

CAT IRON AT WORK

Greg Coverley – Pine Hauliers Cat 541 Harvester

A family owned business that's been operating since 1970, Pine Hauliers recently took delivery of a Cat 541 harvester.

Replacing an excavator based machine, the Cat 541 is clear felling 36-year-old pine up to 50 cm diameter at Myalup north of Bunbury, WA.

"This has more horsepower and more hydraulic power," director, Greg Coverley said. "And that's what we were looking for, as well as lift capacities and coolant temperatures.

"We continually evaluate products to make sure we keep our finger on the pulse," he said. "We've had lots of Cat equipment – graders, skidders and a lot of our mechanics grew up on Cat so it's been good for us.

"The 541 is a lot more powerful machine than the excavator and handles the tree sizes a lot better," Greg said.

"It's also a better machine to operate and the computer systems gives much better control."



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Don Burmas - Softwood Logging Services - Cat 511 Harvester and Cat 545C Wheel Skidder

When Softwood Logging came to choosing a new harvester. Director Don Burmas chose a Cat 511 for one very good reason – fuel economy.

"It goes back to the price of fuel and we've got to try and keep our costs down," Don said.

With Tigercat's already in the field, Softwood needed economy and performance. "We need the hydraulic output but are also trying to get a fuel saving – that was our objective in looking at the Cat.

"The horsepower at the end of the stick comes up every bit as good as the others and might even be a little bit more ... there was only a few litres difference in our tests," he said.

A few litres saved per hour "makes a big difference when you're looking at 10,000 hours of fuel," Don noted.

Cat's 500 series harvesters have "been built for exactly what we are doing – they have plenty of horsepower, plenty of hydraulic



Michael Mangan – Michael Mangan Logging – Cat 521 Harvester

Harvesting radiata pine in steep plantation forest near Oberon, NSW, Michael Mangan said just one thing was important to him with his new Cat 521 Harvester – reliability.

"That's it," he said, "when we look at a machine it is the reliability we are looking at."

With a team of 50 harvesting and hauling

power and we can run the harvester head at full capacity achieving maximum speed," Don explained.

Fitted with an electronic, load sensing Waratah 622B head, the Cat 511 is delivering power on demand. "That's compared to cranking up the pumps and belting down oil and wasting energy – when all you're really doing is creating heat and burning more fuel," Don said.

Softwood Logging also took advantage of the good fuel numbers presented by a Cat 545C skidder.

Replacing two Timberjacks and supplying a whole tree chipper, a competitive brand comparison was "splitting hairs" according to Don, "but the bottom line with the Cat was fuel efficiency again."

With a new blue gum felling contract beginning in April, Softwood has also ordered another 545C and a 511 feller buncher.

"We've always got to look at availability and we need machines that have the maximum availability possible," Don said.

"When we look at a machine it is the reliability we are looking at."

timber, Michael has tried other brands but is impressed with his four-month-old Cat.

Operating 10-hour days harvesting radiata to 600mm, the Cat 521 works in tandem with a forwarder on slopes reaching 22 degrees. Together with the service support from NSW dealer, Westrac, Cat has never let him down.

Michael also enjoyed good service from an earlier model Cat machine.

"We've got one that is still going well after two years of service," he said.



Kelly Gerke – Sweetwater Pty Ltd Cat 320C FM

With about 30 Cat machines in the fleet, Tasmanian plantation site preparation experts, Sweetwater Pty Ltd, have recently begun trialling a Cat 320CFM in the specialised work.

Director, Kelly Gerke, said the 320CFM, working alongside the company's 14 strong Cat 322CL excavator fleet, offered high ground clearance allowing faster travel around second-generation plantation sites.

"We thought we'd give the 320CFM a try in spot cultivating, where we clear, rip and mound in one pass," Kelly explained.

Fitted with a multiple tine rake and ripper head, one machine establishes about a hectare, or 1100 planting beds a day, clocking about 1500 – 2000 hours per annum.

"I thought I'd see if it is quicker than a 322CL – I've obviously dropped down a size machine

but I'll mix and match the sites they go onto and keep the 22 tonners on the heavier sites."

"The 320CFM is no wider than a 322CL so I think there is a place for them. We can get across the ground quicker without getting knotted up on the stumps," he said.

"I've passed the machine around six operators to see what they think and they are generally very happy," Kelly said. "Cat is following this with interest and working with me to see how it goes."



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