

TIMBER TALES NEWSLETTER

Applied Management Information from the LSU Extension Forestry and Wildlife Team

Vol. 26 Issue 003

Louisiana Stumpage Report Second Quarter 2026

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The stumpage prices below are the statewide averages and are intended to demonstrate the general trends in the market. The current value of timber can differ greatly across parishes, species, tree quality, market access, and other factors. Forest landowners considering a timber sale are encouraged to contact a consulting forester for assistance. Average stumpage prices for the six major products for the 2nd Quarter-2026 were reported as follows:

Tabel 1. Average stumpage prices*(\$/ton) Q2/2026

	Q2/2026	Q1/2026	Q2/2025	Q2/Q1 % Change	Q2/Q2 % Change
Pine Sawtimber	\$23.66	\$25.14	\$29.60	-5.9%	-20.1%
Oak Sawtimber	\$39.35	\$42.47	\$44.43	-7.3%	-11.4%
Mixed Hardwood Sawtimber	\$39.93	\$38.49	\$37.73	+3.7%	+5.8%
Pine Chip-n-Saw	\$15.80	\$17.52	\$18.55	-9.8%	-14.8%
Pine Pulpwood	\$4.44	\$5.65	\$4.74	-21.4%	-6.3%
Hardwood Pulpwood	\$4.68	\$5.28	\$8.45	-11.4%	-44.6%

* Oak Sawtimber includes both red oak and white oak species. The sawtimber and pulpwood price data included in this newsletter are published with permission from TimberMart-South Athens, GA 30605 email tmart@timbermart-south.com.

— This document is intended for use by forestry stakeholders of Louisiana. The source of these prices is proprietary in nature.

Market trend

Louisiana's timber market gave back its first-quarter gains in the second quarter of 2026, with prices softening broadly. Pine sawtimber slipped 5.9% quarter-over-quarter to \$23.66 per ton, erasing the early-year bounce and settling back into the range it has held since the middle of 2025. Its 20.1% decline from a year ago is largely a base effect, as the second quarter of 2025 was an unusually strong reading. Pine chip-n-saw fell 9.8% to \$15.80 per ton, its lowest level in four years, and oak sawtimber dropped 7.3% to \$39.35. The one bright spot was mixed hardwood sawtimber, which rose 3.7% on the quarter and 5.8% on the year to \$39.93 per ton, the highest hardwood sawtimber price of any state in TimberMart-South's eleven-state region this quarter. On the pulpwood side, pine pulpwood dropped 21.4% to \$4.44 per ton, within a cent of its four-year low, while hardwood pulpwood fell 11.4% to \$4.68 and is down roughly 45% year-over-year, the steepest decline of any product in this report. Louisiana's pulpwood prices remain among the lowest in the South, the legacy of earlier pulp-mill closures and the paper industry's continuing shift toward recycled fiber.

The quarter's industry news cut both ways. On the sawtimber side, Hunt Forest Products permanently closed its Olla hardwood sawmill in June, citing weak demand and low hardwood prices and removing a buyer for local hardwood. On the pulpwood side, the outlook grew harder to read. SunGas Renewables canceled its roughly \$2 billion Beaver Lake wood-to-methanol project in Central Louisiana, removing a large prospective outlet for residual wood, even as Southern Energy Renewables signed a memorandum of understanding with Axens to advance its \$1.4 billion sustainable-aviation-fuel and green-methanol plant in St. Charles Parish, where production is not expected until roughly 2029.

Looking through the rest of 2026, landowners should plan for current realities. Pine sawtimber prices are likely to stay range-bound near \$23 to \$26 per ton, with any upward momentum depending heavily on housing demand, and housing remains soft: the 30-year mortgage rate hovered around 6.5% in June and home sales stayed flat. A near-term pulpwood recovery looks unlikely. The shift toward recycled fiber is a structural change rather than a temporary downturn, and the biomass and biofuel projects that could eventually absorb residual volume are still years from operating. As always, these figures are statewide averages; the value of any particular tract depends on the parish, species, stand quality, and market access, and landowners considering a sale should consult a professional forester before agreeing to a price.

