

TECHNICAL NOTES

FOREST PRODUCTS LABORATORY

U. S. FOREST SERVICE

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WASTE PAPER MILL BARK AS A SOURCE OF TANNIN

The feasibility of using waste hemlock bark from paper mill operations for tanning purposes has been further demonstrated in recent tests made by the Forest Products Laboratory. Results obtained first in an experimental way were so encouraging that the investigation was finally carried out on a semi-commercial scale in cooperation with a paper mill, a tannery, and a manufacturer of drying equipment.

The conclusions reached are: (1) no great technical difficulties stand in the way of utilizing paper-mill bark for such purposes; (2) the product is satisfactory from the tanner's standpoint; (3) it can be prepared at a cost which will allow it to compete with leaf bark.

The use of paper-mill bark for tannin would mean a source of income for the paper mill from a material which is now of little or no value. In many cases it would also be the solution of a serious problem of stream pollution.

The tanner would be assured of a constant supply of dried bark which would allow him to keep much less material in stock, to reduce his fire hazard, and to wipe out the depreciation and interest charges which must be carried against a yard full of leaf bark.

The lumberman would avoid increasing difficulties of obtaining satisfactory labor for bark peeling and would do away with the fire hazard and expense incidental to the peeling and seasoning operations, all of which combine to make the production of leaf bark an unsatisfactory business, even at the present market price.

It is believed, therefore, that the utilization of waste paper-mill bark for tannin is a conservation measure which from every standpoint is worthy of being put into immediate practice.