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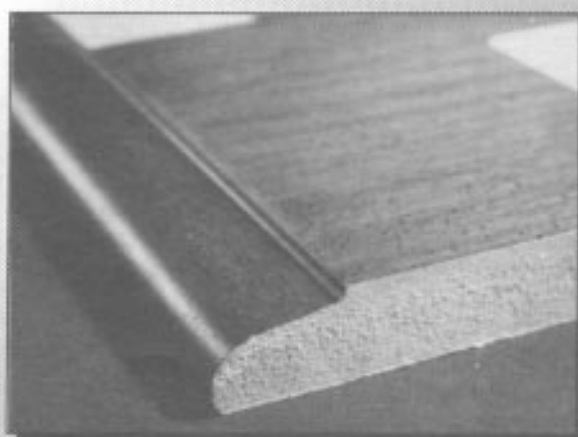
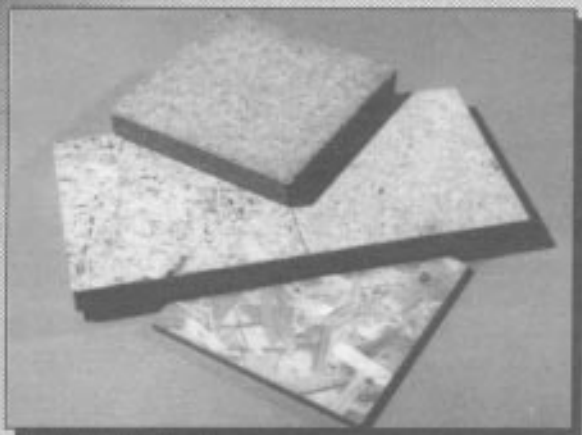
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Capacity, Production, and Manufacture of Wood-Based Panels in North America

Henry Spelter



Abstract

This report is an informational report about four wood-based panel industries: particleboard, oriented strandboard, medium density fiberboard, and Southern Pine plywood. Items highlighted are trends in manufacturing and new plant costs, industry manufacturing capacity, and location. Recent data show the greatest amount of growth taking place in the oriented strandboard sector. Modest rates of growth are occurring in the Southern Pine plywood, particleboard, and medium density fiberboard sectors.

Keywords: Particleboard, oriented strandboard, plywood, capacity, cost, prices

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Capacity, Production, and Manufacturing of Wood-Based Panels in North America

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Introduction

This is a report about the North American engineered wood-based panel industry. The purpose is to provide a reference to the location and size of plants, average manufacturing costs, and trends in the costs of building new capacity. Specifically, the report traces the development of the particleboard, oriented strandboard (OSB), medium density fiberboard (MDF), and Southern Pine plywood industries.

Since World War II, few areas in forest products have afforded more economic opportunities than the wood-based panel industry. The sometimes rapid growth attests to the potential offered by new technologies. This growth is also evidence of changes in North American forest products utilization, from a condition based on an abundance of high-quality, low-cost timber in the Pacific Northwest to one where increasing scarcity of such material has forced an adaptation to lower quality resources in the South and North.

This report provides a perspective on the manufacturing conditions in the wood-based panel industry, focusing on capacity, cost of new plants, manufacturing costs, and prices. The nature of the markets for these products is cyclical, a condition that is sometimes exacerbated by producers' overly optimistic investment responses in good economic times and by caution in bad times. The report begins by describing capacity and production trends in the four industries: particleboard, OSB, MDF, and Southern Pine plywood. This is followed by an analysis of capacity costs. The report concludes with historical trends of manufacturing costs and prices in each industry.

Background

Particleboard was the first of these four industries to develop. Its beginnings can be traced to 1947 in Seymour, Indiana, where a particleboard plant was built based upon modern standards.

Particleboard can be manufactured by extrusion pressing or by flat, mat-formed pressing. This report deals only with the flat-pressed segment, because it represents the bulk of the industry. In flat pressing, wood particles are blended with wax and urea-formaldehyde resin and then compressed in heated presses where the resin cures and solidifies the particles into panels.

The presses are either batch (single or multi-opening) or continuous. Continuous presses cost more initially but can yield processing economies. These presses have become widely adopted in Europe and elsewhere. However, most plants in North America continue to employ traditional multi-opening presses because these panels are made dense and thick, which slows down the throughput of continuous presses. It is also claimed that frequent product changeovers hinder continuous press productivity (Donnell 1991).

In most cases, the wood supply used in particleboard plants consists of residues from sawmills or other wood processing plants. A few North American plants, however, use roundwood as furnish. In recent times, wood residues have become scarce in the western United States, and several plants have experimented with alternative fibers, such as wood demolition debris and nonwood based fibers (e.g., straw) to augment fiber supplies.

An engineered wood-based panel that has many similarities to particleboard is OSB. This product is made exclusively from roundwood because of the need to control the geometry of the wood particles, which affects board properties. The particles are typically slender, thin strands that are aligned to increase strength in desired directions of the panel. Oriented strandboard is manufactured using exterior-type waterproof, boilproof phenol-formaldehyde and isocyanate resin binders. When isocyanate is used, it is typically put only in the cores of the panels. Although the process appears similar to particleboard, OSB mat forming is more complex to ensure alignment, and press pressures and temperatures are increased.

Medium density fiberboard is another engineered wood-based panel product. The main difference from the particleboard process is that the particles used in MDF are further broken down or refined. In North America, the predominant source of wood for MDF is also sawmill residues, but some plants (e.g., in New Zealand) use roundwood for better control of fiber size, thus the physical properties of the board. Another difference in the process is the ability to use woods with a wider range of density. By reducing wood to individual fibers or bundles of fibers, the importance of the initial wood density is diminished because the density of cellulose fibers is more uniform across species. Continuous pressing technology has been more widely adopted in MDF than in particleboard. The first North American MDF plant was built in 1965 in Deposit, New York. Since then, MDF production has grown steadily as end users became familiar with its superior machining qualities.

The first Southern Pine plywood plant came on line in 1964 as problems associated with processing a smaller, more resinous wood species were solved. Southern Pine plants were built at a rapid pace to take advantage of a less expensive timber resource than western Douglas-fir. With the advent of OSB, some observers expected plywood technology to become obsolete. Although many plywood plants in the West closed and few softwood plants have been built since 1982 in the United States, the Southern Pine plywood industry has continued to expand by modernizing and updating existing mills.

