

NEWS RELEASE

Managing farm woodlands for wood fuel - FREE information days for farmers

Release date: Immediate

A series of free one-day events are being held across the South West to encourage farmers to manage their woodlands for the generation of wood fuel.

Farm woodlands are often the most neglected part of the farm and other than supply the farmer with the odd log for the farmhouse have remained largely untouched. But these days' small farm woodlands can play an increasingly important economic role on the farm in the form of wood fuel.

Logs, chips and wood pellets are used throughout the South West to heat a wide range of buildings, from commercial nurseries to private homes and offices. The wood fuel economy in the South West has grown rapidly in the last 3 years, and is set to grow even more in response to the rising cost of oil and the threats of climate change.

The events will be led by wood fuel and forestry experts and will cover bringing your woodland back into productive management, supplying wood fuel for your own heating requirements and/or local markets and improving woodlands for biodiversity.

The events have been organised by The Silvanus Trust, Working the Woods and Forest Fuels Ltd, with funding from Natural England and the Forestry Commission under the Farm Demonstration Programme for the South West.

Will Frost from The Silvanus Trust said:

" Many farmers and landowners don't manage their woodlands because they think there is no money to be made from them. These events will give farmers a better idea of what woodlands can produce and where new markets for the wood are coming from".

Andy Bradford from Brimpts Farm, one of the locations for the event said:

“The renewable energy source for our new biomass boiler is not only good for our carbon footprint but also has benefits to the environment through the management of forgotten woodlands”.

Dave Rickwood from Forest Fuels Ltd, said:

“Many farm woodlands can produce significant volumes of wood fuel, the log market is probably the most cost-effective for small mainly broadleaf woodlands, whereas the timber potential of many under managed blocks of conifer may be unlocked by the emerging wood fuel market”.

The events will be taking place at:

Cothelstone Estate, Quantock Hills, 7th December 2007

River Cottage HQ, Devon, 18th December 2007

Brimpts Farm, Dartmoor, 21st January 2007

Lower Woodford, near Salisbury, Wiltshire, 13th February 2008

Gloucestershire, TBC

Cornwall, TBC

The day will include talks, equipment demonstrations and visits to local woodland.

There will be plenty of opportunity for you to ask questions and an information pack will be provided to all those who attend.

All the events are FREE of charge and include lunch and refreshments but places are strictly limited to 30 for each event so book early to avoid disappointment. To book a place please contact Will Frost on 01579 372100 or email will.frost@silvanus.org.uk.

- ENDS -

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:

Please find attached jpeg image, credited to Forest Fuels Ltd.

NOTES TO EDITOR:

Natural England - For further information please contact Phillipa Mansfield, Natural England, Block 3, Government Buildings, Burghill Road, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol. T. 0117 9598556 or email phillipa.j.mansfield@naturalengland.org.uk.

The Forestry Commission - For further information please contact Mark Prior, Forestry Commission, SW England Conservancy, Mamhead Castle, Mamhead, Nr. Exeter, EX6 8HD. T. 01626 890666 or email mark.prior@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. Visit www.forestry.gov.uk.

The Silvanus Trust works in partnership with those concerned with woodland to:

- Influence policy concerning sustainable and viable woodlands
- Provide information, support, advice, education and training for those with an interest in or working in wood and woodlands.
- Support South West wood industry businesses through several projects to promote a sustainable woodland economy.
- Undertake research and promote best practice in community projects, and for partners and businesses receiving our support.

For further information contact Will Frost, The Silvanus Trust, Kyl Cober Parc, Stoke Climsland, Callington, Cornwall, PL T. 01579 372100, email will.frost@silvanus.org.uk, or visit www.silvanus.org.uk.

Working the Woods is one of four national pilots in the UK highlighting the links between protected landscapes and woodland. The project covers the Tamar Valley AONB, South Devon AONB, and Dartmoor National Park.

Working the Woods stimulates the use of more locally derived timber by improving coordination within the woodland sector; promoting wood product marketing; raising public awareness of the benefits of woodlands; creating new partnerships and sharing good practice amongst woodland sector businesses.

For further information please do not hesitate to contact Jacqui Orange, Project Manager at Working the Woods, c/o Tamar Valley AONB Service, Cotehele Quay, Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr. Saltash, Cornwall, PL12 6TA. T. 01579 351316, email jorange@tamarvalley.org.uk, or visit www.woodmeet.net.

Forest Fuels Ltd - Forest Fuels Ltd, the largest wood fuel supply company operating in the South West, with domestic customers through to commercial customers on supply contracts, e.g. The Eden Project and public organisations, e.g. Bristol City Council. Managing Director, Sam Whatmore has 8 years of experience in the wood fuel sector and operates a specialist consultancy service, Wood fuel Solutions, advising on all aspects of wood fuel logistics.