

TECHNICAL NOTE NUMBER 174

FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY - U. S. FOREST SERVICE - MADISON, WISCONSIN

BLIGHT-INFECTED CHESTNUT AS DURABLE AS SOUND CHESTNUT

Service records collected by the U. S. Forest Service indicate that chestnut posts, poles, and ties cut from blight-infected trees are as durable in service as similar timbers cut from healthy trees. Inspections on posts in one locality during eight years of service showed that decay progresses about as rapidly in undiseased posts as in blight-infected posts.

The blight fungus attacks living trees and grows in the bark, particularly in the cambium layer, but it does not penetrate deeply into the wood itself. The blight finally kills the tree, effectively girdling it by separating the bark from the wood.

Blight-killed chestnut should be cut and utilized as soon as possible. Allowing dead trees to check and become infected with decay in the woods shortens the service life of timbers cut from the tree.