Plant Capacity and Production Trends

Figures 1–4 show the historical trends in capacity and production for the four panel industries. Appendix Tables 2–6 give the location and capacity of individual plants.

One main trend has been the decreasing share of capacity located in the western United States (Fig. 5). About 30 years ago, more than 50 percent of all nonplywood board capacity was located in that region. In contrast, the capacity share is currently about 20 percent.

Another notable trend is the increasing capacity of the average plant. Those built to a smaller scale in the early period of the industry have, for the most part, been retired or overhauled to bring them up to current economic standards. The average panel plant's capacity was about 60 million ft² (3/8-in. basis) in the 1960s (see Table 1 for metric conversions).¹ By the 1970s, this capacity almost doubled. Currently, the industry averages around 200 million ft² per operating plant, while new plants, mostly OSB, average about 350 million ft² per operating plant. Capacities of MDF plants tend to be somewhat smaller, and the current average is around 160 million ft² per plant (Fig. 6).

One consequence of increasing plant size is a larger wood procurement radius. Increased size offers economies of scale within the plant, but causes diseconomies in procurement because the wood has to be brought from a wider area. The procurement radius is unique to each location, but the following equation offers a general rule of thumb:

$$\text{Procurement radius (miles)} = 10 + 3.9 \times \text{square root of plant capacity (3/8-in. basis)}$$

Figure 7 shows this relationship using 13 OSB mills from which data were obtained. The effect of plant size on wood hauling costs can be estimated from the equation. For a 160 million ft² plant, the equation indicates a 59 mile radius. Based upon an average haul of 42 miles, assuming a US\$0.12 per ton-mile haul cost and US\$2 per ton turnaround cost, this mill faces an average hauling cost of US\$7.0 per green ton or approximately US\$14.1 per dried ton, which translates to US\$9.9 per thousand ft² (3/8-in. basis). In contrast, a 450 million ft² mill would have a procurement radius of 93 miles.

Table 1—SI conversion factors

English unit	Conversion factor	SI unit
cord	3.62	cubic meter (m ³) of stacked wood
foot (ft)	0.3048	meter (m)
square foot (ft ²)	0.09290	square meter (m ²)
gallon (U.S. liquid)	0.004	cubic meter (m ³)
inch (in.)	25.4	millimeter (mm)
mile (international)	1.609	kilometer (km)
pound (lb)	0.45	kilogram (kg)
ton	907.2	kilogram (kg)

¹Note that particleboard and MDF are generally measured on a 3/4-in. basis but have been converted to 3/8-in. in this report for consistency in comparison.

Assuming an average haul of 65 miles, this operation's hauling costs would be US\$9.8 per green ton, US\$19.6 per dried ton, and US\$13.7 per thousand ft². The larger mill faces a penalty of US\$3.8 per million ft² of product.²

There has been significant processing changes in manufacturing these products. In the case of OSB, faster press times have increased plant efficiency. This is evident from the growing spread between rated capacities and what can be inferred from actual press sizes. Figure 8 depicts the difference between announced and standard capacities calculated from each mill's individual press and from an arbitrarily chosen press cycle of 5.25 min (for 7/16-in. panels). This comparison shows that initial plant capacity in most cases was below the standard, indicating that press cycles, on the average, were more than 5.25 min long. For the past 30 or so mills that were built, rated capacities have generally exceeded the standard, indicating that cycle times are now less than 5.25 min. In fact, OSB press cycles are now around 3 min, including loading/unloading time of 45 s (Lowood 1994).

Another notable change in OSB manufacturing has been the decreased use rate of resins. Initial liquid resin use rates averaged 5 percent of the panel's weight in contrast to the current average of 3.2 percent. When powdered resins were employed, the use rate ranged from 3.0 to 3.5 percent, whereas now it is less than 2 percent (Davis 1993, Morley 1986).

Capacity Costs

Capacity costs in this report are based on plant announcements and offer only a rough guide to capacity cost trends. Costs of new mills have generally increased with inflation, although economies of scale obtained from larger complexes have moderated the increase on the basis of a thousand ft² of capacity.

Based on published mill announcements, a new MDF mill will cost approximately US\$500 per thousand ft² (3/4-in. basis) of capacity, or US\$50 million for a 100 million ft² complex. This is an increase from about US\$200 per thousand ft² from the early 1970s.

New particleboard plants also cost significantly more than those placed in service in the 1970s (Fig. 9). Aside from inflation, this increase can be explained by the tendency of modern mills to be built with the capability of making laminated rather than only raw boards. One mill was recently built to run on roundwood instead of plant residues, adding

²This relationship does not necessarily hold for other panels. Hauling costs would be affected by differences in bulk density, moisture content, and loading/unloading time.

to its equipment needs. Based on plant costs from the 1970s and subsequent capital goods inflation trends, I estimate that a raw board production facility comparable to those built in the 1970s would currently cost around US\$400 per thousand ft² (3/4-in. basis) of annual capacity, or US\$40 million for a 100 million ft² plant.

Unlike MDF and particleboard costs, OSB plant costs have defied inflation trends since 1980 (Fig. 10). This may be due to economies of scale as the plants currently being installed are about twice as large as those in the late 1970s. Recent plant announcements indicate that a new OSB mill costs approximately US\$230 per thousand ft² (3/8-in. basis) of capacity or US\$80 million for a mill with an annual capacity of 350 million ft².

A plywood mill has not been built in the South since 1982. However, based on capital goods inflation trends, the estimated cost for a new plywood mill would be about US\$230 per thousand ft² (3/8-in. basis), which translates to about US\$60 million for a 260 million ft² plant (Fig. 11).

Manufacturing Costs and Profits

The hallmark of most reconstituted panel mills is high volume output of a basically undifferentiated commodity. The primary elements of manufacturing costs for these operations are wood, resin, and labor.

Wood costs per ton are given for plywood, OSB, and particleboard in Figure 12. Historically, wood costs for plywood mills have been the highest because of larger, higher quality timber requirements. Over time, technology has enabled the economic use of smaller-sized logs, but the wood used for plywood is still more expensive than for OSB.

