

Hartnett Products

We wish to offer support to the Forestry Bill 2020. We are a small family business in Co Cork and our products are all forestry and wood related. Our saws and log splitters are bought and used by forestry owners throughout Ireland to process firewood - a renewable fuel source that has the potential to eliminate coal use in Ireland. The current forestry bill is badly needed in order to give proper structure around the forestry industry in Ireland. The farming of trees is essential. Yes, there needs to be more natural forests planted too where trees are allowed to grow forever and give us vital oxygen while absorbing our CO₂. But we also need to have well planned farmed forests that we can harvest for a multitude of uses. In the last couple of years we've seen such a great move away from everyday plastic products to wood based ones (plastic forks and knives in takeaways are now replaced with wooden ones for example; skyscrapers are now being built with wood alone eliminating the use of concrete). This is wonderful progress and so much better for our environment. But in order to produce wood products we need to farm trees. These farms of trees will be harvested just like any other crop is harvested and replanted again and again. Wild natural forests can also be planted that will not be for harvesting and will be completely for wildlife, nature, recreation and the environment. But the two forms of forests can co-exist.

Sawmill closures would be devastating for the Irish economy. A country with perfect tree growing conditions having to import wood products and timber! Now that would be crazy.

Wood is such a versatile product. Not only does it have a multitude of uses in everyday life, it also provides us with one of humankind's most basic needs, heat.

Air, water, earth and fire – the four elements of nature regarded as essential for human life. Fire gives us natural heat and wood is a natural and renewable fuel. By using wood you stay in touch with nature and learn to appreciate your energy use. There is such satisfaction from going out and creating your own fuel, enjoying the heat from that fuel and renewing that fuel by planting a replacement tree. Economically, when we use firewood our money stays local. For example, when John Hartnett cuts down his tree in Co Cork, he seasons it in Co Cork and burns it in his fire in Co Cork and he re-plants a new tree in its place in Co Cork. All very local. Otherwise, John Hartnett is buying oil, gas or coal to heat his home and his money is heading off overseas to oil, gas and coal producing countries. Isn't it wonderful that we have our own renewable source of heat growing here in the form of trees that we can use without having to import fuel. Using more wood is definitely the way forward for improving our fuel security. In fact, many people have completely eliminated their use of coal and drastically reduced their home heating oil/gas use by burning only firewood.

Environmentally, heating your home with firewood does release carbon dioxide but because, during its lifetime, the tree has absorbed carbon dioxide from the air, when it is burned it simply returns that carbon dioxide back into the atmosphere. So it can be regarded as carbon neutral – what it takes in while living cancels out what it emits when it's burned. And the great thing is, once you cut down your tree, you can re-plant a new one to replace it – renewable energy. Good karma!! When logs are freshly cut, the moisture content is said to be 50% and over, so it's all about reducing the moisture over time and with the right conditions. Firewood at 20% moisture content produces less than 33% of the emissions of wood fuel at 30% moisture content in older stoves, while in modern Eco-Design stoves the emission levels are reduced by almost 90%. According to SEAI figures wood fuels produce as little as 3.2g CO₂ per MJ heat, comparing this to gas which produces 56.9g, kerosene which produces 73.3g and heat pumps today which produce anything from 19g to 52g depending on the amount of wind on the

electrical system. No other heating source can produce heat on demand with such a minimal impact on CO2 emissions.

Please take the above points into account and make sure the Forestry Bill is passed.