5-17-1905

Five Pointers on Farm Woodlands

E. J. Lott
TIMBER IS A GOOD FARM CROP

If wisely managed, the farm woods will produce several hundred board feet per acre per year through annual growth. This growth (similar to interest on a bank account) can be harvested annually, or periodically in the form of mature trees. For example, following is the possible harvest cutting on a 40-acre woods growing at the rate of 250 board feet per acre per year:

On an annual cutting basis:
40 acres \times 250\text{ board feet per acre per year} = 10,000\text{ board feet (possible annual cut)}

On a 5-year periodic basis:
40 acres \times 250\text{ board feet per acre per year} \times 5\text{ years} = 50,000\text{ board feet (possible periodic cut)}

A harvest program such as this for the farm woods will produce regular income on a perpetual basis and is much better than the system of slashing the woods to the ground, once in a lifetime.

Make your woods a regular crop and it will pay you well!

These five rules are just the A B C's of farm woods management.

Forestry bulletins can be found in your county Extension office.

Your county agent is in close touch with foresters of the Purdue Department of Forestry and Conservation where further technical assistance is available.

FIVE POINTERS ON FARM WOODLANDS
Department of Forestry and Conservation
E. J. Lott

1. Keep all livestock out of the woods, permanently.
2. Prevent woods fires.
4. Sell wisely what you can’t use well at home.
5. Make timber one of your regular crops.

KEEP ALL LIVESTOCK OUT OF THE WOODS
Grazing destroys the woods. You cannot raise trees and livestock on the same piece of land. A woods with no young trees has the same future as a town with no young people. Woods that are protected will grow 200 or more board feet of timber per acre each year, but a woods cannot be expected to grow forage for cattle and good timber at the same time.
Fence off a small part for shade, and keep livestock out of the rest of the woods. Classify the protected part under the Indiana Forest Land Classification Act for better protection and tax reduction.

PREVENT WOODS FIRES
Fire kills timber and causes decay in trees which are not killed outright. A good woods, unburned and ungrazed, builds up topsoil a fertility, even on steep slopes.

Plow and disc “safety strips,” 10 to 12 feet wide between the woods and sources of fire such as railroads and highways. Keep these strips free of weeds and grass. Plow them on the contour in hilly ground.
Post fire warning signs, and be careful with any fire outdoors. Seek the cooperation of your neighbors and the hunters you allow on your land.

CUT TREES WISELY
Improve your woods by cutting dead, defective, crooked, or diseased trees for firewood, posts, or poles. Give the good trees a better chance. If a poorly-shaped black oak is crowding or overtopping a good white oak, cut the black oak. Cut growing vines from good, young trees.*
Dense woods borders prevent drying winds from sweeping through the woods, and provide needed cover for game birds and animals. Don’t hesitate to cut trees when they are mature, but leave the woods borders thick if you want to keep the woods productive.

BE WISE IN USING OR SELLING TIMBER
Keep enough large trees of desirable species in the woods to replace a barn or other farm building. This is added building insurance at low rates.
Sell the special, high grade products to good markets when the trees are mature and when prices are right: Oak, walnut, maple, poplar, and ash are valuable in the larger sizes.
Maintain your buildings with homegrown lumber. Keep a pile of seasoned native lumber handy in your barn loft or implement shed.**

*See Purdue Extension Mimeo F-41, Timber Stand Improvement, available at your county Extension office.
**See Purdue Extension Mimeo F-37, How to Pile and Season Native Timber, available at your county Extension office.