

Poplar seminar

Information on poplar cultivation in Finland.

poplar plantations and annual harvest

The total surface of aspen plantations is about 1500 ha., nearly all hybrid aspen (*P. tremula* x *P. tremuloides*) some native aspen (*P. tremula*). All are planted after 1997 so no harvest is going on. The aim is to increase the area of (hybrid) aspen cultivation with 1000 ha per year.

Natural stands and annual harvest

About 8000 ha (0,3% of the forest land) is native aspen. 1,2% of the standing volume (21 milj m³) is aspen, but the majority of this grows in scattered mixed stands. The annual harvest is about 0,5 milj. m³.

Annual consumption by local industries

About all the harvested wood (0,5 milj. m³), as well as the imported round wood is used by local industry. Most of it is used by the pulp and paper industry and only about 30 000 m³ by mechanical wood industry, mainly small sawmills. No plywood, panel or packing production. By the end of 2005 the capacity of the pulp and paper industry will be nearly 2 milj. m³ annual.

Annual import export

The pulp and paper industry imports nearly 0,7 milj m³ of aspen round wood annually, mainly from nearby Russia (Carelia), Estonia and Latvia. The products (paper) are mainly for the European market. Products of the mechanical wood industry are mainly for the local market.

Because of the renewed interest in the use of aspen by the Finnish pulp and paper industry, a series of research and development projects have been or are being carried out. These projects include breeding and genetics, growth and production estimates, pathology and plant production (vegetative propagation)

There is already some co-operation between Finland and Estonia on the field of aspen cultivation. Plantations with hybrid aspen have been established in Estonia with the ultimate aim to supply the Finnish pulp and paper industry and part of the plant production takes place in Estonia.