

Changes in the Georgia Logging Workforce over Twenty Years

Shawn Baker
Dale Greene
University of Georgia

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Georgia logging business surveys 1987-2007

- ❑ First conducted in 1987
- ❑ Comprehensive survey of all logging businesses in state
- ❑ Administered every five years since
- ❑ Data on changing demographics for 20 years



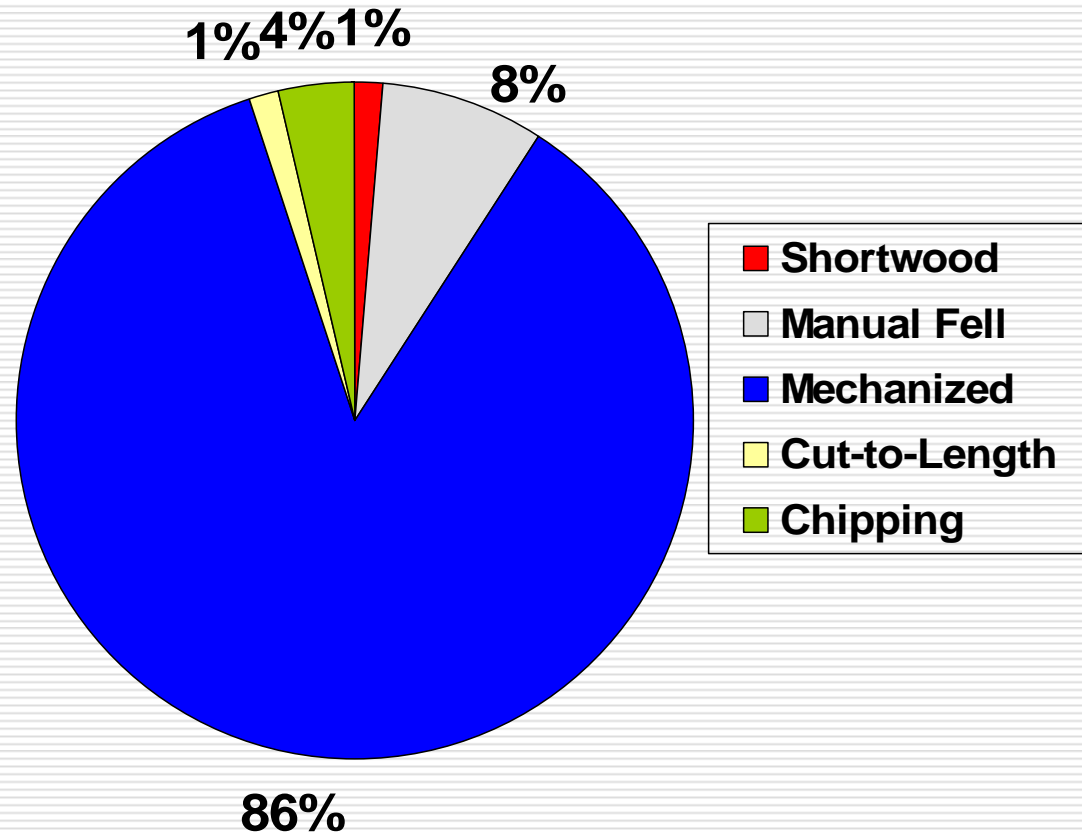
2007 Version



- ❑ Mailed to 930 logging business owners or managers
 - 1st mailing January '07
 - 2nd mailing February '07
 - Data received and entered March-April '07
- ❑ Response rate approx. 24%
- ❑ Similar questions as past surveys
 - New topics of current interest also addressed

Production Data

- Early rapid increase in prevalence of mechanized operations
- Approx. 85% since 1992



Feller-Buncher/Skidder Crew Characteristics

Year	Tons per week	Capital investment ¹	Tons per \$1000	Tons per man-hour ²
1987	831 ^a	\$506,500 ^a	182 ^a	3.95 ^a
1992	1352 ^b	\$711,100 ^b	146 ^{ab}	4.5 ^{ab}
1997	1482 ^b	\$812,500 ^b	154 ^{ab}	4.8 ^{ab}
2002	1169 ^{ab}	\$730,900 ^b	123 ^b	5.1 ^b
2007	1457 ^b	\$748,800 ^b	163 ^a	6.2 ^c

