

# White Pine Disease Study Underway

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*by Sarah Smith, UNH Cooperative Extension Forest Industry Specialist*

Caliciopsis is a fungus that affects eastern white pine trees by forming cankerous growths which pitch, or cause sap flow, along the tree stem. Little is known about the disease or its effect on trees, tree health and lumber quality. “What we do know is that the white pine trees decline and eventually die,” says Kyle Lombard, forest health expert with the NH Division of Forests and Lands.

A group of forest health and wood products specialists are conducting a study to learn more about the effects of caliciopsis on lumber quality. Sample trees have been harvested at two sites in New Hampshire from two different management treatments (thinned and unthinned). The intention is to characterize the extent of caliciopsis damage to the trees as well as to the lumber. The USDA is funding the project.

Caliciopsis research is being led by Isabel Munck, USDA Forest Service. Other cooperators include: University of Maine graduate student, Kara Costanza; Kyle Lombard, NH Division of Forests and Lands; Sarah Smith, UNH Cooperative Extension; Kirk Broders, UNH; and Jon Martin, Martin Forestry. Lumber was sawn by Professor Don Quigley at the UNH Thompson School of Applied Sciences sawmill with the assistance of Division of Forests and Lands staff: AJ Dupere, Bruce Allen, Scott Rolfe and Shaun Bresnahan. The lumber was then shipped to Maine for drying, planing and grading.

White pine is a major commercial timber species in both New Hampshire and Maine. In New Hampshire, white pine represents about 60% of what the state’s sawmills produce. In Maine, it is about 30% of total sawmill production. Caliciopsis causes pitch pockets in the lumber leading to a decrease in lumber grade and value. The study will continue into next year with the results available sometime toward the end of 2016. The following two links provide more information about caliciopsis:

- [http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000999\\_Rep1148.pdf](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000999_Rep1148.pdf)
- <http://extension.unh.edu/articles/Pine-canker-growing-concern-East>



*Isabel Munck, US Forest Service looks on as Kyle Lombard, NH Division of Forests and Lands edges a board.*

*In the background Don Quigley, UNH Thompson School, operates the sawmill.*