Data in Figure 12 are not comparable because the wood for particleboard is partly dried mill residues and that for plywood and OSB is green stumpwood. Figure 13 compares wood costs on the basis of the finished product, all adjusted to a common basis of product measurement and with the value of salable residues subtracted from plywood costs. Even after subtracting the value of such residues, wood costs per unit of output for plywood are the highest among the three processes, and under recent economic conditions, about twice that of an OSB operation. However, particleboard wood costs by product are less than for OSB.

In the realm of resin costs, plywood technology has traditionally maintained an advantage (Fig. 14). Although the amount of resin use in OSB processing has declined by more than 30 percent since the mid-1970s, it is still about twice as expensive as it is for plywood. Current levels of liquid phenol-formaldehyde use (on a dry basis) for OSB

commodity grade panels average a little more than 3 percent by weight (about 45 lb for a thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis) and a little less than 2 percent (about 28 lb) if the powdered form of the resin is used. For particleboard, the use rate of urea-formaldehyde resin is about 8 percent or 140 lb for a thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis. This threefold use rate offsets a price advantage that is about 70 percent, so the total cost per thousand ft² is approximately equal between OSB and particleboard. Medium density fiberboard costs are similar to those for particleboard.

Figure 15 shows trends in labor costs. Plywood mills have made great strides in automation, but the nature of the material and process requires an increase in labor for tasks such as loading dryers and presses, laying up panels, and joining strips of veneer to make standard-sized sheets. Meanwhile, economies of scale in OSB mills have reduced labor costs.

Estimates of overall variable production costs are contained in Tables 7 to 9 in the Appendix and are summarized in Figure 16. On a per ft², 3/8-in. basis, costs ranged in 1993 from about US\$153 for plywood to US\$102 for particleboard; OSB costs were intermediate at about US\$113.

The ratio of variable production costs to market prices gives some indication of the relative profitability of these products.³ This relationship is shown in Figure 17 for plywood and OSB. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the profitability of OSB was greater than that of plywood. As a result, OSB attracted the bulk of the investment in new capacity. New plywood mill construction waned and capacity increases that occurred were mainly due to modernizing and upgrading plants. Around the mid-1980s, the profit margin of OSB and plywood came closer and capacity growth in OSB slowed. Since 1991, profitability of both panels has increased but that of OSB has gained much more as a result of the better control of the previously described costs and the narrowing of the price discount for OSB compared with plywood. As a result, a new wave of investment has been attracted to OSB with more than 4 billion ft² of new capacity expected from 1994 to 1997.

Figure 18 gives the ratio of variable production costs to market prices for plywood and particleboard. Particleboard was highly profitable in the 1960s and early 1970s, during which capacity increased sevenfold. This profitable period ended with the 1974 to 1975 recession. Profits recovered by the late 1970s, but not to the previous degree, and capacity growth slackened.

³Costs for insurance, taxes, and capital are not included; therefore, these ratios are not a true guide to overall profitability. When compared with the older plywood industry, capital costs would be greater especially for OSB and particleboard plants.

Conclusions

During the past three decades, growth of reconstituted panel manufacturing has been rapid. High profitability attracted a great deal of investment interest in the early phase of the industries, but as they matured and profit rates declined to normal levels, growth rates tended to decrease. Currently, the OSB industry is in the rapid growth phase that plywood and particleboard had previously. At the time of this report, all segments of the panel industries are having favorable economic conditions, but OSB continues to have significantly lower costs than those panels with which it competes.

References

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Appendix—Wood-Based Panel Industry Data

Tables 2 to 6 give the location and capacity of individual plants for the four panel industries: OSB, particleboard, MDF, and Southern Pine plywood. Tables 7 to 9 contain estimates of overall variable production costs for OSB, particleboard, and Southern Pine plywood.

Table 4—Canadian particleboard plant capacity—by year of construction

Plant	Region	vince	Location	Company	Initial Capac. MMSF	Cost MIL \$	Year Built	Capac. Cost \$/MSF	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978		
									+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
1	4	ON	Sturgeon F	Abitibi	20		1958		20	20														
6	4	NB	St Stephen	Flake Bd	20		1960		20	20	20	25	34	30	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	30	
4	4	QU	Lac des Iles	Sogefors	15		1960		15	15	15	40	40	40	45	45	50	55	55	55	55	52	52	
9	5	BC	Vancouver	McM-BI	21		1962		21	21	21	32	40	40	40	44	44	48	48	50	52	52		
2	4	MA	Sprague	Weldwood	12		1962		12	12	12	20	20	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20		
13	4	ON	New Liskeard	Rexwood	10		1964		10	25	25	25	25	25	25	30	30	35	35	35	35	35	35	
7	4	QU	Val d'Or	Forpan			1964																	
14	4	ON	Timmins	Mallette	42	18	1972								36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	
5	4	ON	Huntsville	Domtar			1974	429																
12	4	ON	Atikokan	Proboard			1976																	
8	4	ON	Hearst	Levesque			1976																	
3	5	BC	Grand Forks	CanPar			1976																	
10	5	BC	Smithers	Northwest P			1983																	
11	4	QU	Sayabec	Parval			1984																	
15	4	ON	Bancroft	Combiboard			1991																	
16	4	QU	Lac-Megan	Tafisa			1992																	
			TOTAL				1965		98	98	113	142	159	156	157	202	207	221	263	355	357	442	442	
			CHANGE						0	15	29	17	17	-3	1	45	5	14	42	92	2	85	85	
			Number of Mills						6	6	6	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	9	9	9	10	10
			Avg. Mill Capacity						16	19	19	28	32	31	31	34	35	37	38	39	40	40	44	44

