

Agricultural Solutions for Forestry Problems

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The process of harvesting trees for production of solid wood and fuel has evolved over the years. In the early years, trees were hand felled and bucked and horses & oxen used to skid logs to rivers or railroad sidings. The harvesting process has become more efficient through the use of highly automated equipment to cut & bunch, skid or forward, and load logs onto trucks for delivery to the customer. Portable chippers or grinders commutate stems into chip form field side, for delivery to the customer. During this early period, we were harvesting large trees from natural forestland. To meet the growing need for wood fiber, dedicated fiber plantations were established that grew trees in short rotations. The rotation/harvest age of these plantations was determined both by the species peak annual increment and the available harvest systems. Very short rotation plantations, using coppice regeneration on existing root systems, can produce more biomass in a shorter period of time. Forage harvesters, normally used to process corn and other forage crops have the ability, using purpose built biomass harvest heads, to efficiently cut, chip, and load stems too small for existing harvest equipment at production levels of 80-100 green ton per hour.