

Quality Report:

Survey of UK Pellet & Briquette Production

Introduction

The survey of UK pellet & briquette production (or pellet survey) is one of a series of annual surveys and data requests used to produce statistics on the UK timber industry. The survey is run by Forest Research (in association with the Forest Service) to collect data from wood pellet and briquette manufacturers in the UK.

The survey, introduced for the collection of 2009 data, comprises a short questionnaire that is sent to around 20 pellet mills.

The list of pellet mills covered by the survey is maintained by Forest Research and is updated regularly, following consultations with the Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics and others, to add new companies and remove those that do not manufacture pellets.

Relevance

The pellet survey requests data annually from around 20 companies in the UK that are believed to produce wood pellets or briquettes. It asks for data relating to the most recent calendar year on the quantity of pellets produced, the source of fibres used, the origin of wood used and product markets for pellets, and (since 2014) certification.

The main uses of the pellet survey include:

- Trends in the volume of pellets & briquettes produced in the UK are monitored by the Forestry Commission, the UK timber and woodfuel industries and others;
- Data on UK pellet production are provided to international organisations (Eurostat, UNECE, FAO and others) as part of the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire (covering wood production and trade).

The Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics (EGTTS), comprising representatives from the UK timber industry, the Forestry Commission, Natural Resources Wales and Forest Service are consulted regularly to ensure that UK wood production and trade statistics remain relevant to users (details on the EGTTS can be found at www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-5rabj3).

Accuracy

As the survey approaches all relevant businesses, there are no sampling errors. There are, however, a number of non-sampling errors associated with this survey, related to errors of coverage, measurement, processing and non-response.

Unit response rate

The overall response rate to the survey of UK pellet and briquette production in 2016 was 28% (i.e. 5 of the 18 pellet mills approached). The weighted response rate (taking account of the estimated pellet & briquette production by each pellet mill covered by the survey) was 68%.

Key item response rates

All of the 4 respondents provided data for total pellet & briquette production.

Total contribution to key items from imputed values

In compiling results from the pellet survey, values are imputed to estimate for non-response (either to specific questions or to the entire survey). In 2016, values were imputed using responses to previous surveys or using expert advice.

32% of the estimated total of 329 thousand tonnes of pellets and briquettes produced in the UK in 2016 was imputed.

Editing rate for key items

The responses received to the survey are checked to ensure that the values provided to questions are consistent with each other and with previous responses from the same company. Where there are clear inconsistencies that cannot be explained, values are revised to a more realistic level.

The editing rate for key items in the 2016 pellet survey was 0%.

Timeliness and punctuality

Provisional results from the survey of UK pellet & briquette production are published in UK *Wood Production and Trade: provisional figures* in mid-May, 4.5 months after the end of the reference period (calendar year).

Final results are published in *Forestry Statistics* at end September, 9 months after the end of the reference period (calendar year).

Accessibility and clarity

The annual *Forestry Statistics* publication, available on the Forestry Commission website at www.forestry.gov.uk/statistics provides the most comprehensive results from the pellet survey, including background information on the data collected, response rates, methodology, revisions and reporting. *Forestry Statistics* is published in line with the Forestry Commission's website accessibility statement.

Excel and PDF versions of all tables in UK Wood Production and Trade: provisional figures and Forestry Statistics are available to download from the Forestry Commission website.

Comparability

The survey of UK pellet & briquette production is a relatively new survey, run for the first time in 2010 to collect data for the year ending December 2009.

The survey was refined for the collection of 2010 data, in response to consultation with the Expert Group on Timber and Trade Statistics and suggestions/issues raised by users and data providers, to collect additional detail on source of fibres used.

Coherence

There are no other known sources of data on UK pellet and briquette production, although estimates of pellet production in Scotland are provided in the annual Woodfuel Demand and Usage in Scotland reports produced by Forestry Commission Scotland.

Revisions

The Forestry Commission's Revisions Policy outlines our general approach to revisions.

The statistics for pellet and briquette production are subject to annual revision, as new information becomes available.

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Updated September 2017