

Dry Kiln Profit:

Once you have a dry kiln, you will have to decide which products to use the dry kiln for to gain you the most profit. We term this best profit approach to an income-side strategy, rather than product based strategy. While this might be a simple case of just loading the kiln with select Red Oak or other hardwoods, there may be other options. In this article, we will examine some of these routes to generate more profit utilizing a dry kiln.

Seasonal Use: If you have a generous supply of quality wood all year-round, then you probably don't have to look at alternatives for filling the kiln. However in many parts of the country, when winter hits, many loggers are not able to bring in logs. Without an inventory of prime logs, your sawmill or operation might find some winter months with low or no supply. If this is the case, consider an alternative, drying firewood.

Firewood is a complimentary use of your kiln, and can generate tremendous profits. Firewood not only for homeowners, but for trendy wood-fired pizza oven restaurants. A large markup on a premium value-added product like kiln-dried firewood can give you additional income.

Market Use: With fluctuating market prices, shifting to various species or different products may be a good strategy to follow when developing uses for your dry kiln. If the kiln dried price of Red Oak is down, consider Cherry or other species. If dimensional lumber prices are down, consider squares or timbers.

Contract Use: If there are periods when your kiln is down due to lack of supply of quality lumber or logs, consider contract drying. While this is less profitable than drying your own product, it may be the difference from making a profit, or charting a loss for that month.

Demand Use: Talk to local building and remodeling contractors in your area and keep in tune to what they are demanding, using, and installing. If there is a big demand for flooring, then produce flooring. If the demand shifts to molding, then try that. Above all do not lock your operation into a single product, and hinge all of your sales and profit by it. Above all, be flexible in the strategy to utilize kiln. A Best-Profit approach will generate income all year round regardless of your fluctuating market prices, demand or log supply.

Summary: Running a dry kiln operation for profit can be a challenge. Look at your potential markets, and try to keep the kiln running all year long.

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