

TALLOWOOD POLES

by J.B. Campbell

Recently the small tallowood plot at Willowdale was evaluated for S.E.C. pole production. With the present concentrated drive on S.E.C. poles, foresters have become very conscious of the great demand for poles.

The Willowdale plots, which measure approximately 18 yards by 18 yards with trees spaced at 7 feet by 7 feet, has the following acceptable poles:

30 fts	-	12
35 fts	-	6
40 fts	-	10
45 fts	-	5
50 fts	-	2
55 fts	-	3
60 fts	-	1
TOTAL:	-	<u>39</u>

Taking the plot to represent approximately 1/10th acre this is 390 poles per acre in 30 years.

The gross value on the Perth market for these poles would be £300.0.0. on the plot or £3,000 per acre, or £100 per acre per annum.

The royalty value per acre would be £1,170.0.0 in 30 years or £39 per acre per annum.

These figures seem exceptionally high but have been checked. The present demand for poles on the Perth and Northam markets is in the vicinity of 12,000 per annum and this figure is growing. There are other requirements on the Great Southern and Geraldton areas and a figure of 18,000 per annum would not be too great. The jarrah forest will eventually yield this quantity quite easily but for a period it will probably be difficult to meet this demand.

The figures are derived from a very small area, and are therefore suspect, but even at half this level they are good.

The potential for growing poles has been largely overlooked and with these figures we could well embark on an increased planting of tallowood on all types of soil. Essentially the soil needs to be deep and well drained. As reported in an earlier Forest Notes, this species is doing well and continues to do well, on poor die-back sites in Harvey and every endeavour is to be made to increase the area of planting. At the level of the above plot it is much more lucrative than pine planting.

There must be a lot of older foresters wishing they had planted 10 acres of tallowood on deep, well drained soils about 30 years ago.