Values with different letters within a column indicate a significant difference ($p < 0.05$)

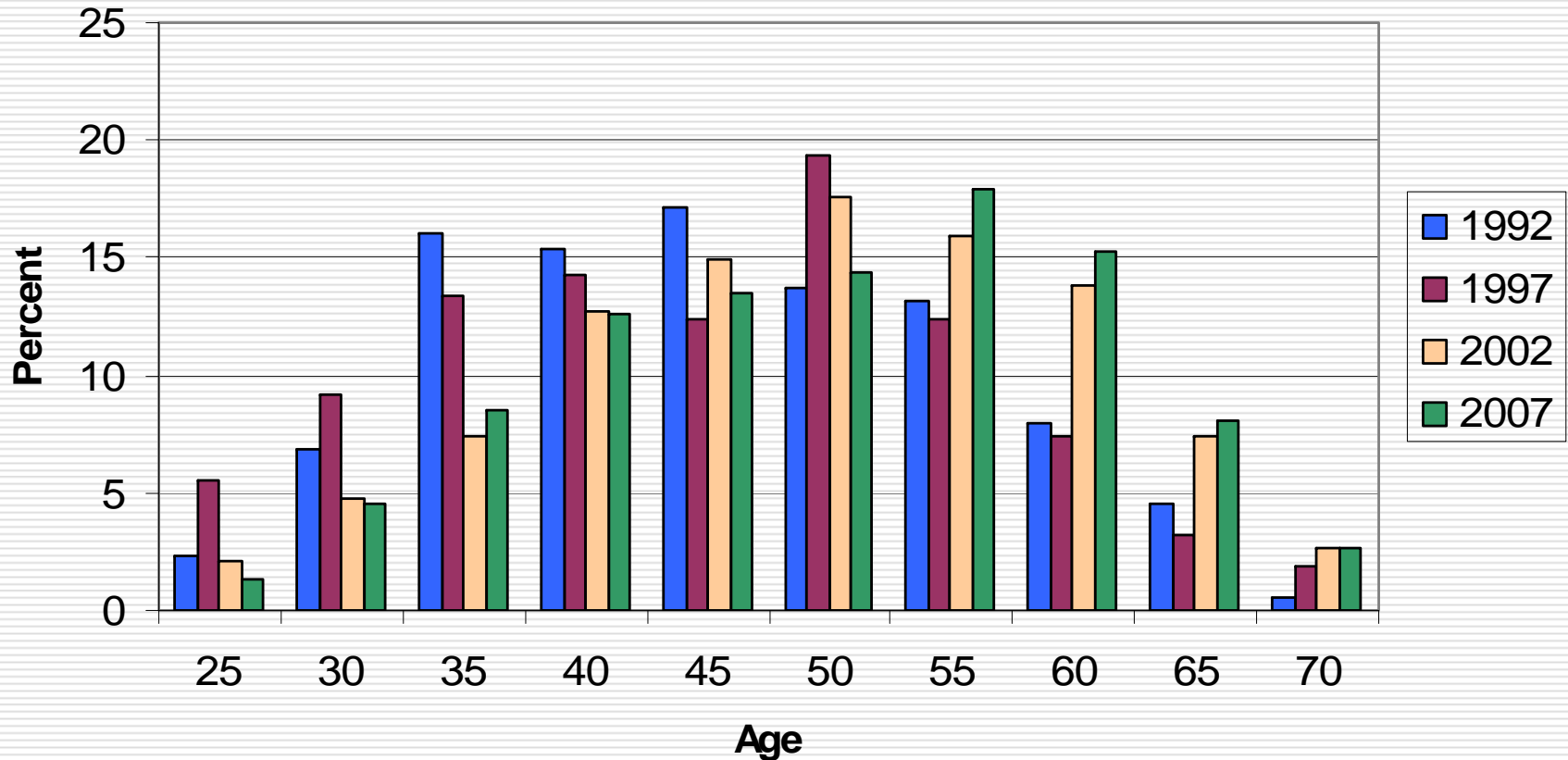
¹Total capital investments corrected for inflation to base year 2007 value.

