

THE LANDING

SUMMER 2022



EDITORIAL

BOOM IN EFFICIENCY

Graham Hinch,
Director, Western Hemisphere Sales and Marketing

I'm pleased to announce that our optional Intelligent Boom Control (IBC) technology is now available on our 953MH and 959MH Tracked Harvesters. This development is a result of global collaboration between our John Deere Wheeled Cut-to-Length and Full-Tree Forestry teams, with the goal of implementing IBC's field-proven technology on tracked harvesters. IBC has been extremely popular with owners of wheeled machines. As you'll learn in our International Corner article (see page 4), Owner and Operator Thomas Schmidt says he can't imagine living without IBC on his 1270G Wheeled Harvesters.

IBC makes it easier to maneuver the harvesting head by reducing the operator inputs controlling the boom. Instead of controlling each independent boom function separately, the operator simply steers the harvester head toward the target. It's easy and intuitive, helping the operator become more efficient. Early adopters of IBC on tracked machines include Owner Adam Williams



(see page 6), who has been demoing the technology on a John Deere 953MH Tracked Harvester. He considers IBC "must-have."

IBC is another example of how Deere strives to offer products and solutions that respond to the unique and changing needs of our forestry customers. In recent years that has included introducing machines for working on steep slopes and challenging terrain, such as our six-wheel 768L-II Bogie Skidder and 953ML Shovel Logger. More great examples are our technology solutions that include JDLink™ connectivity and TimberMatic™ Maps and TimberManager™, our map-based production-planning and -tracking system.

For more details about IBC on our 900-MH Series Tracked Harvesters, see "Deere Gear" on page 10. And to learn more about how this and other solutions can help your business realize its potential, speak with your local John Deere dealer.



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Cover image:
Pierce Timber Company builds a legacy
in southern Georgia.

DEERE FORESTRY TECH UP CLOSE

New harvester head specially designed for handling eucalyptus

John Deere designs and manufactures harvester heads for a variety of purposes, including thinning, large trees, softwood, and crooked hardwood. Our new H225E Harvester Head is purpose-built for effective eucalyptus harvesting.

Native primarily to Australia, eucalyptus is one of the largest genera of trees in the world. Some species are among the world's fastest growing. Eucalyptus is grown in many countries as a short-rotation pulpwood feedstock, so much of the world's paper of hardwood origin contains eucalyptus. It is the most widely planted tree in plantations in countries around the world, including South America, South Africa, Australia, India, Galicia, and Portugal.

Designed for large wheeled and tracked harvesters such as John Deere 1270G and 1470G Harvesters, the H225E Harvesting Head incorporates several technologies that make it ideal for harvesting eucalyptus:

- X4** Four moving delimiting knives and fixed top and back knives work together with fixed debarking tools in the frame and two rotating rollers to deliver the high-quality debarking demanded by mills.
- ///** Optional patented variable-angle debarking Vario feed rollers rotate the stem at different speeds depending on diameter, maximizing debarking.
- ∩** The shape and large opening of the delimiting knives is designed to make it easy to pick up logs from the ground, especially when trees are felled one after the other and then delimited, debarked, and cut.
- ⚠** Long cutting edge improves delimiting and debarking when reverse feeding.
- ||** Head design delivers easy processing of crooked trees.
- ⚡** PEvo-harvester head valve found on most John Deere harvester heads minimizes cavitation tendency in varying loads, for excellent performance and control.
- 🎯** Optional find-end sensor further assists harvesting.
- ∩** Casted delimiting knives provide strength and durability.
- 👉** Piston rods on the feeder arm are well protected from eucalyptus juice and branches by easy-to-replace steel covers.
- 🌀** Hydraulic hoses are carefully routed inside structures to prevent premature wear.




MEET THE BEETLES



GERMANY

**German forestry
administration meets
bark-beetle threat with
an invasion of its own:
forestry machines**





Burgwald's coat of arms includes a line of fir trees, a symbol of the surrounding forest areas, one of the largest in the German state of Hesse. The forest stands are dominated by pines and spruce, which make up more than 60 percent of the forest.

German forests are not doing well at the moment. Heat waves and drought have harmed beech and spruce, the two most common German species. The damaged timber has caused the bark-beetle population to grow immensely, and the drought-weakened spruce cannot fight off the bark beetle. As a result, by the end of 2021, the living spruce population in the Burgwald national forest was half of what it was in 2013.