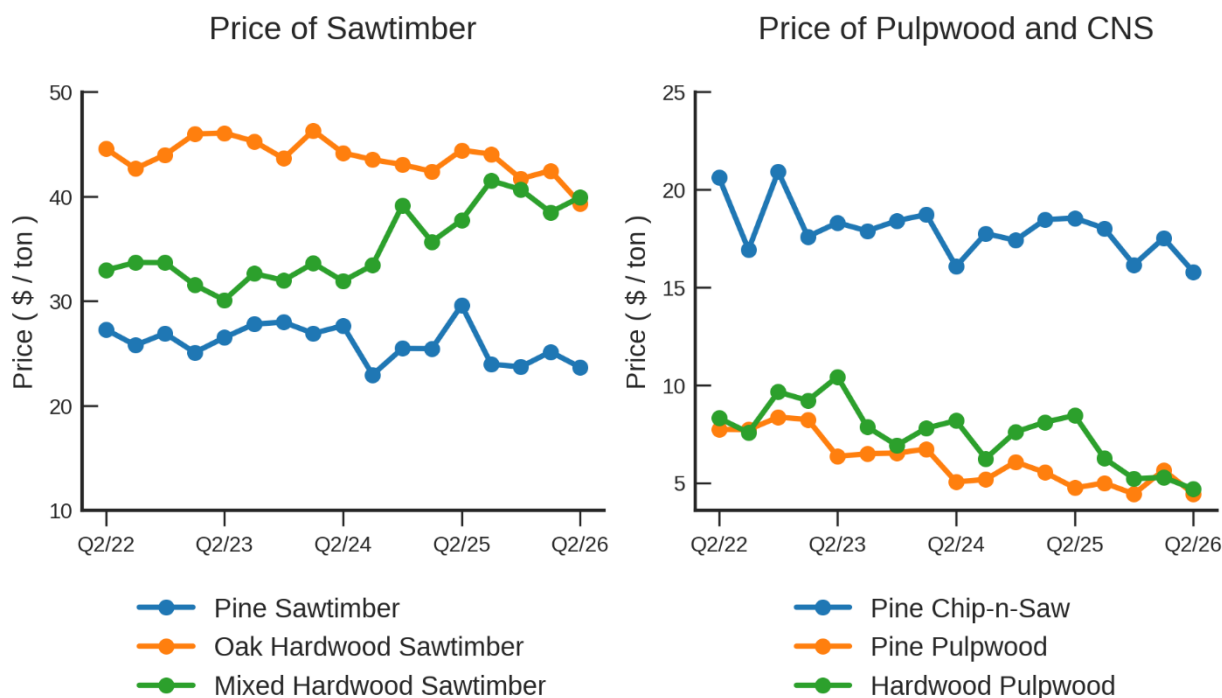


Figure 1 Quarter 2 timber price comparison by year.

New World Screwworm: What Louisiana Hunters and Landowners Should Know

Luke Stamper, PhD, Extension Wildlife Specialist, LSU AgCenter, & Dr. Kim Tolson, Professor Emerita, University of Louisiana Monroe

The New World screwworm (NWS) is a parasitic fly (Figure 1.) whose larvae, or maggots, feed on the living tissue of warm-blooded animals. Historically, it caused significant losses among livestock and wildlife across the southern United States. Some early accounts from South Texas reported severe losses of white-tailed deer fawns during years with mild winters.

Beginning in the 1950s, the United States used the sterile insect technique to control NWS. This method releases sterile male flies that mate with wild females, resulting in unfertilized eggs and eventual population collapse. The program eliminated NWS from the United States by 1966.

