

Issued By
 The School of Forestry, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.
 Devoted To
 The Dissemination of Information Concerning the
 Forests and Forest Industries of Idaho.

**ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE LUMBER
 INDUSTRY IN IDAHO**

The industrial prosperity of Idaho rests primarily upon her agriculture, forestry, and mining. Of these three basic industries, forestry, if developed to a degree easily possible, will, in the long run stand second in importance only to agriculture.

With the depletion of the standing timber in the older lumber centers, the lumber business is rapidly shifting to the Pacific northwest. During the period from 1915 1922, the lumber cut of this region increased 56 per cent, while that of the remaining states decreased 30 per cent. It is notable that the Pacific northwest now supplies 31 per cent of the entire lumber cut of the United States, and within a decade will be supplying the greater bulk of it.

The effect of this nationwide economic change has, so far as Idaho is concerned, raised her lumber producing rating from twenty-fourth place among the states in 1908, to thirteenth place in 1920, and fourth in the states west of the Mississippi River in 1922. Among the lumber producing states in 1920, Idaho ranked first in larch production, second in the production of white pine and white fir, third in western yellow pine, and fourth in output of Douglas fir and cedar.

According to the Forest Officers' Handbook of 1922, published by the U.S. Forest Service, the

annual lumber cut in terms of board feet from 1915 to 1922 in Idaho was as follows:

YEAR	LUMBER CUT
1915	777,000,000
1916	846,107,000
1917	749,764,000
1918	802,529,000
1919	765,388,000
1920	969,576,000
1921	550,077,000
1922	860,161,000
Average	790,075,000

It will be seen from the above table that the peak of production for the years included was reached in 1920. This, however, should not be taken to mean that the cut in the future will not again equal the 1920 output; for with the swing of the lumber industry to the northwest, it is very probable that the annual production in Idaho in the very near future will exceed the 1920 figure. This is all the more to be expected since Idaho contains the largest body of white pine extant, the lumber from which is in wide demand.

According to the Forest Service, the value of the 1920 output at the mill was \$38,000,000. Using this figure as a basis the average annual production of lumber in Idaho has a manufactured value of approximately \$30,000,000, of which fully 80 per cent, or not less than \$24,000,000 remain at home to the benefit of every line of community business.

It is estimated that the lumber industry of the state pays

\$10,000,000 annually to labor, and \$4,000,000 each year for supplies, the greater part of it for products from the farm and range. Since the money paid for wages is in turn mostly paid out by the wage earners for supplies, it will be seen that the lumber business affords an important home market, a fact of the greatest economic significance to a state remote from the great market centers.

The lumber industry of Idaho employs two-thirds of the state's industrial population, produces one-half of her manufactured products, ranks second in community dependence upon its output, and represents an invested capital of \$50,000,000 inclusive of the value of standing timber privately owned. These figures do not take into account the value of such materials as poles, posts, hewn ties, round mine timbers, pulpwood, match blocks, etc., nor the wages paid out in their manufacture. Neither do they include the earnings from the many secondary wood-working industries operating within the state.

The industry also puts into local circulation considerable sums of money through the payment of freight charges. It pays about \$1,000,000 in annual taxes, the amount paid in some of the more important timber counties ranging from 30 per cent to 60 per cent of all the taxes raised. In addition, the Forest Service pays 35 per cent of the gross receipts from the national forests to the support of the schools and the building of roads in the counties in which these forests lie.

The following table, taken from the Forest Officers' Handbook, shows the industrial demand for forest products within the state:

	BOARD FEET
Mines	40,000,000
Railroad Ties	30,000,000

Railroad (uses other than ties).....	12,000,000
Lumber (sold by retailers).....	150,000,000
Shingles and lath.....	4,000,000
Poles.....	2,500,000
Box material.....	5,000,000
Total.....	243,500,000

The greater part of the 150,000,000 board feet of lumber sold by retailers in Idaho goes into the building of homes, of which there are now over 100,000 within the state, practically all of them being built of lumber cut from Idaho forests. Obviously Idaho has better and cheaper homes than she would have without a home supply of high grade lumber.

Of the 243,500,000 board feet given in the last table, 22,500,000 board feet were round or hewn material, and 221,000,000 board feet sawed lumber. This latter figure for sawed lumber used in Idaho in 1920, is about 23 per cent of the 969,576,000 board feet of lumber cut in the state in 1920. Since a certain portion (doubtless small) of the 221,000,000 board feet was brought in from outside the state, it will be seen that Idaho consumed in 1920 something less than 23 per cent of her production. In other words, over 77 per cent of Idaho's lumber output now goes to out-of-state markets.

NOTES

The American lumber industry, its affiliated forest and wood working industries employs over one million men, and is the direct means of livelihood for an additional four million people.

The 30,000 sawmills in the United States are now producing over 50 per cent of the total lumber cut of the world.