

Unit 5. Non-timber forest products

“Peisved” or Firewood in Norway



Description

Firewood is almost an obsession in Norway! Many Norwegians have wood fires to make their homes “køsilig” (cozy) in winter. And many still access the forests to cut their own wood. Furthermore, the best type of wood, the best way to stack that wood to dry and the best way to lay a fire and light it remains contemporary topics of debate!

In rural Norway, cutting and selling firewood offers a useful extra income to small farmers and landowners and can provide a strong link between urban consumers and rural producers.



Goals

Although firewood serves a utilitarian purpose (to heat houses), the harvesting, preparing, transporting and burning of firewood provides near-universal access to this ancient and atavistic method of heating. Further, in times of high energy prices (as Norwegians are currently experiencing) firewood offers a way to economize whilst staying warm.

Activities

Wood is harvested mostly on private forest land, although it also comes from land clearing for construction, and from farm woodlots as well. As a result, nearly, every tree is owned by someone. That said, the level of firewood produced each year suggests that permissions are obtainable and worth the effort.

Firewood plays such an important part in Norwegian life that NRK, the national TV broadcaster made a special 12 hour long Slow TV episode focusing on Firewood, called *HelVed!* You can link to it here:

<https://tv.nrk.no/serie/nasjonal-vedkveld/2013/DVNR30003513>



Impact

According to figures from Statistics Norway (SSB), 1.2 million Norwegian households heat with wood. This is in a country with just over 5 million in population. They burned **1.1 million tonnes** of firewood in 2016 that provided 5.34 TWh of direct heat.