Plant	Region	vince	Location	Company	Initial Capac. MMSF	Cost MIL \$	Year Built	Capac. Cost \$/MSF	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	
									+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
1	4	ON	Sturgeon F	Abitibi	40		1958		40	40	40	40	40	45	70	80	80	80	82	84	84	84	84
6	4	NB	St Stephen	Flake Bd	62		1960		62	62	65	67	67	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
4	4	QU	Lac des Iles	Sogefors	54		1960		54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	57	57	55	54	56	56	56
9	5	BC	Vancouver	McM-BI			1962																
2	4	MA	Sprague	Weldwood			1962																
13	4	ON	New Liskeard	Rexwood			1964		35	35	35	35	35	40	40	45	65	65	65	65	65	65	
7	4	QU	Val d'Or	Forpan			1964		85	85	85	85	120	130	140	140	140	150	155	163	170	170	
14	4	ON	Timmins	Mallette			1972		36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	38	32	30	28	28	28	
5	4	ON	Huntsville	Domtar	42	18	1974	429	42	42	45	45	45	45	45	45	50	50	75	100	100	100	
12	4	ON	Atikokan	Proboard			1976		50	50	55	70	70	70	70	70	70	70	62	62	62	62	
8	4	ON	Hearst	Levesque			1976		45	55	55	55	55	55	58	58	58	57	57	57	62	62	
3	5	BC	Grand Forks	CanPar			1976		30	30	40	40	40	42	42	45	65	65	71	83	83	83	
10	5	BC	Smithers	Northwest P			1983																
11	4	QU	Sayabec	Parval			1984																
15	4	ON	Bancroft	Combiboard			1991																
16	4	QU	Lac-Megan	Tafisa			1992																
			TOTAL				1980		479	489	510	577	707	750	787	803	828	822	786	935	1016	1016	1016
			CHANGE						29	10	21	67	130	43	37	16	25	-6	-36	149	81	0	0
			Number of Mills						10	10	10	11	13	13	13	13	13	13	12	13	13	13	13
			Avg. Mill Capacity						48	49	51	52	54	58	61	62	64	63	66	72	78	78	78

Table 7—OSB industry variable costs and prices

Year	US\$ per thousand ft ² , 3/8-in. basis						Price
	Power and fuel ^a	Labor and management ^b	Glue and wax ^c	Other costs ^d	Wood ^e	Variable costs	
1976	5	12	20	14	21	73	108
1977	5	14	17	14	22	73	116
1978	6	15	13	14	23	71	123
1979	7	16	20	16	24	83	128
1980	8	17	24	18	26	95	109
1981	10	20	25	20	28	102	120
1982	11	23	25	21	28	107	127
1983	11	22	25	21	30	108	140
1984	11	22	25	21	30	109	124
1985	11	21	25	22	31	110	135
1986	10	21	21	20	31	103	129
1987	10	20	24	21	31	106	125
1988	10	20	25	22	33	109	109
1989	10	19	27	23	34	113	147
1990	10	19	21	22	35	106	110
1991	10	18	17	22	36	103	127
1992	10	18	17	23	39	107	187
1993	10	18	18	25	42	113	192

^aElectricity based on 160 kWh per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; diesel based on 1 gal per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; Natural gas varies by region and residue generation.

^bCensus of manufactures, various years.

^cResin based on liquid used at 72 to 42 lb (dry) per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; wax based on 15 to 12 lb per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; prices are delivered to mill, obtained from suppliers and *Chemical Market Reporter*.

^dIncludes selling and administrative expenses. Costs of capital, taxes, and insurance not included.

^eBased on 0.87 to 0.72 cord per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; prices from *Timber Mart South* and various state agencies from northern United States.

Table 8—Particleboard industry variable costs and prices

Year	US\$ per thousand ft ² , 3/8-in. basis						Price
	Power and fuel ^a	Labor and management ^b	Glue and wax ^c	Other costs ^d	Wood ^e	Variable costs	
1962	2	9	6	5	7	29	52
1963	2	9	6	5	7	29	52
1964	2	9	6	5	7	29	52
1965	2	9	6	5	7	29	57
1966	2	9	6	5	8	29	51
1967	2	9	6	5	7	29	46
1968	2	10	6	5	8	30	52
1969	2	10	6	5	7	30	62
1970	2	11	7	5	7	31	48
1971	2	11	7	5	7	32	45
1972	2	12	8	5	7	35	48
1973	2	13	11	6	8	41	57
1974	3	14	16	7	9	49	58
1975	4	14	19	8	9	54	54
1976	4	16	16	8	10	54	58
1977	5	17	14	8	11	54	68
1978	6	19	15	9	12	61	110
1979	6	20	17	10	16	70	85
1980	8	22	19	12	17	78	90
1981	10	24	19	13	21	86	94
1982	11	26	19	14	22	92	98
1983	11	27	20	14	20	93	101
1984	11	27	21	14	22	95	109
1985	11	27	20	14	19	92	102
1986	10	28	19	13	19	89	107
1987	9	28	18	13	20	89	113
1988	9	28	21	14	20	92	112
1989	11	29	21	14	21	94	115
1990	11	29	20	14	21	94	108
1991	9	29	20	14	23	95	107
1992	10	29	21	14	24	98	114
1993	10	30	23	15	25	102	135

^aElectricity based on 160 kWh per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; diesel based on 1 gal per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; Natural gas varies by region and residue generation.

^bCensus of manufactures, various years.

^cResin based on liquid used at 72 to 42 lb (dry) per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; wax based on 15 to 12 lb per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; prices are delivered to mill, obtained from suppliers and *Chemical Market Reporter*.

^dIncludes selling and administrative expenses. Costs of capital, taxes, and insurance not included.

^eBased on 0.87 to 0.72 cord per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; prices from *Timber Mart South* and various state agencies from northern United States.

Table 9—Southern Pine plywood industry variable costs and prices

Year	US\$ per thousand ft ² , 3/8-in. basis							
	Power and fuel ^a	Labor and management ^b	Maintenance	Glue	Supplies	Net wood	Variable costs	Price
1964	3	13	2	3	4	16	41	54
1965	3	13	2	3	4	16	42	52
1966	3	13	2	3	4	18	44	55
1967	3	13	2	3	4	19	45	49
1968	3	14	3	3	4	20	48	65
1969	3	15	3	3	5	24	53	67
1970	3	16	3	3	5	23	53	55
1971	3	17	3	3	5	27	59	65
1972	4	18	3	3	6	32	65	91
1973	4	19	3	4	6	40	75	94
1974	5	20	4	6	6	42	82	84
1975	6	20	4	7	7	37	81	87
1976	6	21	4	7	7	46	92	116
1977	7	22	4	7	8	55	102	149
1978	7	23	5	5	8	67	116	163
1979	8	25	5	7	9	84	139	154
1980	10	26	5	9	10	75	135	158
1981	12	28	6	9	10	70	135	143
1982	14	30	6	9	11	55	124	142
1983	14	30	6	9	12	60	130	159
1984	14	31	6	9	12	57	129	150
1985	14	32	7	9	13	45	120	145
1986	12	34	7	8	14	44	118	149
1987	12	35	7	9	15	55	132	149
1988	12	34	7	10	15	56	133	141
1989	12	34	7	11	15	57	135	163
1990	12	33	7	9	15	61	136	149
1991	11	33	7	7	15	65	139	143
1992	11	33	7	8	15	75	150	167
1993	11	33	7	9	15	76	153	209

^aElectricity based on 160 kWh per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; diesel based on 1 gal per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; Natural gas varies by region and residue generation.

