

DOMOTEX -

Continued from page 15

Schattdecor were also very prominent. The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) and the Hardwood Export States Group fronted a pavilion of hardwood exporting companies. The U.S. group included Anderson-Tully Lumber Company, Shannon Lumber International, Bridgewell Resources China Division, American Lumber Company, Cummings Lumber Company Inc., Industrial Timber & Lumber, Hermitage Hardwood Lumber Sales, Amos Hill Associates, Midwest Hardwood Corporation, CCS Forest Products Inc., Prime Lumber Company, AHC Export Lumber, Weyerhaeuser Hardwoods and Baillie Lumber Co.

WHO'S WHO - Brand

Continued from page 2

domestic and imported wood products. As manager, Brand oversees the Import and Export purchases and sales of ten sales professionals doing business in over 30 countries around the world. With over 12 years industry experience, Brand is also a member of several industry associations including the American Hardwood Export Council, International Wood Products Association, National Hardwood Lumber Association and the North American Wholesale Lumber Association. Originally from Woodland, Washington, she graduated from the University of Washington in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in Russian Language and Literature. Brand began her career in 1995 as Inside Sales Support for American President Lines. In 1999, she joined North Pacific as a hardwood export trader and spent one year working and living in Milan, Italy. Her tenure with Bridgewell began in 2010 as assistant export sales manager. Brand lives in Portland with her husband of eight years, Edgar, and their two daughters.

Bridgewell Resources is a premier global supplier of hardwood and softwood products offering in-house door-to-door logistics, international documentation and a variety of packaging options. They are an operating company of Atlas Holdings LLC, a Connecticut-based company that owns and operates businesses in a number of industrial sectors. More information about Bridgewell's products and services can be found at www.BridgewellResources.com.

WHO'S WHO - Kleiner

Continued from page 2

Lumber Markets. He accepted his current duties in 2010. Kleiner is responsible for the worldwide promotion of Southern Pine lumber products through SFPA's 25-year cooperator status with the USDA Market Access Program under the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). He annually coordinates with other U.S. structural lumber associations to devise Unified Export Strategy executed under the promotional banner of American softwoods. Kleiner's expertise includes knowledge of the use of Southern Pine in a wide range of applications, including outdoor decks, marine construction, and termite-resistant framing. Through trade media and seminars, he is frequently called upon to address topics of interest to designers, builders and importers, including the transition to new wood preservatives, moisture management and mold prevention. Most recently, his efforts have focused on promotion of wood-framed raised floor systems throughout the South. Kleiner was born in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he still resides. He joined the U.S. Air Force after high school and during his military service, attended Phillips University in Enid, Oklahoma where he earned a degree in Mass Communications. Following military service, Kleiner served as public relations director for the Louisiana Chemical Association.

WHO'S WHO - Strang

Continued from page 2

imported woods and managing inventory. He began his career in the forest products industry in 1992 in an entry-level position of a wholesale distribution yard in the northeast. A graduate of Wachusett Regional High School, located in Holden, Mass., he obtained a bachelor's degree of wood science and technology from the University of Massachusetts located in Amherst, Mass. Downes & Reader Hardwoods is a member of the International Wood Products Association, Penn-York Lumbermen's Association and the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA). Strang and his wife of 13 years have one daughter and one son.

WHO'S WHO - Tarbell

Continued from page 2

"All of the lumber we market is our own production, ensuring a consistent uniform product load after load," Tarbell said. Tarbell has been in the import/export industry with Ram Forest for approximately 25 years. He began in the lumber industry as a lumber grader in 1978. A graduate of Union City Area High School in Union City, Pa., Tarbell graduated from the 64th Class of the National Hardwood Lumber Grading School in Memphis, Tennessee in 1978. He and his wife Debra have a son, two daughters and three grandsons. In his spare time he enjoys golf, basketball, baseball and spending time with his grandchildren. Ram Forest Products Inc. is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA), Hardwood Manufacturers Association (HMA), and the Pennsylvania Forest Products Association. Tarbell is on the board of directors for the Oswayo Valley Education Foundation and

he is also a junior little league and 5th and 6th grade basketball coach.

WASHINGTON SCENE -

Continued from page 2

Maurice is a Society of American Foresters Certified Forester and a member of the Association of Consulting Foresters. He holds a degree in forestry from the University of Missouri.

Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Hold Budget Oversight Hearings

A number of Congressional committees have held oversight hearings that focused on agency budget requests and policy matters. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee questioned Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell about his agency's plan that includes using the proposed Integrated Resource Restoration (IRR) program, which would combine habitat, watershed and forest product programs and would also absorb hazardous fuels dollars, road removal, and the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration fund. There are concerns about going with this combined line item approach because it could lead to a lack of transparency and accountability by the agency. The House Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands questioned both BLM Director Bob Abbey and Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell regarding their budgets and agency programs. The 2012 budget for the O&C Counties portion of the BLM has a net increase of \$486,000, which should increase timber targets for those lands. The House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, chaired by Congressman Mike Simpson (R-ID) questioned Chief Tidwell on his agency's budget. Tidwell warned members of the Committee that the Continuing Resolution is impacting his ability to plan work for the rest of this fiscal year and could affect out-

Continued on page 20

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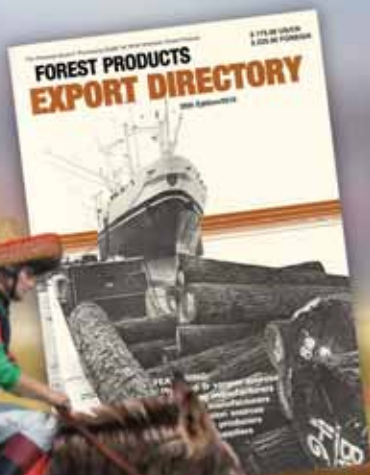
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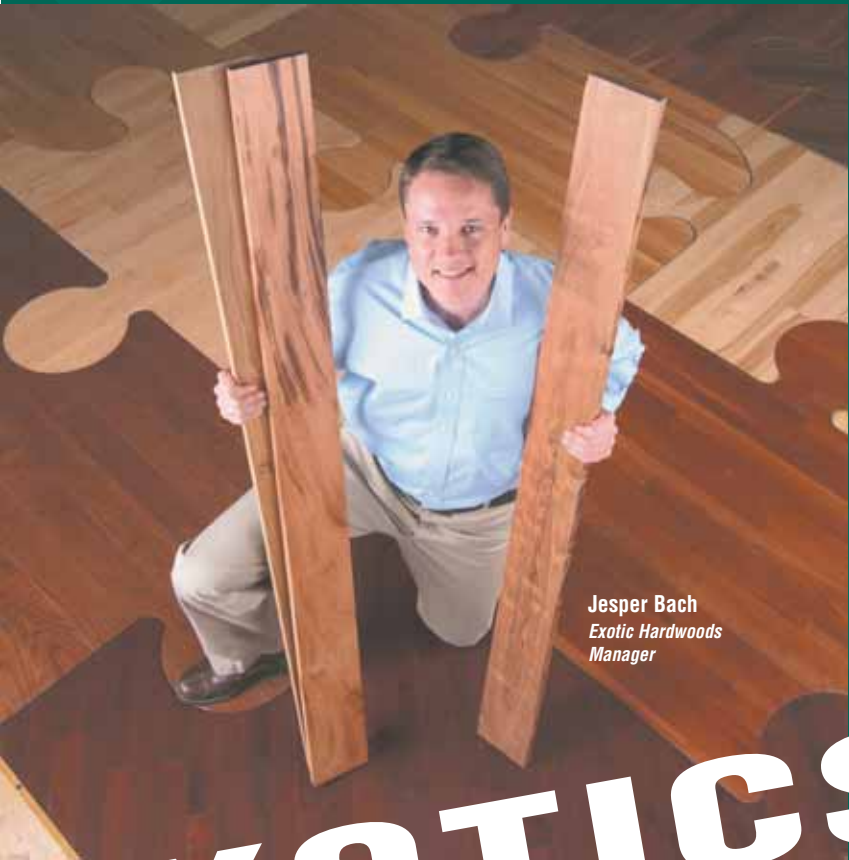
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WASHINGTON SCENE -

Continued from page 17

puts such as timber sales.

Simpson also questioned Tidwell about how the IRR concept would be implemented and if the dollars dedicated to this line item could be followed in a transparent manner. The Chief has mentioned that the IRR concept, if approved, may be first used as a pilot in some regions or on individual national forests.

MCLENDON -

Continued from page 3

For example, wood flooring exports to the Middle East increased 119 percent from January through September, according to a report from AMEinfo.com. Flooring is just one product that is experiencing growing consumption in the area. American hardwood exports to the Middle East rose 54 percent, from \$49 million to \$76 million, during the same period.

American wood exports to China also tells a success story, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, China is now the new number one market for U.S. agricultural products and the second largest export market for U.S. forest products, just behind Canada.

In this global economy with fewer and fewer straight lines it isn't practical or wise to continue the pretense that trade is an enemy.

The facts are that business leaders have to be nimble and flexible. The global economy is fluid and the supply chain has to follow the customer – whether building a home in Dubai or Altoona.

