

Firewood has potential

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and oaks are considered more valuable than the hickories. To be sure of the value of trees in his area, a farmer should check with a forester or someone knowledgeable in the area.

In woods, there is a wide variability of heating values in the different woods. In a list showing the relative ranking of firewood based on the heat value of a dry standard cord, with white oak having a heat value rating index of 100, the

following trees were rated good: Osage orange, dogwood, hophornbean, shagbark hickory, white oak, black locust, blue beech, bitternut hickory, sugar maple, bur oak, beech, red oak, yellow

rated poor: Big tooth aspen, red spruce, hemlock, quaking aspen, butternut, yellow poplar, basswood, white pine and cottonwood.

As fuel for the fireplace, dry firewood has certain advantages. Relatively clean, it burns with little smoke or soot, is usually easy to start, gives quick heat, and has a low ash content.

For farmers who decide to cut their own firewood, it is good to know the preparation of firewood needs no special skills and if done properly. It can also present an opportunity to practice conservation. By removing the trees that will never make good timber, a farmer will reduce the problems of inferior trees interfering with the growth of the other trees. Also, storm broken trees, and trees cut for other purposes on the farm should not be ignored for their potential as firewood.

For use of cutting firewood, chain saws can be used, but proper safety care should be followed. For more exercise, an ax or bow saw can be utilized.

Splitting the logs is done most easily when a splitting maul is used which has a splitting blade on one side of it and a sledge hammer face on the other side. Wedges are often used to help in splitting.

To get maximum heat value from firewood, the wood should be stacked properly to aid drying. It should be stacked about four inches off the ground to allow good air circulation. A temporary cover can shield

the wood stack from the weather elements. Seasoning of wood takes various amounts of time, from a minimum of a few weeks to a period of six to eight months.

In order to fully enjoy a

cozy, safe fire, the following guidelines should be followed. Firewood should be selected that has been thoroughly air-dried. The fireplace and chimney

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Five types of wood in demand as firewood are: (left to right) wild cherry, black walnut, apple, hickory, and red oak. Wild cherry is known for its good fragrance and burning quality, black walnut burns well but is really an expensive wood to use as firewood. Apple wood has a colorful flame and nice fragrance, and hickory gives lots of heat, although it is used more primarily for smoking meats than as firewood. Red Oak is known for its easy splitting ability and good burning quality.

birch, mulberry, apple, red elm, and white ash. The following trees were

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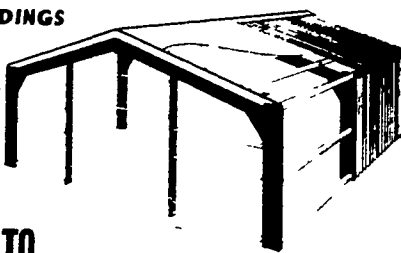
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