^bCensus of manufactures, various years.

^cResin based on liquid used at 72 to 42 lb (dry) per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; wax based on 15 to 12 lb per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; prices are delivered to mill, obtained from suppliers and *Chemical Market Reporter*.

^dIncludes selling and administrative expenses. Costs of capital, taxes, and insurance not included.

^eBased on 0.87 to 0.72 cord per thousand ft², 3/8-in. basis; prices from *Timber Mart South* and various state agencies from northern United States.

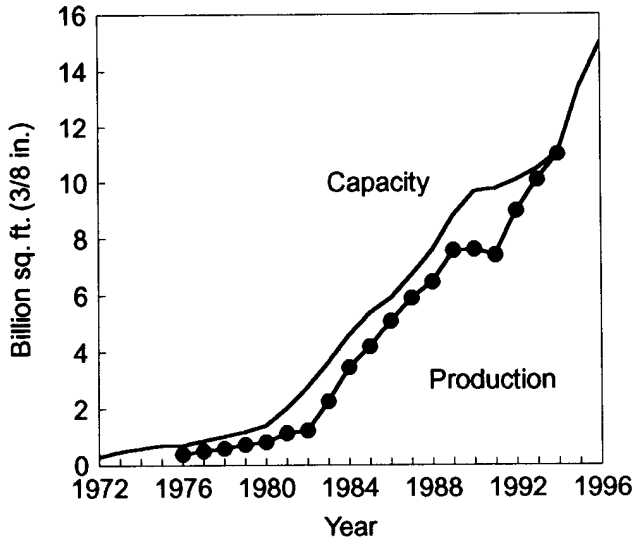


Figure 1—OSB capacity and production in North America.

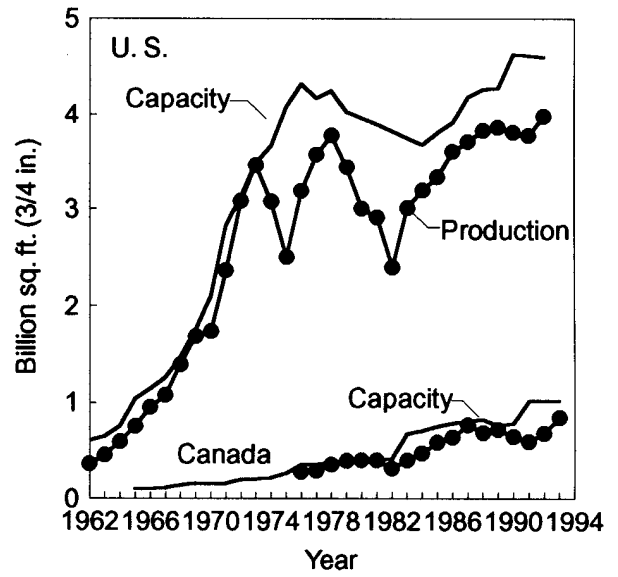


Figure 3—Particleboard and capacity and production in the United States and Canada.

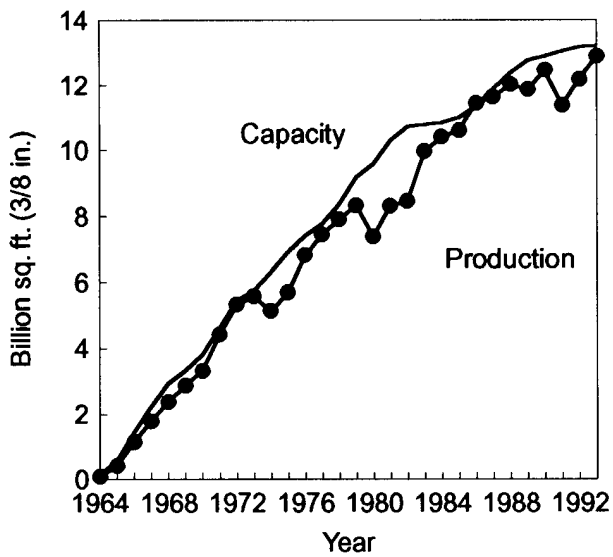


Figure 2—Southern Pine plywood capacity and production in North America.

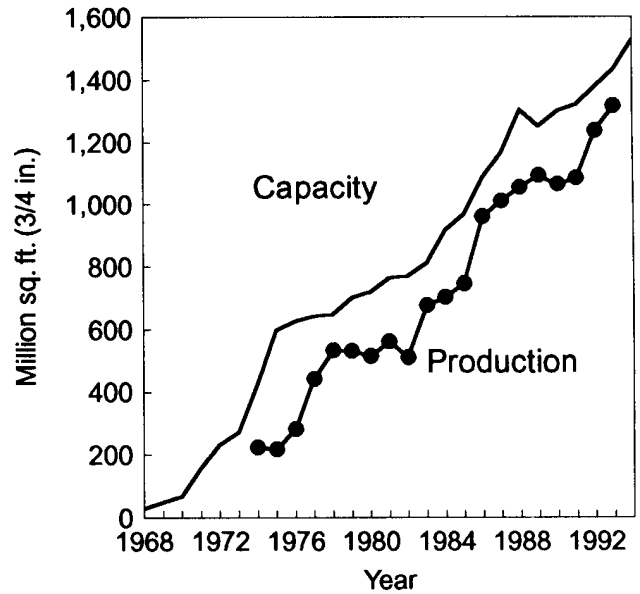


Figure 4—MDF capacity and production in North America.