Occasional introductions have occurred since eradication. During a 2016 outbreak in the Florida Keys, NWS caused substantial mortality among endangered Florida Key deer, particularly adult males with rut-related wounds. Intensive control efforts eventually eliminated the outbreak, but an estimated 15% of the Key deer population was lost. In June 2026, NWS again emerged as a concern in the United States following confirmed cases in Texas and New Mexico.



Figure 2. NWS Fly, Photo by USDA

What Is New World Screwworm?

New World screwworm is the larval stage of the fly, *Cochliomyia hominivorax*. Unlike most fly larvae that consume dead or decaying material, NWS larvae use sharp mouth hooks to tear into healthy tissue. Untreated infestations can enlarge rapidly, cause severe tissue damage, and lead to death. Adult NWS flies resemble several common blowflies, including the Secondary screwworm, whose larvae normally feed on decaying tissue. Because both species can occur in the same wound and are difficult to distinguish, identification should be performed by a trained professional. Female NWS flies deposit batches of eggs along the edges of wounds or near body openings. The eggs may hatch within 12 to 24 hours. Larvae feed head-down in the wound for approximately five to seven days before dropping to the soil to pupate. Under warm, humid conditions, the entire life cycle may be completed in about three weeks. Cold temperatures slow development and help restrict the fly's geographic range.

Why Are White-Tailed Deer Vulnerable?

White-tailed deer frequently experience wounds that can attract egg-laying flies. Potential infestation sites include injuries from rut-related fighting, damaged velvet, antler shedding, vehicle collisions, predators, fences, dense vegetation, ticks, and other sources of trauma. Adult bucks may face increased risk during the rut because fighting can produce punctures, facial

injuries, and open wounds around the head and neck. Antler shedding also temporarily exposes vascular tissue at the pedicle. During spring and summer, damaged velvet can create bleeding wounds. Newborn fawns may be vulnerable at the umbilicus, where moist, healing tissue remains after the umbilical cord separates. Even small abrasions or tick-associated openings may provide suitable sites for infestation when NWS flies are present. In contrast, not every larva found on a deer is NWS. For example, nasal bots commonly occur in deer nasal passages and should not be mistaken for screwworms.

How Can You Help?

Hunters and landowners can support surveillance through trail-camera monitoring, careful observation with binoculars or spotting scopes, and post-harvest inspection. Watch for:

- Maggots on live or recently dead animals
- Open, wet, bloody, draining, or expanding wounds
- Wounds around the head, neck, antler bases, eyes, nose, mouth, genital region, or a fawn's navel
- Swollen faces or injuries associated with sparring
- Lethargy, isolation, head shaking, excessive licking, or unusual behavior

If you observe a live animal with a suspicious wound containing maggots, do not attempt to capture, handle, or treat it. From a safe distance, record the date, location, species, visible signs, and photographs if possible. Promptly contact your local LSU AgCenter Extension office, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries office, or Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry office. Louisiana's hunters and landowners are valuable eyes in the field. Early recognition and rapid reporting can help protect wildlife, livestock, pets, and people from this serious parasitic threat.

Feral Hogs: A Growing Invasive Problem for Louisiana

Robbie Hutchins, Area Forestry and Wildlife Agent, LSU AgCenter

Feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) (Figure 2.) have become one of the most serious wildlife management challenges in Louisiana. Found in all 64 parishes, the population of feral hogs have a wide range of negative impacts on agriculture, forestry, wildlife, horticulture, homeowners, and water resources across the state.

Feral hogs are classified as an invasive exotic species. An invasive exotic species is any non-native species of plant, animal, or organism introduced, either deliberately or accidentally, into an ecosystem, by humans or natural means, that causes harm to that ecosystem. It may surprise some people that feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) are not native to the United States. Feral hogs, also known as pigs or swine, were deliberately introduced into the United States in the 1500s by European explorers for meat production and sport hunting. Louisiana's feral hog population consists of domestic swine that escaped, released European wild boars, or domestic and European cross breeds

Three words accurately describe the biology of feral hogs. The first word is adaptable. Feral hogs are highly adaptable in terms of habitat. Feral hogs live in all ecoregions of Louisiana and thrive in forests, marshes, wetlands, agricultural fields, and even urban and suburban areas. Feral hogs are also adaptable in terms of food sources. They are opportunistic omnivores and easily adapt their feeding habits to take advantage of any available food source readily feeding on crops, acorns, roots, insects, small animals, white-tailed deer, and even domestic livestock.