The densest forestry-machine population in Germany

The forestry administration in Burgwald countered the invasion by forming a task force. The strategy it came up with is to remove trees that are still green but already infected. The larvae of the beetles in these trees do not have the chance to develop into full-grown beetles.

All available logging resources in the area were recruited, making Burgwald the densest forestry-machine population in Germany. One of those recruited was Reinhard Schmidt Forstunternehmen GmbH & Co. KG, which was founded by Reinhard Schmidt in 1970. In the early years, Schmidt was one of the first to run a John Deere grapple skidder. In 1997 he bought his first harvester, a Timberjack 1270, and a year later his son Thomas joined the company.


Today the company's fleet comprises two eight-wheeled John Deere 1270G Wheeled Harvesters, three forwarders including a Deere 1110E, and a skidder. Thomas co-manages the company with his father and operates one of the 1270Gs. The eight-wheeled harvesters provide superb stability and traction as well as excellent boom reach, an unbeatable combination according to Thomas.

One of the company's biggest challenges is meeting customer demands while dealing with the difficult bark-beetle situation. The time frames are often short and volume is often large. And of course, every customer wants to be served immediately.

To address the issue, Thomas traded in his old John Deere H414 Harvester Head for a new H424 model, which he feels can handle even large trees and offers additional precision and control with its PEvo valve (see also Tech Tips, page 3, about a new harvester head with a PEvo valve).