² Assumes 40 hours per week worked by employees. Trucking employees are not included.

Greatest Problems in Business

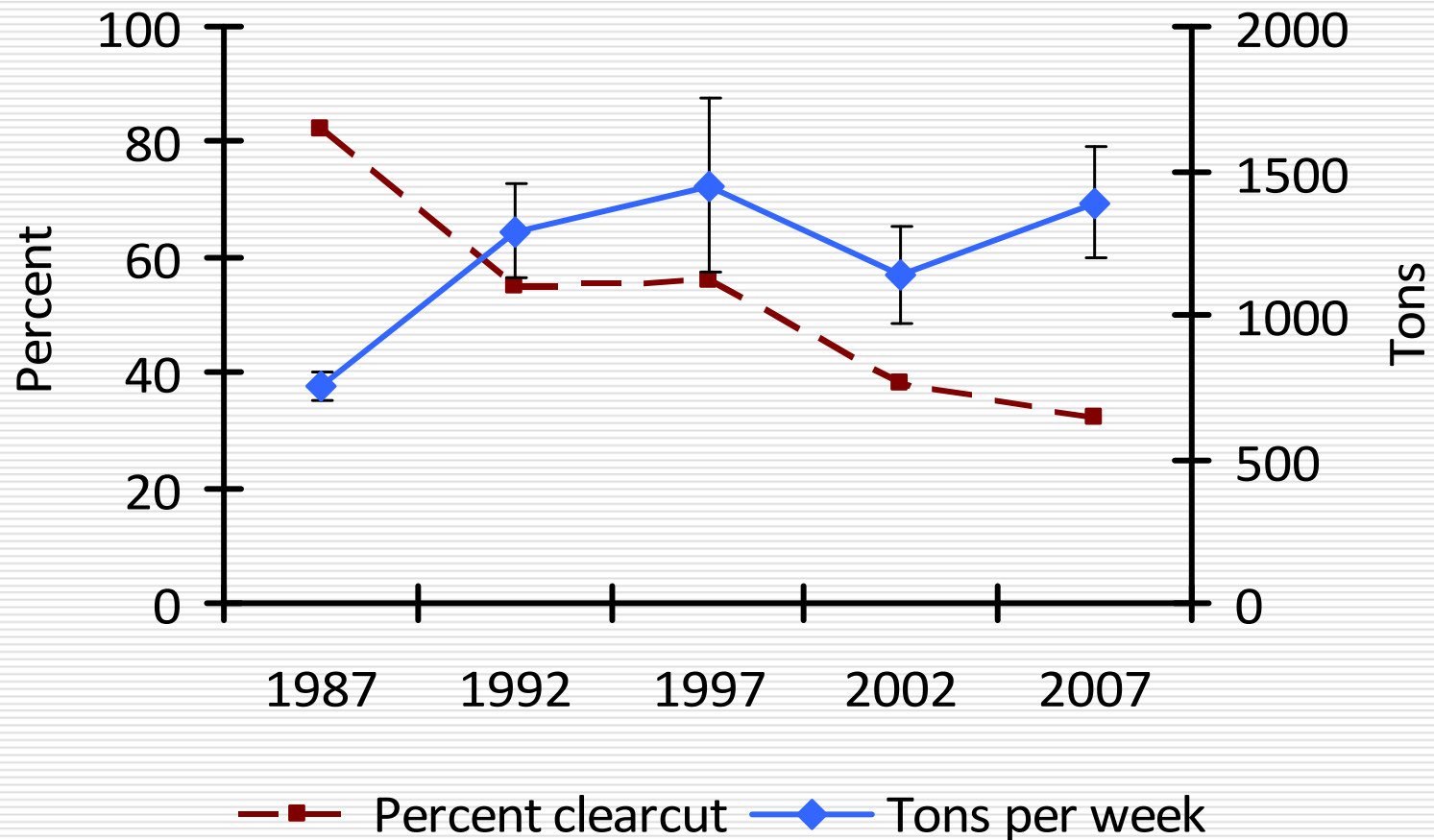
1992			2007		
Problem	Responses (%)	Rank	Problem	Responses (%)	Rank
Insurance	41	1	Fuel Price	28	1
Labor	14	2	Labor	24	2
Finances	11	3	Logging Rate	19	3
Logging Rate	10	4	Quotas	18	4
Taxes	9	5	Trucking	13	5

