

Value-adding in Forestry at the Farm and Community Level

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ABSTRACT

Subsistence farmers have long recognized the importance of trees as a source of many goods, services and amenities. However, central to tree growing activities should be the development of opportunities for farmers to generate and improve their income by value adding. A variety of value-adding activities are undertaken in small-scale forestry in Leyte. This includes production of fuelwood, charcoal, lumber, furniture and novelty items. By increasing forestry revenue, value-adding encourages smallholders to plant more trees. Community forestry, as an alternative to individually owned forestry, allows smallholders to work together to increase productivity and creates opportunities for value adding. Since smallholders lack resources and other needed technical knowledge, the role of support organizations such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) are crucial for value-adding. These agencies can help smallholders in the processing of papers to make the venture legal and in establishing market linkage for the product that they will produce.

Keywords: value-adding; smallholder forestry; product diversification; fuelwood; cooperatives.