Fighting the good fight

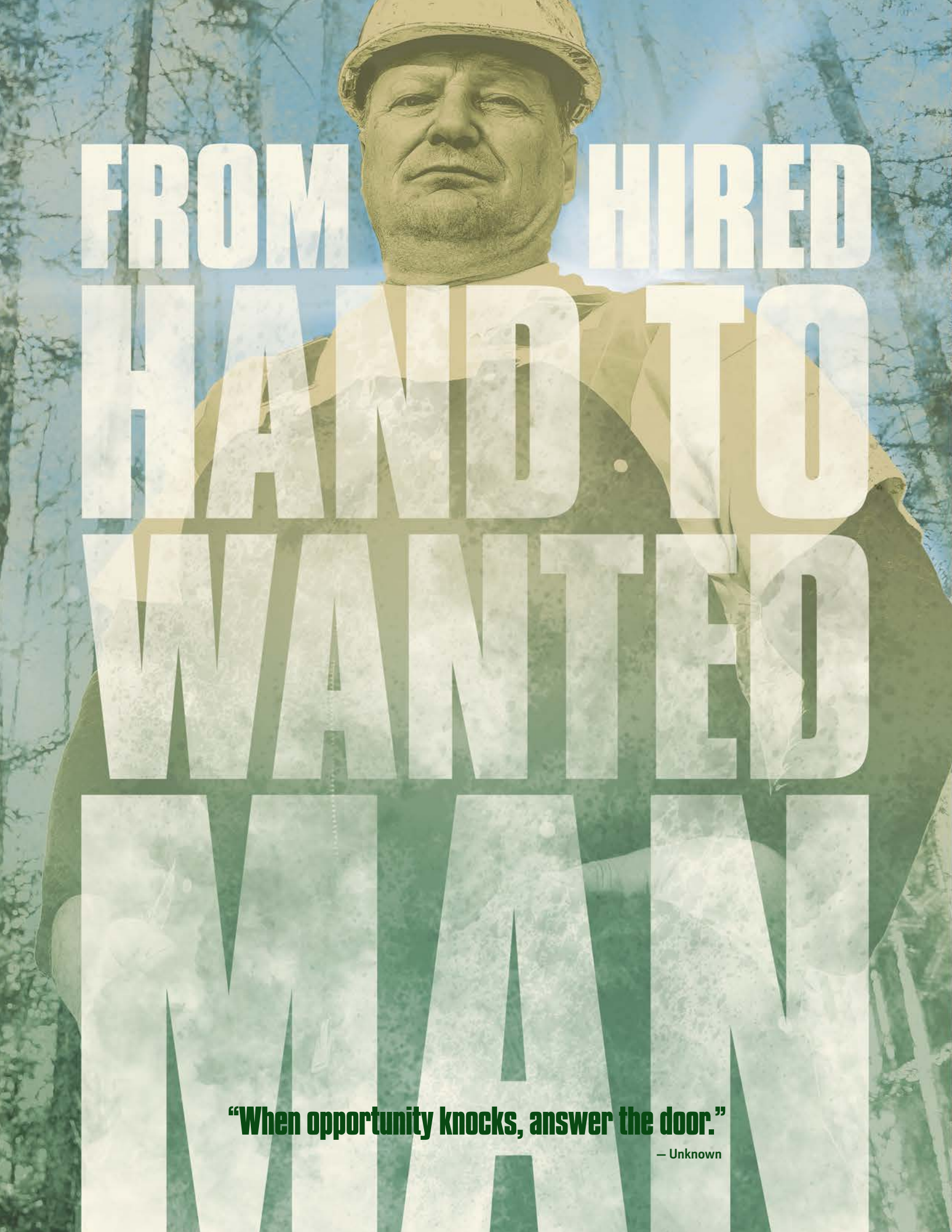


Thomas also appreciates his harvester's Intelligent Boom Control (IBC) option (for more on IBC, see Deere Gear, page 10, and the "From hired hand to wanted man" story, page 6). IBC smooths boom operations for more precise harvester-head positioning. Operators no longer need to control each independent boom function separately. They can simply steer the harvester head toward the target, and IBC automatically adjusts the booms and cylinders accordingly. Harvesting is now more relaxed and efficient, an advantage Thomas no longer wants to live without.

A key reason Thomas and his father chose John Deere forestry machines is the service and support they receive from their local Deere dealer, Fa. Nuhn. He believes the close relationship with the dealer and service agreements contributed to the long-term success of the company. "At least once a year our machines are serviced and updated by the experts at Fa. Nuhn," he says. "Sometimes software is upgraded, sometimes improved components are installed. The information received during that time from John Deere and Fa. Nuhn employees is really helpful."

The company will continue to fight the good fight. Cool weather initially delayed last year's appearance of the bark beetle by a few weeks. But the beetle population was soon back in full force. With the soaring temperatures, massive damage almost immediately appeared in the forest stands, which up to then had seemed healthy. But the efforts of Reinhard Schmidt Forstunternehmen and other companies will help stem the tide.





**FROM HIRED
HAND TO
WANTED
MAN**

“When opportunity knocks, answer the door.”

— Unknown



ADAM WILLIAMS FOUND HIS NICHE RUNNING A DEERE 953MH TRACKED HARVESTER

Opportunity knocked for Adam Williams, owner of A.R. Williams Logging, back in 2014. Or more accurately, it gave him a call. “My hunting buddy called to tell me he had a lot of logging work lined up in my hometown of Englehart, Ontario,” he recalls. Since 2002, Williams had been working in construction six hours away in Ottawa, where he learned how to run heavy equipment. “I ran large excavators at first, doing street restoration downtown or working in quarries and new developments,” he remembers. “I then switched to wheeled excavators, and when they saw how good I was, I couldn’t get off of it.”

That is until that fateful day he received the phone call. “I moved back home and bought a feller buncher from my friend. It was good work and close to home. I worked as hard as I could and paid that feller buncher off in six weeks.”

TOP OF THE LIST

Williams first started working in construction after high school when he took a job with a local company in Englehart. “During the winter, we’d haul logs. It was my first time doing anything with logging, and I really enjoyed it,” he says.

When he returned home in 2014 and purchased his first feller buncher, Williams was off and running. But because the general contractors often had their own bunchers, he was usually the last one brought on. “I could make a good living with the buncher, but I was always on the bottom of the list.”

By 2017, the company for which he was contracting desperately needed cut-to-length machines. “Many loggers in the area were afraid to run harvesters because of the higher investment cost and lack of experience working on them,” he recalls.

Williams took the plunge and bought a John Deere 903MH Tracked Harvester with a Waratah 623C Harvester Head. “It’s easy to work on, which is one of the big reasons I picked it. It has been very reliable, so I’ve really only replaced normal wear parts. The head is solidly built, too. I just don’t have many problems with this combination.”

Without enough harvesters to go around, Williams soon became a “wanted man.” Before long he was running 24/7, so he hired another operator.

“MUST-HAVE” TOOL

Recently Williams has been demoing a John Deere 953MH Tracked Harvester with a Waratah 623C Harvester Head. The 953MH features Intelligent Boom Control (IBC), which Deere is introducing on tracked harvesters for the first time (see Deere Gear, page 10). “IBC is absolutely what you want for harvesting at the stump,” says Williams. “It makes boom operations much more precise and efficient compared to our other 953MH, which doesn’t have it.”

