



NORTHERN HARDWOOD NOTES

Woody Browse Production

Sugar maple has great potential as wildlife food, especially as good winter fare for deer in the northern Lake States. Deer will diligently seek out sugar maple browse in the hardwood forests along the edges of a winter yard or in isolated islands of upland forest within a yard.

The amount of available browse produced depends on the species available and the condition of the stand. In upland northern hardwoods, uncut pole stands with 100 to 120 square feet of basal area have very little browse, only about 1 pound per acre (see table). In contrast, open upland stands with vigorous regeneration produce the most. A 7-year-old clearcut strip, for example, can have up to 122 pounds per acre.

Dry weight of buds and twigs and available browse per acre, and percent sugar maple for different stand conditions

Stand condition	Dry weight		Sugar maple Percent
	Twigs and buds (total) ---- Lbs/acre	Available browse' ----	
Northern Hardwoods			
Pole stands 40-60 years old			
1. Uncut (100-120 sq ft)	2-5	Upto 1	65
2. Selection (75 sq ft)			
1 year after cut	20-25	5-6	75
3 years after cut	66-120	16-30	89
3. Clear-cut strips			
7 years after cut	490	122	
12 years after cut	160	40	55
Mature Stands			
1. Shelterwood (80 sq ft)			
4 years after cut	250	62	81
5 years after cut	375	94	97
Mixed Conifer-Hardwood Swamp			
1. Uncut	38	9	0-1
2. Shelterwood			
4 years after cut	100	25	2-3
3. Clear-cut strips			
4 years after cut	70	17	2-3

'About 25 percent of the weight of all buds and twigs are available for browse.

Extremes are not as great in mixed conifer and hardwood swamp forest. Uncut conifer and swamp stands produce more browse than uncut stands of upland hardwoods but clearcut strips produce less than clearcut upland hardwoods.

Try to schedule timber cutting during the winter in areas where deer use is heavy. Tree crowns provide more browse than reproduction and can reduce the feeding pressure on understory vegetation.

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