Figure 3 Photo of Feral Hogs by Olivia McClure

The second word that accurately describes feral hog biology is reproduction. Females, known as sows, begin reproducing at a young age. Females often produce two litters per year with an average of six to eight piglets per litter. This high reproductive rate means populations will increase rapidly in a relatively short period of time if not aggressively managed. To put this in perspective, you must remove 70% of the feral hogs on a property each year just to keep the population at baseline levels.

The third word that accurately describes feral hog biology is difficult. They are highly intelligent, very sensitive to pressure, have a highly refined sense of smell, are primarily crepuscular and nocturnal, have few natural predators, and often live with other hogs in large groups known as sounders. The combination of these factors makes feral hog populations almost impossible for landowners and wildlife managers to control without spending an incredible amount of time and money.

This combination of factors that make up feral hog biology has allowed Louisiana's feral hog populations to increase dramatically over the past several decades. The LSU AgCenter estimates that there are more than 750,000 feral hogs in Louisiana in 2026. Nationwide, the population and range of feral hogs is also growing. In 2026, APHIS estimated the U.S. population to be greater than 6 million feral hogs located in all or parts of 29 different States.

As an invasive exotic species, feral hogs do a significant amount of economic, ecological, and biological damage in Louisiana. Damage is another word that can be used to describe feral hogs. Feral hogs are so destructive they are on the list of the most damaging invasive species in the world.

Feral hogs cause significant economic losses each year in Louisiana. The LSU AgCenter estimates that feral hogs cause about **\$91 million in economic damage each year** to traditional row crop agricultural lands. Amazingly, this figure does not include feral hog damage to forest land, pastures, lawns, public parks, and golf courses. Feral hogs cause economic damage by rooting and feeding on crops such as corn and rice, destroying tree seedlings and forest regeneration, damaging pastures used for hay and livestock production, breaking fences, destroying levees and irrigation structures, and destroying farm and forest roads.

Feral hogs also cause serious environmental damage. Their rooting and wallowing behavior disturbs soil, uproots vegetation, and increases erosion. A feral hog can disturb 6.5 ft² per minute by their rooting activity. These disturbances can reduce native plant populations, degrade wildlife habitat, promote the spread of invasive plant species, encourage erosion, and damage wetlands and water quality. Feral hogs also compete with native wildlife for food and habitat, and they often prey on ground-nesting birds, reptiles, and small mammals.

Feral hogs also cause biological damage because they can carry diseases that affect livestock, wildlife, pets, and people. Common diseases carried by feral hogs include brucellosis and pseudorabies. Feral hogs also contaminate streams and water sources with *E. coli*, salmonellosis, leptospirosis, through their feces making the water unsafe for human and wildlife contact.

Because of the damage caused by feral hogs, controlling feral hogs is a high priority for landowners and land managers. However, as previously discussed feral hog control is extremely difficult because of their biology. There is no single solution for effective feral hog control. Instead, experts recommend an integrated approach that combines multiple strategies. Common control methods include trapping, snares, shooting, hunting using specialized dogs, hunting using aircraft, exclusion fencing, chemical control and baiting, and habitat management.

Because sounders of hogs move across property boundaries, larger coordinated efforts between adjoining landowners have been shown to reduce populations more effectively than the efforts of an individual landowner. Using a wide variety of control methods that adapt and change as hog populations change is also more effective than continued long-term use of a single control method or location. Successful control programs focus on long-term management rather than short-term removal efforts.