IBC makes it easier to maneuver the harvesting head by reducing the operator inputs controlling the boom. “Without IBC you have to control the boom and stick functions separately,” says Williams. “Using IBC you just position the boom tip where you want it using a single joystick. It makes everything more predictable so you don’t overcompensate movements. It’s so much smoother and easier. And I’m not getting shaken around as much, so I feel less fatigued at the end of the day.”

Plus IBC is easy to learn, which makes it great for training new operators, according to Williams. “You catch on quick. It just comes so naturally.”

The technology has also helped his company’s bottom line. “IBC makes my work faster. Cycle times have increased compared to my 953MH without it, so I’m more productive. And I noticed a fuel savings right away compared to the other machine. Deere really hit a home run with IBC. It’s must-have. I wouldn’t dream of running without it. I told our salesmen at Brandt, our Deere dealer, not to order any machines without IBC.”



“IBC IS ABSOLUTELY WHAT YOU WANT FOR HARVESTING AT THE STUMP.”


— Adam Williams, owner, A.R. Williams Logging





“ I’M ALWAYS
LEARNING
SOMETHING
NEW OUT HERE.”

— Adam Williams, owner, A.R. Williams Logging



“We’re excited to see this technology coming to tracked machines,” says Allain Santerre, director of sales for Ontario and Eastern Canada at Brandt Tractor. “Deere has had the technology on wheeled forestry machines for a few years now, and it’s changed how operators do their work. IBC is intelligent, so it makes the operator’s task easier.”

He and other Brandt salesmen have been spreading the word about IBC on tracked machines and offering demos. “Everyone I speak with who tries IBC feels they are better at their job and less tired at the end of the day. We want customers to know their options. Like our TimberMatic™ Maps and TimberManager™, IBC is another step ahead to help our customers succeed.”

Santerre confirms the bustling forestry industry in Ontario that Williams has experienced firsthand. “The forestry market is really good here right now. There’s a big demand for wood and therefore a big demand for people to cut the wood and bring it to the mills. We’ve sold more machines in the last two years than in the previous five years.”

Asked if he is happy with his decision to leave construction to become a logger, Williams replies, “Absolutely. The lumber mills are sawing record numbers. They can’t keep the yard full of wood, and there’s no end in sight.”

Despite a hectic schedule, Williams prefers the woods to the city. “I enjoyed doing the infrastructure projects in downtown Ottawa. I was learning something new. But I like the woods more. It’s so quiet out here, very peaceful. And I’m always learning something new out here, too.”

A.R. Williams Logging is serviced by Brandt Tractor Ltd., Timmins, Ontario.



To see more of the story, visit
JohnDeere.ca/TheLanding

REACH NEW LEVEL

New for tracked harvesters, IBC provides consistent, smooth operation

"John Deere hit a home run with IBC. It's smooth and precise. It makes harvesting at the stump a lot easier. I wouldn't dream of getting another machine without IBC. It's truly must-have technology."

Adam Williams,
A.R. Williams Logging,
Englehart, Ontario



ELS OF EFFICIENCY

Now available on our MH-Series Tracked Harvesters, optional Intelligent Boom Control (IBC) smooths boom operations for more precise harvester-head positioning, especially on extended reaches. Operators no longer need to control each independent boom function separately. The controls used for reaching and securing trees intuitively mirror how the equipment might function if it were the operator's arm. Just steer the harvester head toward the target, and IBC automatically adjusts the boom and cylinders accordingly.

IBC allows the operator to focus on controlling the attachment, helping improve efficiency. The result is a better operator experience and increased productivity compared to an MH-Series Tracked Harvester without IBC. Easy, accurate, and fast, IBC takes harvesters to a new level.

To learn more, visit JohnDeere.ca/trackedharvesters.





THE LEGACY WE LEAVE

**Pierce Timber Company
has built a successful name
for itself through teamwork**

Years ago, a pro football team with the motto “40 for 60” won a championship. Forty players gave their all as one unit for 60 minutes of game time. “50 for 30” would be a good motto for Pierce Timber Company, Blackshear, Georgia, where 50 people work together to support 30 crews.

Story: Kevin Orfield | Photography: Dan Videtich



◇ Hugh Thompson



Unsung heroes

Hugh Thompson, owner of Pierce Timber Company, knows how to be a team player. He was the quarterback of his high school football team and also played football in college. “I played sports all my life,” he says. “As I got older, I got to wondering why I was able to be on all these successful teams. It’s always revolved around having good people around you. You need to work as a team to win championships.”

