

PLANTING & HARVESTING ESTIMATES

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»» NEW PLANTING AND RESTOCKING ESTIMATES

The 2005 calendar year estimate of total planting is 37 900 hectares. This is made up of 6 000 hectares of new planting and 31 900 hectares of restocking. The new planting estimate is calculated from total seedling numbers sold by forest nurseries, and the restocking estimate is based on data collected from forest owners in the 2006 NEFD survey.

Approximately 37 100 hectares of previously harvested forest remained unplanted awaiting restocking as at 1 April 2006. It is provisionally estimated that 5 000 hectares of new planting occurred during the 2006 calendar year.

The average new planting rate over the last 30 years has been 42 000 hectares per year. In the period 1992 to 1998 new planting rates were high – averaging 69 000 hectares per year. Since 1998 new planting has declined. At 5000 hectares in 2006, new planting is at its lowest level since 1959.

Of the new planting captured directly in the 2006 NEFD survey, 19 percent occurred on unimproved pasture, 2 percent on improved pasture and 79 percent on land where scrub was previously the predominant land cover. Table 6.1 shows in percentage terms the predominant land cover prior to planting since 1993.

The estimates of land cover prior to new planting are based solely on the new planting information collected in postal surveys (see Table 3.1). In some instances postal survey respondents who had undertaken new planting did not state the land cover prior to planting. While the sample size used

to derive the proportions of land cover type prior to new planting is considered to be adequate, the estimates are biased towards the practices of the larger forest owners who are fully represented in the postal surveys.

For definitions of these land cover types refer to Appendix 1.

»» HARVESTING DATA

The 2006 NEFD survey estimated that the total volume harvested for the year ended 31 March 2006 was 18.3 million cubic metres. It is estimated that 17.9 million cubic metres came from clear felling 38 800 hectares of planted forest, and 0.4 million cubic metres from production thinning.

The total volume of radiata pine harvested in the year ended 31 March 2006 was 16.7 million cubic metres, from clear felling 34 300 hectares of forest. The area-weighted average clear fell age of radiata pine increased from 27.9 years in the year ended 31 March 2005 to 28.2 years in the year ended 31 March 2006.

Of the 16.7 million cubic metres of radiata pine, it is estimated that approximately 12 percent were sold as pruned logs, 66 percent were sold as unpruned logs, and 22 percent were sold as pulp and chip logs. These estimates are based on a question first added in the 2005 NEFD questionnaire. The question was answered by owners representing 87 percent of the total harvest in this reporting year.

»» TABLE 6.1: LAND COVER PRIOR TO NEW PLANTING

	CALENDAR YEARS												
	1993 (%)	1994 (%)	1995 (%)	1996 (%)	1997 (%)	1998 (%)	1999 (%)	2000 (%)	2001 (%)	2002 (%)	2003 (%)	2004 (%)	2005 (%)
Improved pasture	28	49	67	36	43	44	56	52	68	31	28	18	2
Unimproved pasture	56	35	22	50	46	47	30	31	9	49	46	46	19
Scrub	16	16	11	14	11	9	14	17	23	20	26	36	79

Another estimate of roundwood removals from planted forest for the same period was 18.96 million cubic metres (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, July 2006). This estimate is based on the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's annual surveys of forest processing plants and export data from Statistics New Zealand. Conversion factors are used to indirectly estimate roundwood removals.

A project to produce new wood availability forecasts started in early 2006. The Nelson-Marlborough region wood availability forecasts were published in September 2006, and can be downloaded from the MAF website (www.maf.govt.nz). Separate forecasts will progressively be produced and published for each other wood supply region. Once all the regions have been completed a national overview will be produced. The forecasts will incorporate the harvesting intentions of major forest owners.

