

TECHNICAL NOTE NUMBER 216

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

FACTORY OUTLETS FOR SHORT-LENGTH SOFTWOOD YARD LUMBER

A survey recently conducted by the Forest Products Laboratory indicates that factories might profitably use three times as much short-length softwood yard lumber of standard patterns. Shorts, or lengths under 8 feet, are unavoidably produced at the sawmills in the manufacture of lumber, and if short-length material had a large market it would be possible for mill owners to market a larger proportion of the log. In this way there would be less waste at the mill, and the drain on the timber supply would be decreased. Cutting to size would bring the value of shorts both to the manufacturer and the consumer more on a par with that of standard length material.

A summary of the factors that were found in the study to influence the sale and use of shorts is given below. More detailed results of the study can be obtained from the Forest Products Laboratory, Madison, Wisconsin, but this summary may serve somewhat as a guide to lumber producers in forming their selling policies with respect to short lengths.

In the industries which offer the best outlets for shorts, the following conditions are usually found to prevail: (1) Production is on a quantity basis or the products remain standard from year to year; (2) a large volume of material in relatively few sizes is used; (3) shorts are purchased in carload lots and in specified lengths bundled to facilitate handling.

In order to qualify for this market the lumber manufacturer must be able to supply reasonably prompt shipments of uniform quality material, and he must be willing to cut to exact lengths and bundle his shorts for shipment.

The industries which offer less favorable outlets for short lengths are (1) those which require many sizes of material or which have frequent changes in the sizes required, (2) consuming plants that automatically produce their own short lengths without excessive waste in making cuttings from standard lengths, and (3) factories which must maintain cutting-up plants for other lumber requirements and which use relatively small amounts of softwood yard lumber in short lengths.

The following table lists the products that afford the principal outlets for short lengths and shows what items are used in each product.

FACTORY OUTLETS FOR SHORT-LENGTH SOFTWOOD YARD LUMBER

<i>Products</i>	<i>Items Used</i>
Refrigerators	Ceiling, partition, siding, flooring
Ice cream cabinets	Ceiling, partition
Automobile export boxes	Dressed and matched
Portable and ready-cut buildings	Siding, dimension, dressed and matched
Caskets, coffins, and shipping boxes	Dressed and matched, rough
Garage door panels	Ceiling, partition
Incubators and brooders	S2S, ceiling, flooring
Fixtures	Rough, S2S
Tanks and vats	Rough
Auto running and floor boards	S2S
Screen doors	S2S
Stepladders	Rough, S4S
Sign panels	S4S
Washing machines	Rough
Beehives	S4S
Agricultural implements	Rough, S2S, dimension stock
Cable reels	Rough, dressed and matched
Toys	S4S, rough
Boxes and crates	Rough S2S
Railway cars	Worked lumber, dimension
Millwork	Rough, S2S
Woodenware	Bolts, staves, lumber
Automobile shipments (domestic)	Dimension, strips
Shade and map rollers	Rough squares
Patterns and flasks	S2S
Grain doors	Rough
Fences	S2S
Piano boxes	Dressed and matched, S2S
Car racks	Strips, dimension
Scale beam boxes	Partition, S2S
Factory trucks	S2S