Owner Age



2007: median age 50

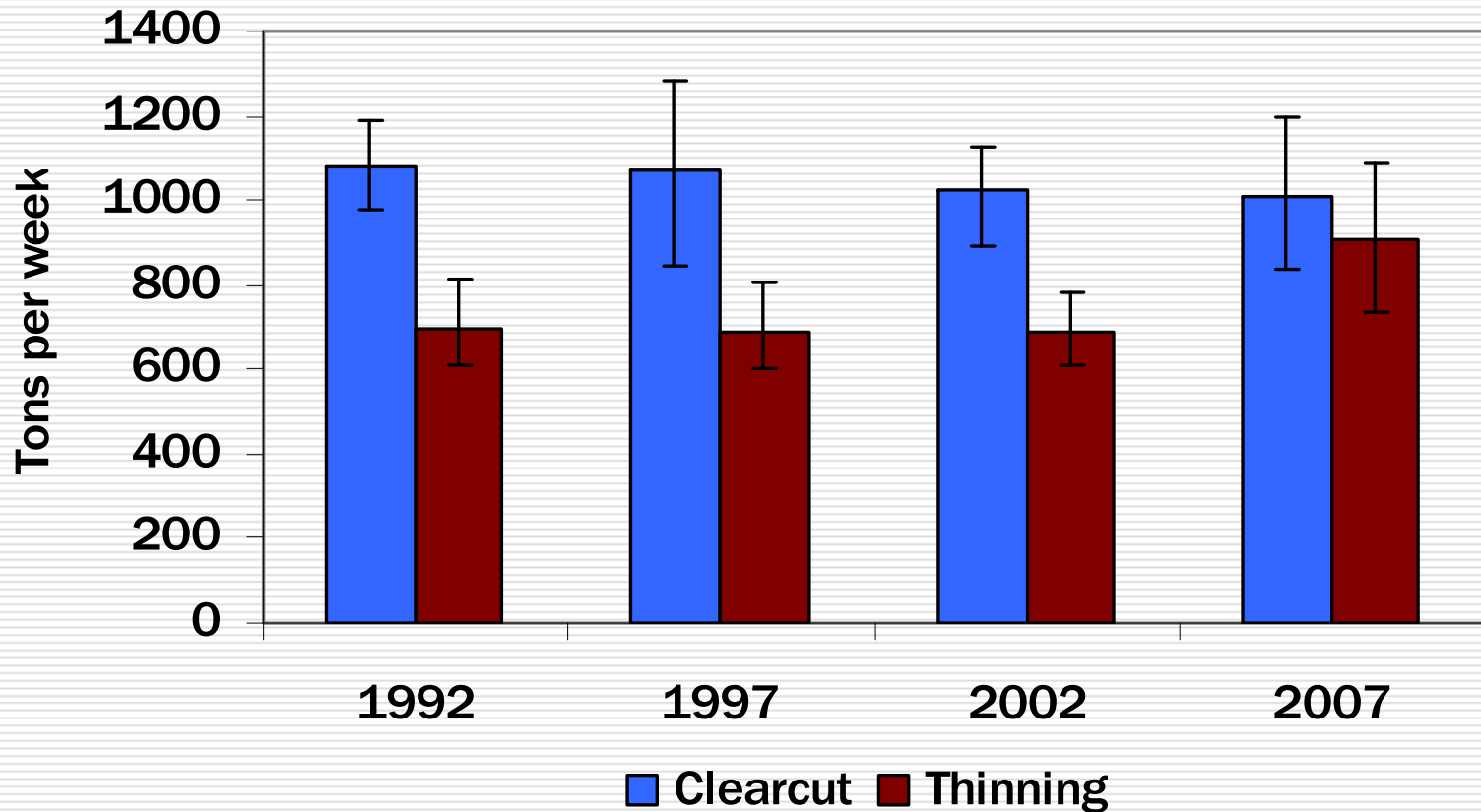
Average Production and Clearcut Percentage



