

Thinning Profile

SWS Forestry has recently conducted thinning of an Ash plantation under the Woodland Improvement Scheme and a first thinning of a Conifer plantation in Co. Waterford.



Forwarder Removing Timber

The Woodland Improvement Scheme is a grant aided scheme available from the Department of Agriculture. This work carried out by **SWS Forestry** was funded for tending and thinning of the broadleaves. This was the 1st tending in this Ash plantation, which was planted in 1997 by **SWS Forestry**. The thinning method used for this site was the removal of 1 Line in 7 to facilitate extraction, with a selective thin between racks to remove trees with poor form & Canker. This will mean the remaining better quality trees in the plantation will have more room and light to grow and as a result a better quality crop will form. These potential final crop trees were high pruned

post thinning.

SWS Forestry organised for the extraction to take place with conventional forwarder. Chains and tracks were removed from the wheels to prevent damage to trees along side of extraction rack. The Extraction of timber was carried out during cold spell to minimise ground disturbance. The owner saw a good return with some of the timber sold and a portion of the timber used on farm for solid fuel stove to heat holiday cottage, and was very pleased with the service provided by **SWS Forestry**.

The conifer plantation that was thinned was a 1st thinning Sitka Spruce plantation that was planted 1997, 16 years old. When thinning brash mats (branches removed from cut trees) were used on main extraction routes, this is important and was done to prevent ground damage with moving of machines on site. The stumps were treated immediately with Urea solution this is extremely important. This will help prevent *Heterbasidion annosum* or butt rot. *H. annosum* occurs when the fungus gains entry to the timber stand by means of airborne spores which infect freshly cut stump surfaces produced by thinning. Stump infection may be prevented by the application of a Urea solution.



Brash Mats

If you have a plantation that you are interested in thinning it is important to know that good planning is required for good thinning. Prior to thinning your forest, a felling license is required and where necessary a road. A grant can be applied for to

cover the cost of construction of a road. Padraig Egan from SWS Forestry said “SWS Forestry have over 25 years forestry experience. SWS Foresters have first hand knowledge of road construction, first Thinning, second Thinning and clear felling plantations. SWS Forestry can ensure maximum return from your investment”. It is



Urea Applied to stump

important to plan for you first and subsequent thinning in advance to ensure everything is in place.

Employment of a Forestry company can prove very beneficial at this stage for both you and your plantation. Padraig Egan from SWS Forestry went on to say “allot of plantations coming up for thinning have been growing for 15 to 20 years, and it so now that the investment will make returns”. Having a Forestry company to supervise the harvesting works can be very beneficial for many reasons including ensuring the correct amount of timber is extracted from your forest and that it is not over thinned. Having a forestry company supervise will also ensure that all forestry regulations and legal

requirements for thinning are adhered to. Padraig Egan from SWS Forestry also stated “Now is a good time for thinning your forest as the price for timber is excellent at the moment”.