in value begins to decline. Trees harvested at this point yield the maximum return on investment. Often many people have found that productive timberland turns out to be marginal farmland. In the long run, high value timber species could be a better investment.

When landowners have an inventory species of trees and an estimate of the volume in board feet of each species and knowledge of marketable trees, it makes it easier getting multiple timber harvest bids. A quality estimate of the lumber offered is also helpful. Reserve the right to reject or accept any bid given and notify all bidders of your decision in a timely manner.

Timber can be quite valuable and you can market it effectively and fair to you and the buyer, with a bit of help.

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