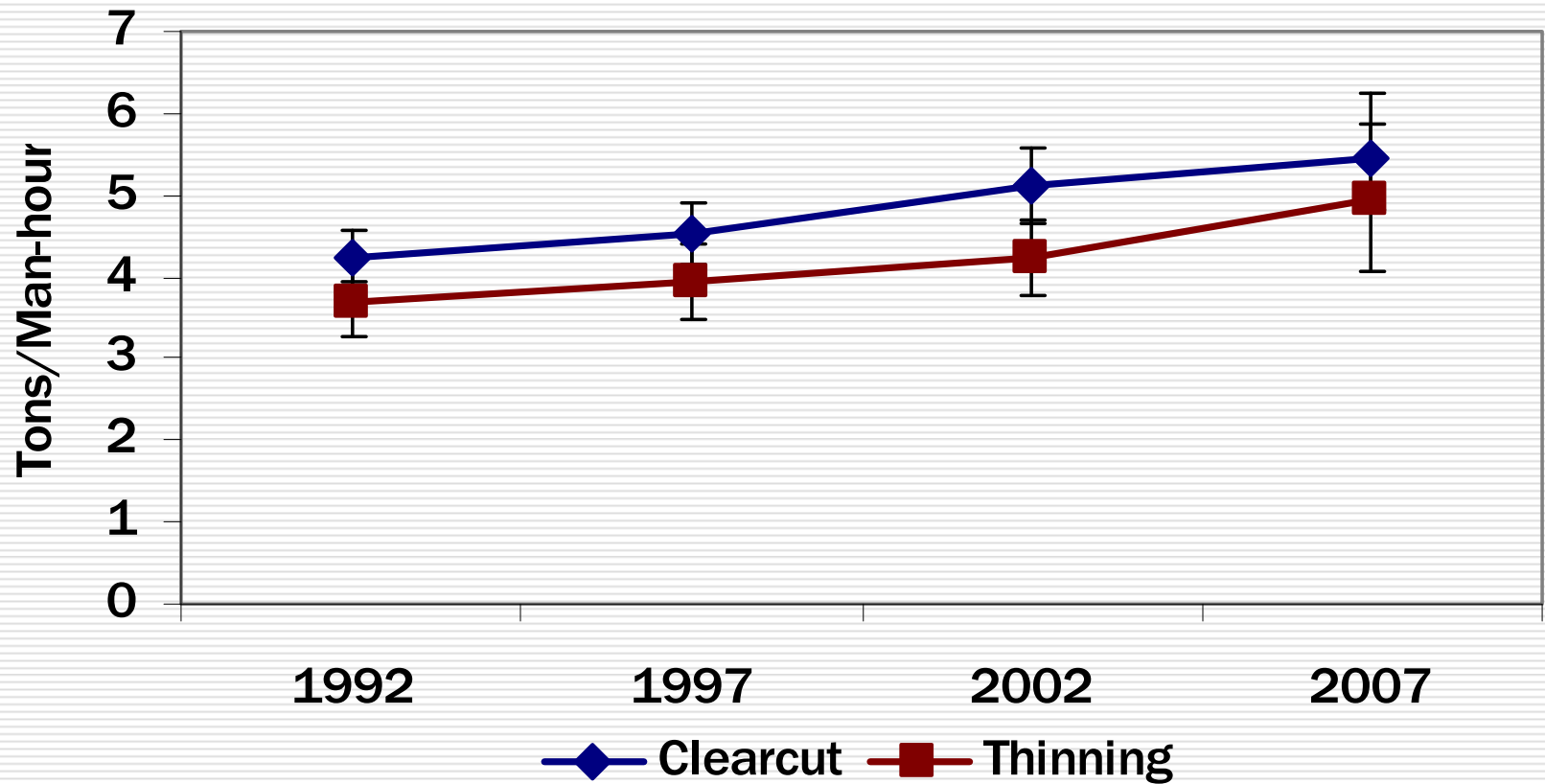
Partial Cutting Prevalence

- Intensively managed industrial plantations and CRP plantings in late 80's early 90's coming to thinning age
- Land use changes causing "Residential harvests"
- Changing management philosophies of timberland owners