A landowner's action or inaction will greatly influence the effectiveness of their feral hog control program. To ensure success landowners should continuously monitor properties for any signs of hog activity including rooting, wallows, and tracks. Once their presence is detected, landowners should immediately implement applicable control measures while hog populations are small and more manageable.

Feral hogs are a serious and growing problem in Louisiana. Their ability to reproduce quickly, adapt to different environments, and cause widespread damage makes them one of the most challenging invasive species facing landowners today. While complete eradication is unlikely in most areas, consistent and coordinated management can reduce damage and protect valuable agricultural and natural resources.

Contact your local LSU AgCenter office for more detailed information about feral hogs and their control.

Protecting Your Timberland Before and After a Hurricane: A guide for Louisiana forest landowners

Jinggang Guo, PhD, Forest Economist, LSU AgCenter

Hurricanes can damage timber in a few hours, but much of the financial loss comes later. Roads may be blocked, crews and trucks may be hard to find, mills may limit what they take, and many landowners may try to sell damaged wood at once. No forest can be made hurricane-proof, but planning ahead can reduce avoidable losses.

Louisiana has about 15 million acres of forest, close to half the state's land area, and most of it is privately owned. After Hurricane Laura in 2020, the LSU AgCenter's preliminary estimate was about 758,000 acres damaged and about \$1.1 billion in losses to the state's timber industry. A statewide number will not tell you what happens on your tract, but it shows why planning matters.

Manage each stand according to its site

Wind damage varies over short distances. Soil moisture, drainage, tree height and shape, species, stand edges, and recent work in the woods all affect the outcome. Because these interact, be careful with simple rules that treat every tract the same.

Longleaf pine has held up better than loblolly in some Gulf Coast research. In one long-term Mississippi planting with the three species side by side, 7% of the longleaf died after Hurricane Katrina, compared with 14% of slash pine and 26% of loblolly. Only the longleaf and loblolly difference was statistically significant, and this was a single planted stand. Longleaf is worth considering on suitable sites, but it is not the best choice everywhere. Soils, drainage, markets, your goals, and whether you can burn matter too, and loblolly remains sound on many sites.

Thinning may help trees grow wider trunks and healthier crowns, but it also changes how exposed they are to wind. Older, taller stands may hold more value and take more wind pressure, but age alone is not a reason to harvest. For both, use a forester's recommendation for that stand rather than a fixed schedule, and weigh stand condition, markets, your goals, taxes, and access. Do not start work an approaching storm could keep you from finishing safely.

Keep records that show what you owned

A current timber inventory documents species, volume, products, conditions, and rough value before a storm. Keep it with the management plan, maps, deeds, planting and treatment costs, past timber-sale records, insurance papers, and dated photographs. Store copies off the property and in a secure digital location. Ask your forester how often to update it; the need varies by stand age and activity.

Timber basis, roughly what you have invested in the timber for tax purposes, can limit a federal casualty-loss deduction. The deduction is generally not damaged tons times a timber price. A tax professional who knows timber, working with a forester, can help rebuild your records and tell you what documents you need.

Prepare before a storm is in the forecast

Get to know a consulting forester, your local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) office, reputable loggers, and likely buyers before hurricane season. They cannot guarantee a crew or mill will be free, but they make it easier to get reliable information when many landowners need help at once.

The Emergency Forest Restoration Program, run by FSA, may cover up to 75% of the cost of approved restoration work on non-industrial private forest land, with a limit of \$500,000 per person or legal entity per disaster. It pays for approved restoration costs, not lost market value, and it reimburses you after the work is finished rather than paying up front. Eligibility, sign-up periods, approved practices, and funding vary, so contact FSA before starting work you may want to include in an application.

Insurance terms vary too. A policy may exclude certain causes of loss or require specific records and notice, so read your own policy rather than a general description. Timber-sale contracts should say when ownership and risk pass to the buyer, how payment is made, and what happens if a storm interrupts the sale. A lump-sum sale does not move every hurricane risk to the buyer unless the contract says so.

