Step 4: Log measurement and tally.

Log measurement and tally: All logs are measured for diameter and length, which is marked on each log with a crayon (left). A tally clerk records the details of all the individual logs loaded and this is the basis of calculating the volume of logs sold and therefore payment to the farmer (right).

Step 5: Trucks to the mill.

Loading and haulage: All logs are carried from the site and loaded onto a log truck (left). A log truck must be able to access your site via a good road (right) to be able to cart the logs to the sawmill.

Better returns from balsa...

By completing the 5 simple steps shown, a farmer’s balsa trees can be cut down and converted into logs for sale to the processor: Farmer returns are improved by maximising the volume of logs sold for the best price.

Introduction

Farmers grow crops to generate the best possible returns and balsa is no exception. Balsa is a good tree for planting by ENBP farmers, providing future income by selling the trees to processors. Balsa has no on-farm uses, only export markets. Farmers growing balsa need to understand how to sell balsa. This Fact Sheet (#4 of 6) explains how. There are five simple steps to selling balsa logs.

Step 1: BPA—find a buyer and complete a BPA.

Approach your local sawmills or the PNG Forest Authority at Kerevat to identify a buyer of balsa logs. Care is needed to secure the best price for your logs and that you understand the log specifications required by the sawmill / buyer.

Buyers: Sell balsa based on log volume to secure the best price (left). Prepare a Balsa Purchasing Agreement (right) with a log buyer (such as sawmills).

For more information:

See: www.pip.com.pg for copies of the fact sheets.

Contact: The ACIAR Project Officer, Mr Jaupo Minimulu on 7251 2787 or the Integrated Agriculture Training Program, The Papua New Guinea University of Natural Resources and Environment on 983 9736.
Step 2: Falling and cross cutting.

Trees to logs: Harvesting is generally done by the log buyer (such as a sawmill). The balsa trees are fallen by the sawmill’s harvest crew (left) using chainsaws (right).

Log making: The fallen balsa tree stem is measured and log lengths marked (left). The marked balsa stem is cross-cut into logs using a chainsaw (right).

Step 3: Debarking, measuring and grading.

Debarking and grading: The logs are de-barked ready to load (left). All logs taken must meet the processor’s specification for size and quality (right). The size of each log is recorded in a tally sheet which is used to determine the volume of logs taken and the payments due to the farmer.

Log defects: A processor will set a minimum log diameter - a 19 cm diameter log was too small (left). Logs need to be straight to allow sawing in the sawmill to produce boards. A 38 mm bend in a log over a 2 m length was too much and outside of the specification. The log was left onsite (right).

Stem quality: A major kink in a tree stem caused by a jorquette results in a loss of log volume sold (left). A major jorquette caused stem defect and loss of log volume - the log was left behind (right).

Red heart: Red heart (left) is a section of poor quality wood within a balsa log which cannot be sawn in a sawmill to produce high quality boards. The red heart is marked with crayon as after time the red heart fades and is hard to see except for the crayon outline (right).