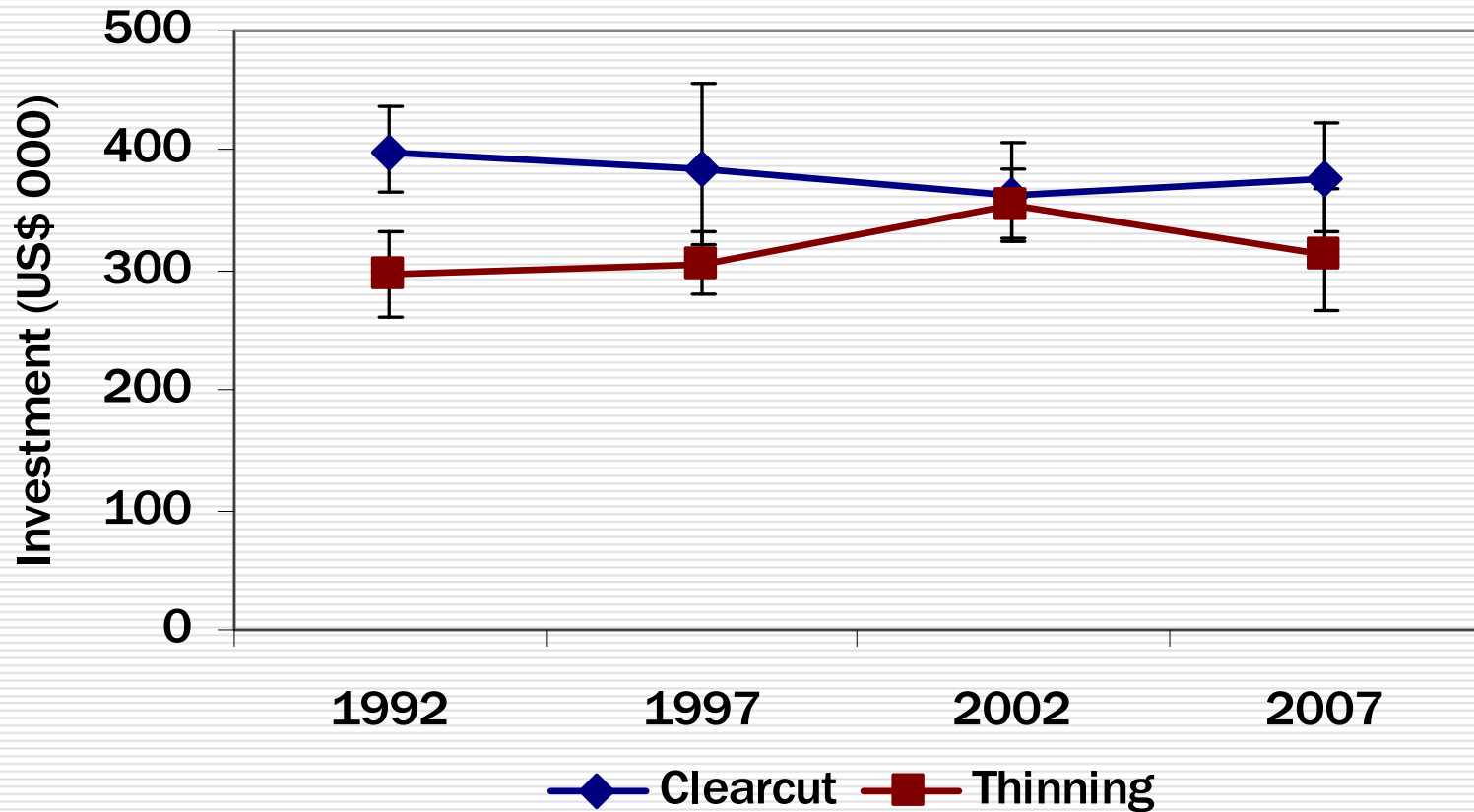
Weekly Production



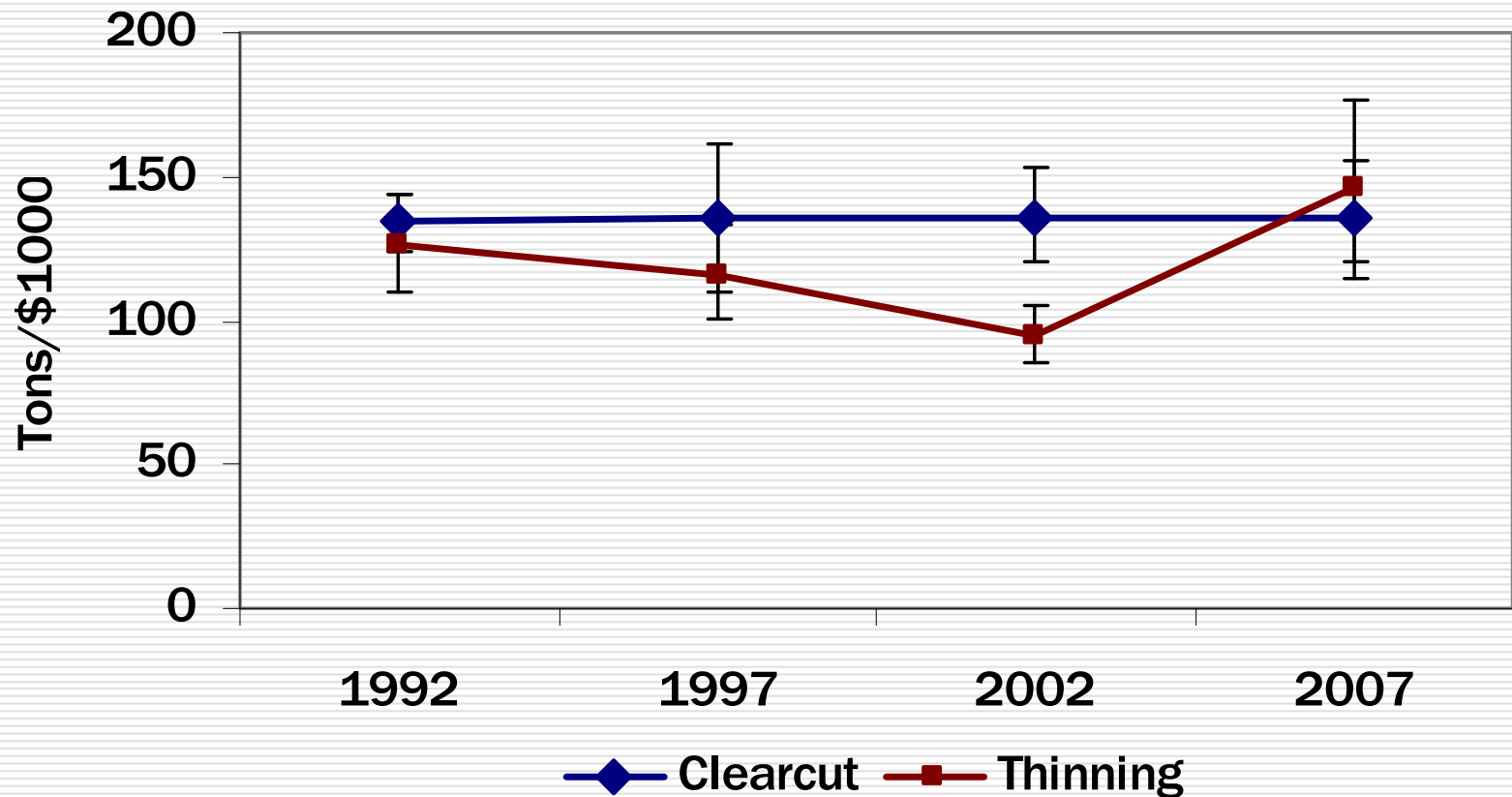
Tons per Man-Hour



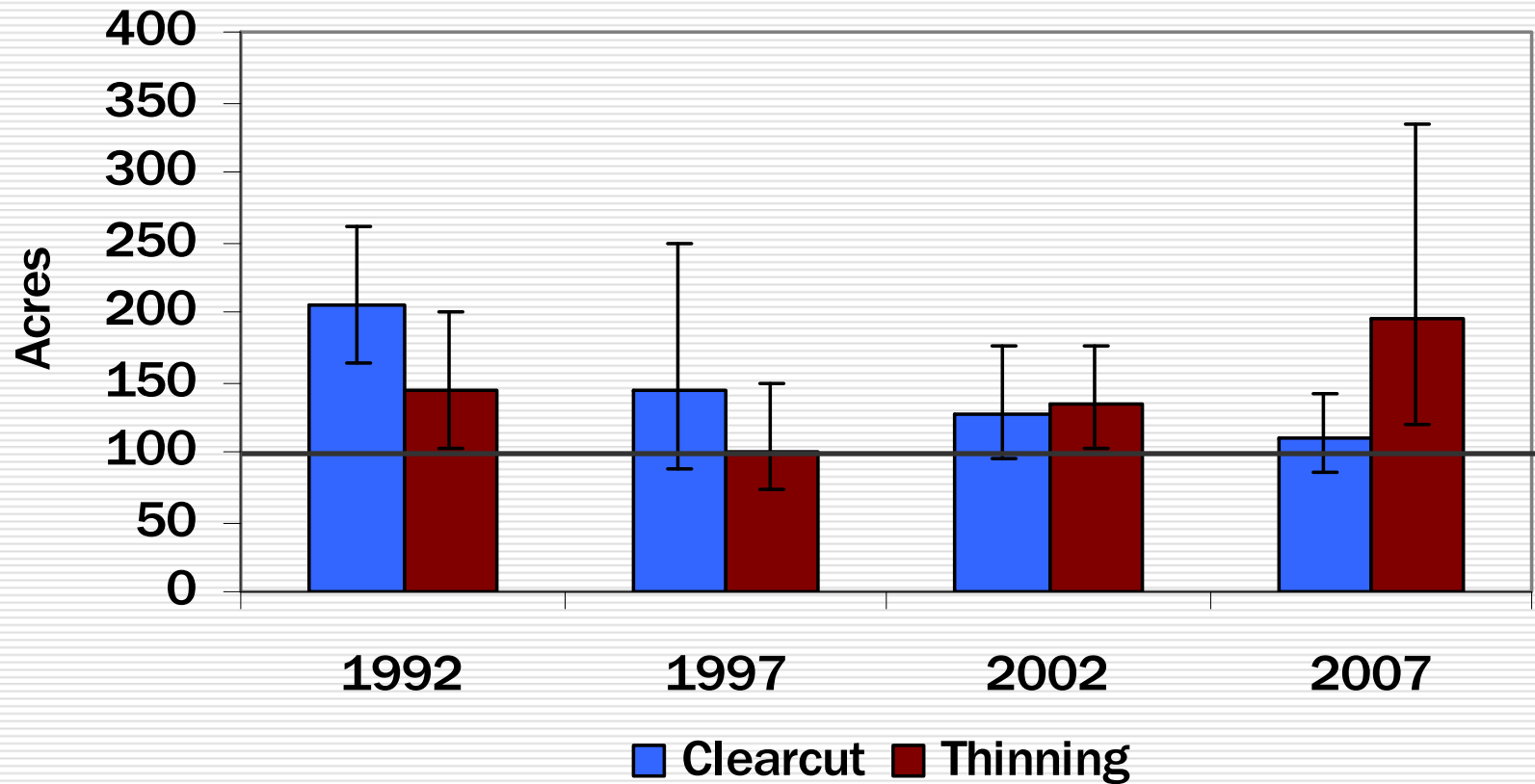
Total Capital Investment



Tons per \$1000 Capital



Average Harvest Acreage



Clearcut vs. Thinning

- ❑ Thinning crews are increasingly similar to clearcut crews
- ❑ Per acre volumes lower, but total acreage trending higher
- ❑ Potential shift back towards clearcut crews as stands age?



Summary

- ❑ Industry dominated by tree-length harvesting with feller-buncher and grapple skidders
- ❑ Large improvements in productivity of employees (57%)
- ❑ Marginal returns to capital remain flat
- ❑ Aging business owners struggling to find new laborers

Future Work

- Initiating WSRI-funded project to assess impacts of thinning/clearcut shift and harvest acreage on harvesting cost
- Will obtain better information on financial impact to wood supply chain



Thank You

**Shawn Baker
Research Professional
Center for Forest Business
Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30606
(706) 542-4298
sbaker@warnell.uga.edu**