

Forestry Mower

All nursery operations have a need to destroy plants as a result of 'culls', excess production, and changing demand cycles.

Traditionally, plants are cleared and destroyed by burning or grinding. Plant removal from the field can be labor and machine intensive followed by additional expense to burn or grind.



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The forestry mower allows us to dispose of above ground plant parts in the field. Roots still have to be removed and disposed of but with significantly reduced volume and labor/equipment expense.

Importantly, the plants are returned to the soil to increase organic matter and avoid the environmentally negative outcome from burning or grinding. At Waverly Farm, we have often had the material ground and then composted for use in the field growing system which costs on the order of \$10.00 per cubic yard of finished compost from grindings. The forestry mower yields a significantly lower carbon footprint for fuel and capital cost compared to a 500 HP grinder.

One concern is the potential nitrogen robbing of composting debris left in the field. In situations where significant debris is produced, incorporate the material for in-ground composting with a legume cover crop planted if the field can be fallowed for a year. If the ground needs to be put back into production immediately, a carbon/nitrogen calculation should be made and nitrogen incorporated with the grindings to offset the nitrogen deficit. There are also microbial sprays available to speed up decomposition. We have actually not seen any negative outcomes without amendments.