At Pierce Timber, everyone from the front office to the logging site understands the company’s goals and how it does things. “We’re all one team,” says Thompson. “We’ve got great people who really care about the company. And I was lucky to learn early on to delegate to people and help them grow. I’ve had so many people who have really come along to help build the business with me.”

Chad Nimmer, forester, manages Pierce Timber’s western area. “Mr. Thompson always says we have the best team in the world, some of the hardest-working people. It takes a lot of effort to get a tree from the stump to the mill. There are a lot of unsung heroes making it happen.”

The company has its priorities straight, according to Nimmer — safety, then maintenance, then production. “When I wake up every day, my goal is to make sure everyone goes home safe. That’s number one. If we’re safe and we maintain everything well, production will be there.”

“You need to work as a team to win championships.”

Hugh Thompson, owner,
Pierce Timber Company





“My dad was always the kind of guy who could pull things together and make it happen if there was a need.”

Hugh Thompson, owner,
Pierce Timber Company

Real-life Mayberry

Thompson grew up in Blackshear. “It’s like Mayberry from *The Andy Griffith Show*. Everyone says hello and is courteous,” he says. “It’s a blessing to live here. It really is.”

Hugh’s father Mac Thompson moved to Pierce County in 1955 and started working for John Shackleford, owner of Pierce County Timber Company. In 1962, Mac bought the company. “My dad was always the kind of guy who could pull things together and make it happen if there was a need,” says Thompson. “He didn’t mind trying something.”

When Thompson started working for the company in 1987 after receiving his business degree, Pierce Timber was running three logging crews and contracting with two others. “My father wanted me to get a degree first before learning the family business. I spent the first few years training with our foresters and learning procurement before entering logging and managing crews.”

Over the years until the time he purchased the company from his father in 2010, Thompson became intimately familiar with it. “My father wanted me to dive into the weeds of the business and learn what made us money and what did not. That’s when we really made strides in becoming more efficient and doing what needs to be done to be profitable. To be a good logger nowadays, you need to be a good businessman. You’ve got to be able to manage your costs.”



Mac
Thompson



STAY CLEAR

WARNING
STAY BACK
500 FEET

KODIAK

Our business is their business


Today Pierce Timber runs one of the largest logging operations in the region, with over 30 crews. Half are company crews and half are contracted. The company covers southeast Georgia and northeast Florida, primarily harvesting loblolly pine as well as a variety of hardwoods.

Pierce Timber began converting to John Deere forestry equipment in 2000 when Deere bought Timberjack. Today the company runs over 30 Deere construction and forestry machines, including skidders and feller bunchers. "They're great machines," says Thompson. "We've been getting a good return on investment from them. Extended warranties and maintenance programs through our local dealer help us manage costs."

A major key to improving efficiency and profitability, Thompson has learned, is maintaining equipment. "Uptime is critical," he says. "As a company we try to eliminate as much downtime as possible."

Using JDLink™, Pierce Timber can easily track machine health, maintenance schedules, fuel consumption, and idle time. "JDLink is a great tool," says Thompson. "It helps make sure our machines are working properly and to their utmost productivity and efficiency."

The company's local dealer, Flint Equipment Company, can remotely monitor machines and diagnose issues before they become bigger problems. Thompson believes that having a high level of support from its dealer has been critical to the company's success.



"JDLink is a great tool. It helps make sure our machines are working properly and to their utmost productivity and efficiency."

Hugh Thompson, owner,
Pierce Timber Company



“What’s most important is the legacy we leave, and our people get that.”

Hugh Thompson, owner,
Pierce Timber Company

“Our local dealer, Flint Equipment, helps us, number one, by treating our business like their own business,” says Thompson. “We joke that our John Deere salesman has an office here at Pierce Timber. Flint Equipment stays on top of our business and our needs. They know our company almost as well as we do and help us get better. That’s a big deal. It really is.”

Thompson is optimistic about Pierce Timber’s future. His son Trey has been working with the company for six years. “Like me, Trey really wanted to get into the business right away. But it isn’t for the faint of heart. It’s constantly changing and nothing is simple. You always have to be growing and getting better. Every day is a new problem.”

But problem-solving is one of the things Thompson enjoys most about the industry. “I look forward to waking up in the morning and figuring things out. What I really love most about this industry is the people, especially the people I work with. We’ve built this together. Pierce Timber isn’t just a name. It’s a brand that we all have ownership in, going from generation to generation. What’s most important is the legacy we leave, and our people get that.”

Pierce Timber Company is serviced by Flint Equipment Company, Brunswick, Georgia.



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