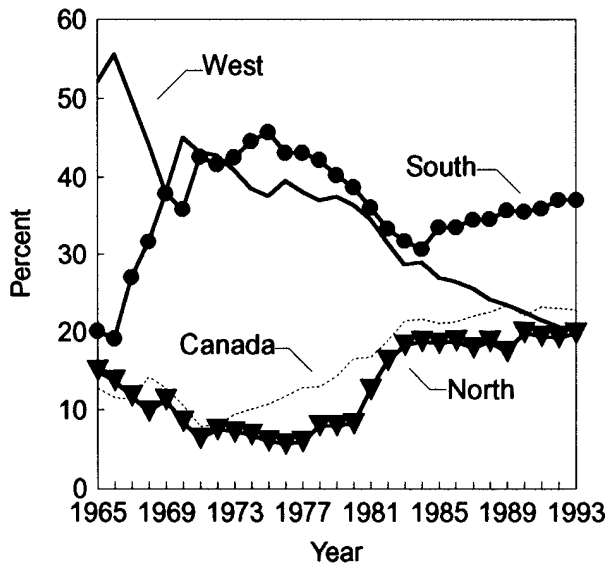


Figure 5—Particleboard, MDF, and OSB shares of capacity, by U.S. region and Canada. Note: shares based on common volumes.

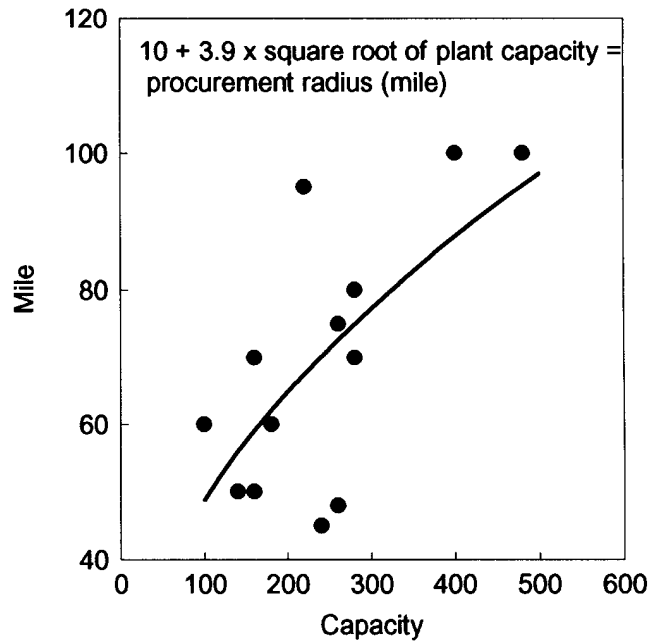


Figure 7—Wood procurement radius compared with OSB plant capacity.

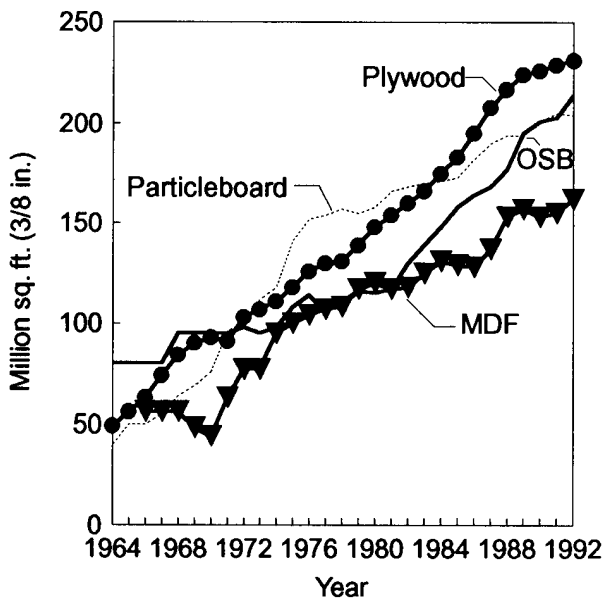


Figure 6—Average capacity per mill.

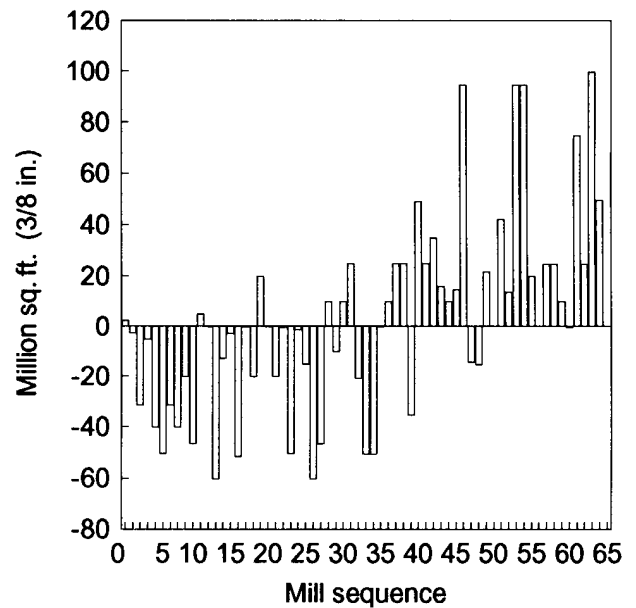


Figure 8—Announced compared with standard capacity; standard based on 5.25-min cycle for 7/16-in. panels.

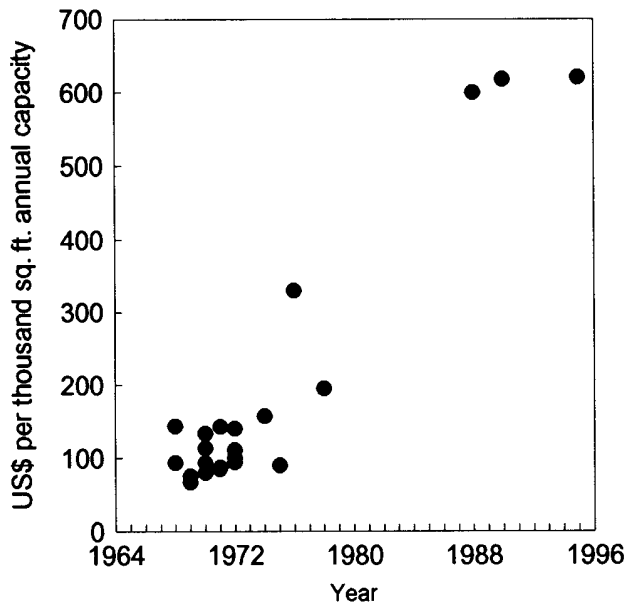


Figure 9—Cost of particleboard mills, by annual capacity.