A short readiness check

- ☐ A forester, FSA office, insurer, and other key contacts are identified.
- ☐ Inventory, management plan, maps, and dated photographs are reasonably current.
- ☐ Tax, ownership, cost, insurance, and timber-sale records are stored safely.
- ☐ Roads, gates, culverts, bridges, and stream crossings are inspected and maintained.
- ☐ Mature or high-value stands are reviewed, without assuming harvest is necessary.

- ☐ Another trusted person knows who may act if you cannot reach the property.

When a hurricane is approaching

People and public safety come first. Follow local emergency instructions and stop woods work early enough for crews and equipment to get out safely. Back up records and contact lists. Secure equipment, fuel, and chemicals only if there is time to do it safely. Avoid last-minute sales or field work driven only by the forecast.

After the storm, document before acting

Do not go onto the property until access is safe. Storm-damaged woods may have downed power lines, washed-out roads, hanging limbs, split trunks, loosened roots, and bent trees under pressure. Chainsaw work in damaged timber is especially dangerous and should be left to trained people with the right equipment.

When it is safe, photograph and map the damage before cleanup. Record the date, stand, type of damage, road condition, and any emergency work. Contact your forester, insurer, and FSA promptly, and write down what you are told. Do not start work you expect a program to pay for until you understand the approval requirements.

A forester should look at both damaged and surviving trees and weigh usable products, the condition of what is left, access, logging safety, likely buyers, and harvesting cost. A drive-by estimate can miss root injury, hidden cracks, crown loss, and unstable stand edges.

Treat salvage as loss reduction

Damaged timber loses value as it stains, dries, decays, or attracts insects, but how long it stays usable depends on species, product, weather, root condition, access, and what mills require. Call buyers early to learn what they are taking. Blue stain in pine is a color change rather than decay and has little effect on strength, though it can still affect grade or whether a buyer takes the wood. Decay, cracking, insects, and hidden storm cracks are separate concerns.

Market limits can matter as much as the condition of the wood, because many owners sell at once while logging and mill capacity stay limited. A study of Hurricane Michael found that prices in the hardest-hit areas fell for several products, with the largest drops in hardwood sawtimber, while a few products rose in less affected areas as rebuilding demand picked up. That shows serious disruption is possible, but it is not a forecast for the next Louisiana storm.

Storm logging is usually slower, more dangerous, and more expensive than a normal harvest. Small tracts, scattered damage, poor access, and long hauls may make a sale impractical. Salvage can recover part of the loss and ready the site for recovery, but it should not be expected to restore full pre-storm value.

Use care in any timber sale

A forester can estimate the damaged timber, contact buyers, compare offers, and review the terms. A written contract should cover boundaries, products, payment, time allowed, road responsibilities, wet-weather limits, liability, treatment of surviving trees, and cleanup. Check the buyer's and logger's references and insurance. Keep bids, load records, mill tickets, settlement statements, receipts, and photographs.

No single lean angle, damage percentage, or deadline fits every stand, and damage to part of a stand does not mean every tree should come out. Some stands may stay productive; others have too little sound timber left to manage efficiently. Have a forester compare partial salvage, final harvest, rehabilitation, and replanting before work begins.

Plan recovery for the site and the owner

After salvage decisions, repair access and erosion problems using Louisiana forestry best management practices, and keep watching the surviving trees. If you replant, choose species and stocking based on soils, drainage, markets, how much management you can do, and your goals. Longleaf may suit some sites, but it generally needs good planting, competition control, and prescribed fire.

Remember. You cannot control the storm track. You can keep useful records, know who to call, put safety first, get a careful assessment afterward, and avoid rushed sales and unsupported assumptions. These steps will not prevent every loss, but they support better decisions before and after a hurricane

Note. This publication provides general education, not site-specific forestry, legal, tax, insurance, or financial advice. Program rules, markets, and policy terms can change. Confirm current information with a qualified forester, your local FSA office, and appropriate professional advisers.

Contact your area agent/specialist for more information

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