



AVONGRO

Wheatbelt Tree Cropping

July 2005

First Biomass Loads to Narrogin Plant

Harvesting Begins in the ARB

After many years on the drawing board the Narrogin Integrated Mallee Plant (IMP) is set to open. The first loads of biomass were harvested and delivered by the Oil Mallee Company in April 2005, as part of the commissioning process.

Dave McFall, Regional Manager at Narrogin, oversaw the operations on two properties where new harvest systems were trialled.

"Many mallees are overdue for harvest so we have been using traditional plantation methods including separate cutting and chipping operations. This involves a hydro-ax harvesting machine and trailable chippers as used for clearing under power lines."

"We are also testing other harvest systems designed for oil production and the OMC are continuing to develop the prototype harvester designed especially for full scale operation."

"We expect to deliver around 5,000 tonnes of biomass from a number of sites over the next six months."



First Payments Made

The first payments to growers occurred after 50 tonnes of biomass was delivered to the plant recently. Although a small beginning, the system is now in place for tracking loads of biomass, weighing and sampling the loads, ensuring compliance with our Code of Practice and establishing an audit trail.

Tym Duncanson of the OMC, which will be coordinating the deliveries, said " We have a few more logistical and chipping issues to resolve but we are on track to make deliveries when the plant opens for operation, hopefully in June. We have a large range of sites to choose from due to many growers planting oil mallees before 1998."

If you are a grower within 80km of Narrogin and would like to ensure you are on the harvest list, contact Tym Duncanson on 1800 625 511 or Dave McFall on 9881 5373.

OIL MALLEE COMPANY TRIAL HARVESTER DESIGN

The harvester is a continuous harvester that cuts the mallee off at the base and chips the mallee stems all in one pass. The key to the technology is transferring the stems from the cutter to the chipper at speed so that 60 tonnes per hour can be harvested. Photos of the harvester appear at www.oilmallee.com.au/pi12.html.

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