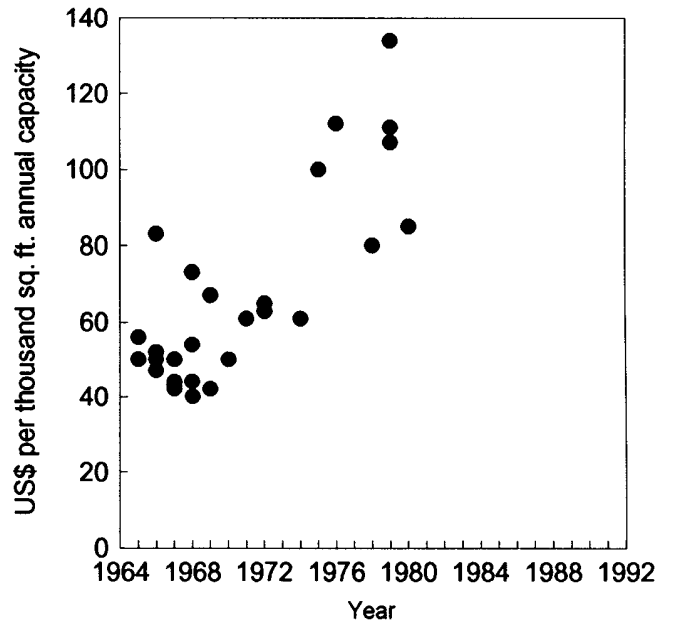


Figure 11—Cost of new plywood mill, by annual capacity.

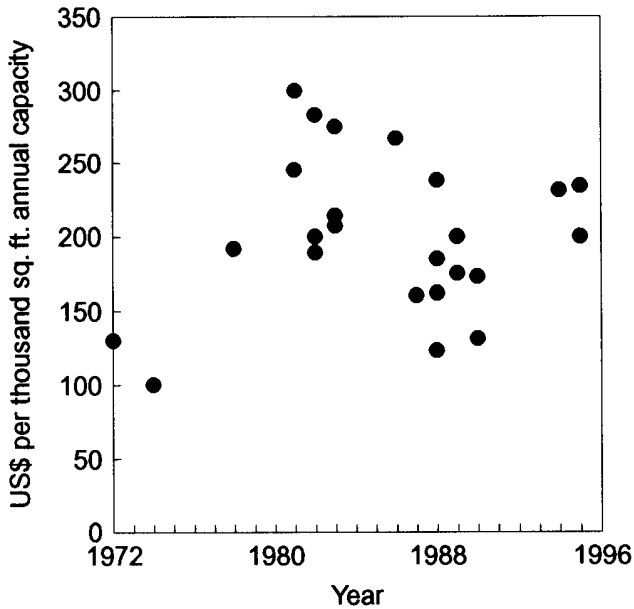


Figure 10—Cost of new OSB mills, by annual capacity.

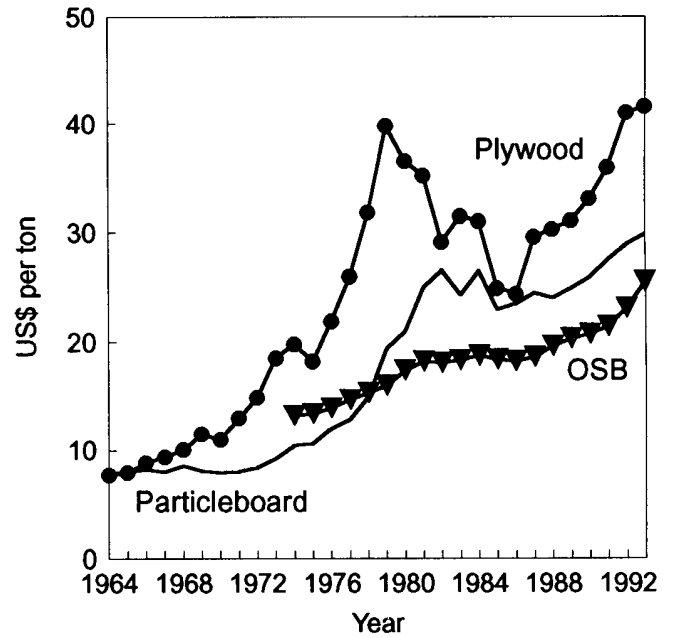


Figure 12—Wood costs by weight.

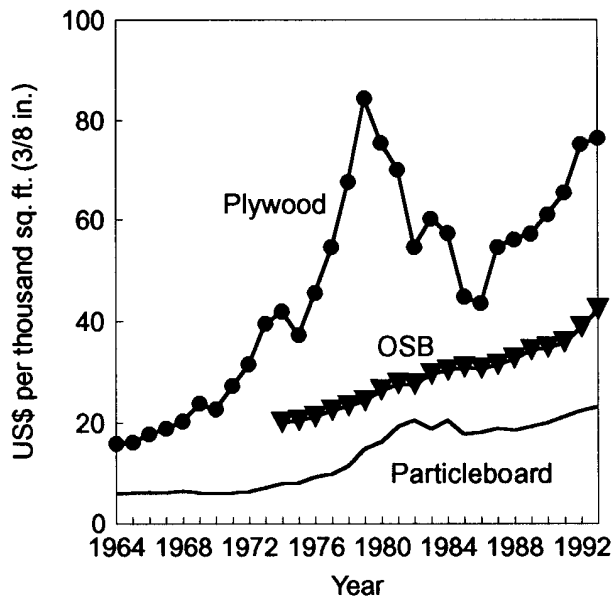


Figure 13—Wood costs by finished product.

