



Council of Forest Industries of BC

Productivity

"Canada is now investing in plants and equipment at a faster rate than the U.S. . . . Canadian firms have derived a productivity advantage." **ITC Report.**

The technology of the forest industry sector has advanced rapidly in recent decades, and many of the most significant advances have originated in Canada.

Loggers employ power saws and wheeled skidders and are using mechanical tree shears and feller-bunchers at an increasing rate.

Huge machines grapple and cut the trees, bunch them together and carry them out of the forest.

At the mills electronic equipment controls sawing, trimming and drying, and lumber sorting is automated.

The increasing mechanization of the industry has raised productivity significantly.

Data from the International Woodworkers of America shows that Canadian softwood workers work fewer hours and are generally more productive than their U.S. counterparts.

The overall gap in lumber output per hour worked in 1984, the last year reported, was 61 per cent.

In British Columbia, Canada's principal softwood region, industry workers were 46 per cent more productive than workers in Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington.

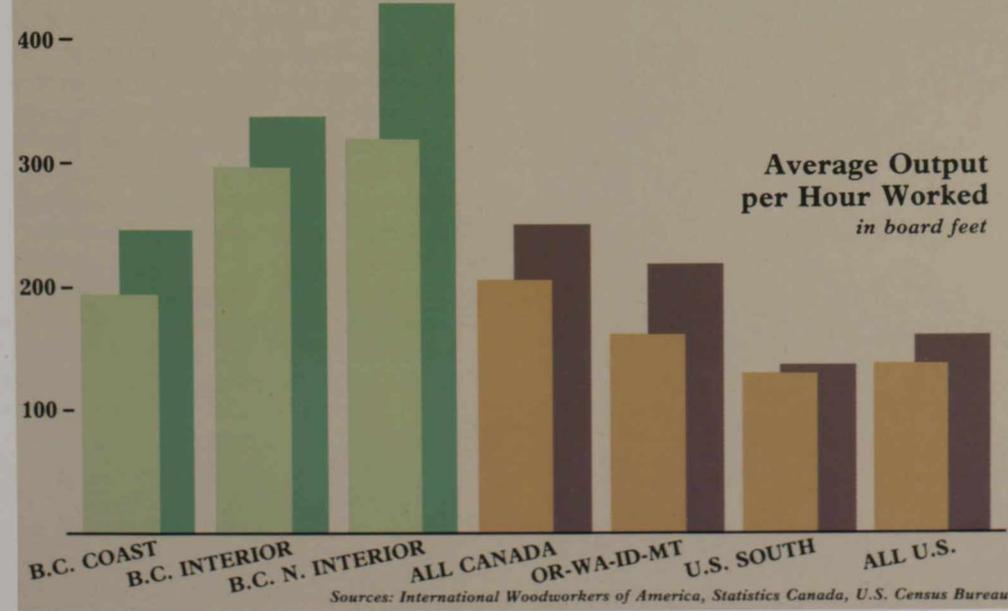
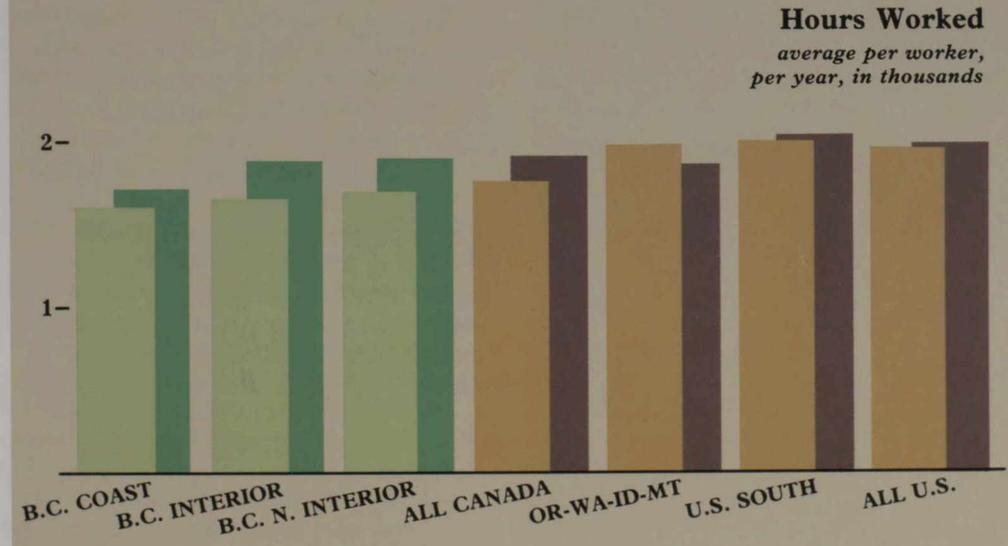
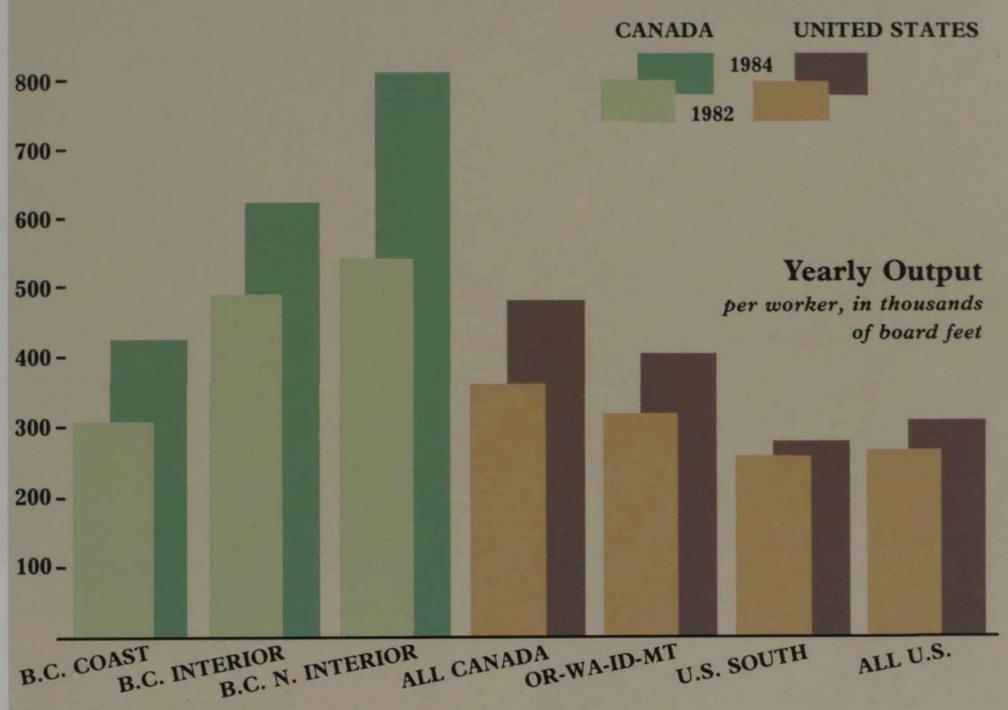
There had been increases in productivity in both countries in the previous two years, but the most dramatic leap had been in the northern interior of British Columbia, where sawmills were modernized and expanded and per-worker hourly production went up by 35 per cent.

There and elsewhere, Canadian productivity advantages reflected economies of scale made possible by larger and more productive mills, as well as investment in state-of-the-art technology.



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Softwood Lumber Productivity, by Region



Sources: International Woodworkers of America, Statistics Canada, U.S. Census Bureau