

Forest Products Utilization & Marketing Success Story: New Hampshire

Community Relations: “The Perfect Sawmill Tour Guide”

The Challenge

New Hampshire’s forest industry is the State’s third largest manufacturing industry, contributing to the economy with jobs, taxes, local economic multipliers, and maintenance of the forest critically important to the tourism industry. Despite the fact that New Hampshire’s sawmills have invested over \$74 million in capital improvements over the last 10 years, the perception remains that sawmilling is old-fashioned and on its way out. Combine these false perceptions with the natural independent nature of the sawmill manager and you have a recipe for a challenging relationship between the industry and the local community.

The Solution

A few of New Hampshire’s sawmills have always opened their doors to the local community and the result has been better relationships with both the municipal officials and private citizens. Building on this concept, a UNH Cooperative Extension specialist using Rural Development Through Forestry Program funds worked with the sawmills to develop “The Perfect Sawmill Tour Guide”. The publication uses the best ideas from the sawmills and provides a clear direction on how to organize and implement a successful tour through a facility. The guide offers suggestions on: tour promotion, developing a mill fact sheet, handling small children, and tour safety.

Resulting Benefits

- Sawmills are more engaged with local communities. Likewise, the communities value their sawmills more.
- Tours include legislators, community officials, schools, and neighbors.
- Local schools develop the sawmill tour calendar each year.



Sawmill manager talks to a group of third graders participating in a Project Learning Tree sponsored sawmill and woodlot tour.

Sharing Success

- Presentation to New England Lumberman’s Association.
- Shared copies with Northeast Utilization and Marketing folks in the 20 NE states.
- Presented as a “Sawmill Seminar” of the Loggers Congress organized by the Northeastern Loggers Association.
- A spin-off “The Perfect Woodlot Tour” was developed using the same principles. This is now widely distributed in the northeast.
- School, legislatures, and local officials are now seeking out tours of sawmills.

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