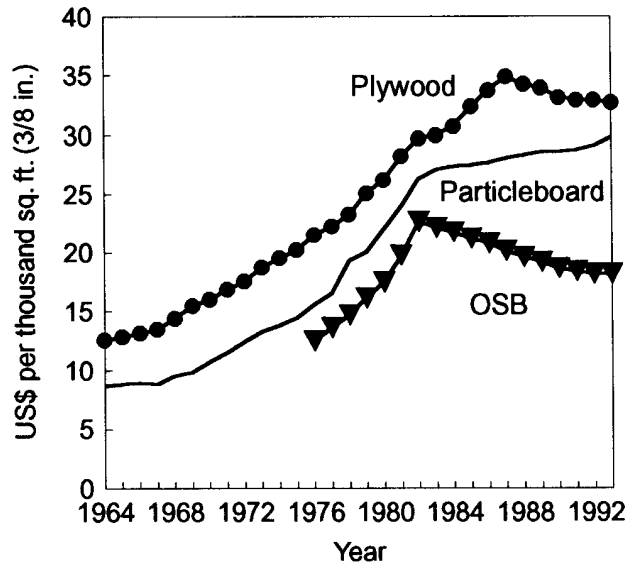


Figure 15—Labor costs by product.

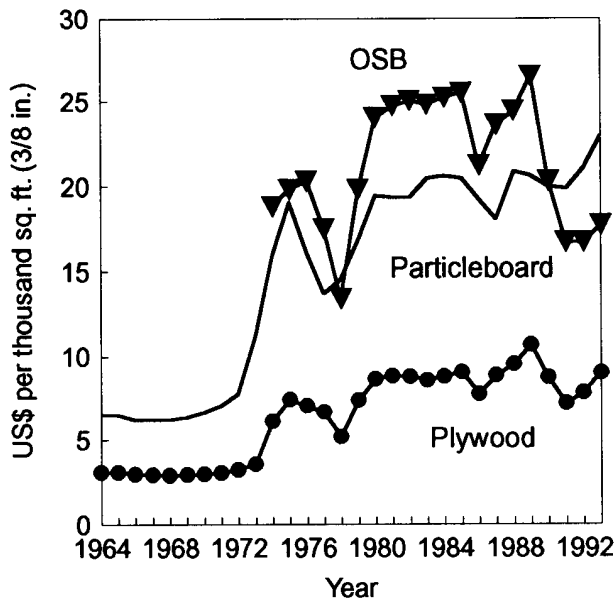


Figure 14—Resin costs by product.

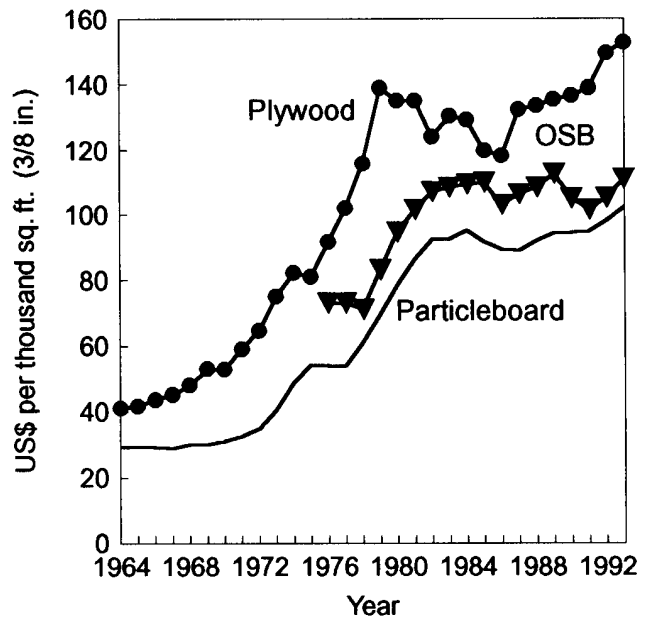


Figure 16—Summary of overall variable production costs by product.

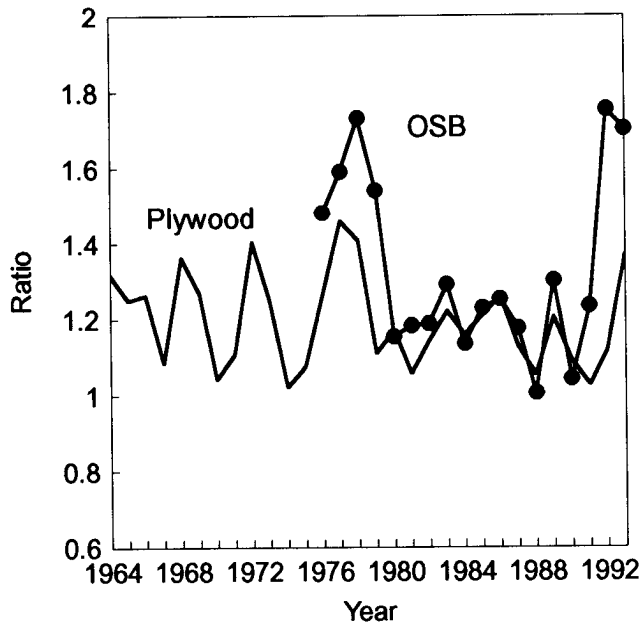


Figure 17—Ratio of variable production costs to market prices equals relative profitability of plywood and OSB.

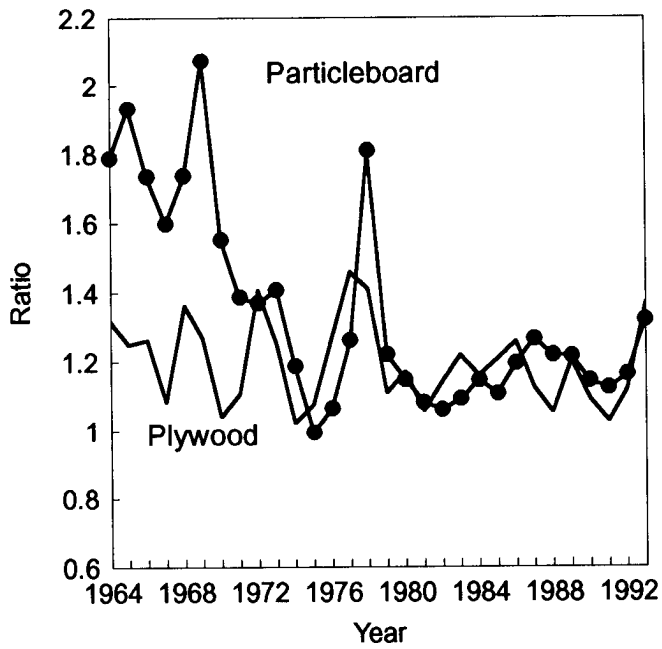


Figure 18—Ratio of variable production costs to market prices equals relative profitability of particleboard and plywood.