Wood imports into the United States provide consumers with a wide range of price points for their homes and recreation. Before the products get to the consumers, U.S. manufacturers, retailers, port workers, truckers all get a piece of the import pie. Same goes for wood exported out of the U.S. for processing and consumption.

So, with high hopes and bolstered by the reality of global trade, we're confident our partnership with the American Hardwood Export Council will result in increased opportunities for all.

DANUBE -

Continued from page 4

film-faced plywood coming from China.

Doors are another imported item that make up the range of wood-based products. In fact it's hard to find many gaps in the company's catalogue of 25,000 different products.

The company has been certified by BM TRADA for its Chain of Custody systems to FSC and PEFC standards for some of its many wood products, including hardwoods.

While much of the furniture sold in the Gulf is supplied by countries like Malaysia, there is nonetheless a significant manufacturing capacity of free-standing and fitted furniture made in the UAE and GCC, to which Danube is able to offer quality hardwoods from the USA, Europe and Africa. Veneers for local lamination also find markets in both construction fit-out and furniture. In these applications, moisture can be a problem in such dry climatic conditions. It rains only two to three days a year in UAE. Despite Danube mainly importing kiln dried lumber, the region has a tradition in buying some shipping dry material which may then later require drying on site. For that reason alone the company has installed oil-fired kiln dryers with a capacity of 400-450 cubic meters for custom drying.

The strength of Danube seems to be one of product choice, a real one-stop shop for the construction contractor, able to select from softwoods and hardwoods, plywood and veneer, as well as MDF, particle board, doors, flooring, and mouldings – in every conceivable specification, sourced from around the world. This year the company is expecting to achieve a sales turnover of AED1.6billion (US\$436 million), of which about half are wood based building materials with the balance in steel and such prod-

ucts as ceramics and hardware. Danube's project references vary from the Emaar projects like Emirates Hills, the Burj al Arab, the Shangri La and the Grand Hyatt hotels to a private palace in Muscat.

It is hard to imagine that any firm's headquarters in the Middle East could be as busy as the Jebel Ali corporate offices of Danube Group where Rizwan Sajjan leads with energy that "is expected of all," according to Tejesh who has been with the Group for 12 years since arriving in Dubai from his native Bombay.

Asked about the effects of the recent financial crisis of the last two years and the collapse of the real estate market, that hit Dubai as badly, or worse, than anywhere, he is optimistic. "That is partly due to an infectious positive attitude to business by our Chairman," he said, but also due to Danube's diversified markets in the Emirates, throughout the GCC, Middle East and North Africa.

With sales stretching from Morocco to Turkey and a new distribution center in Qatar, to take advantage of future events such as development for the Football World Cup, there is no sense of construction catastrophe at Danube. It recently opened two new state-of-the-art facilities in Ajman and Al Quoz, where the company invested a total of AED55million as part of its regional expansion plans to address the demand for top-quality materials in that region. The new operation's hubs are bringing the widest range of products, including wood, to local and regional customers. The company, which has 38 sales staff for domestic and exports, also supplies traders in diverse markets as far afield as Sudan and Turkey.

In June 2010 Danube opened its first Danube Buildmart branch at the Oberoi Mall in Mumbai, India for building materials and shop-fitting industries. The AED10million, 6,000 square foot retail facility marked the company's 20th global store. The opening complemented estimates that India's economy was expected to grow by 7.5% from 2010 to 2011 and by 8% in 2012.

In 2010 H.H. Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, awarded the prestigious Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (MRM) Business Award to Danube at a ceremony organized by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce. The award, which was received by both Chairman Rizwan and MD Anis, complements the company's 'excellence model' and its outstanding business performance; strategic programs, initiatives and achievements, which were the main criteria used in judging the awards. Danube Building Materials was the only building materials trading company to be awarded in the 2010 MRM awards. They were established in 2005 to recognize, showcase, and celebrate the success of organizations that have contributed to UAE economic development.

"We were very humbled to receive this award, which affirms our strong commitment towards the promotion and adoption of best practices and high standards in the Middle East Region," said Rizwan.

Anis said, "Danube is totally committed to uphold the integrity of the MRM Business Awards by constantly ensuring that we meet the requirements set by this prestigious award. Rest assured Danube is looking forward to undertaking further initiatives to enhance our processes and the value we provide to our customers, which would hopefully merit more recognition in the future."

Danube's recognition as a thriving company and its current expansion plans, in a market still recovering from the 2008/9 financial crisis, is definitely leading the way in the region.

For more information on this company, visit online at www.aldanube.com.

NEFF -

Continued from page 5

never changed and that is our commitment to be the best we can be. Over the years, that has meant earning our customers' respect and meeting their need for the best in products and service. I personally invite you to try our products. Do it with this guarantee — Expect the best and with Neff, you won't be disappointed. We guarantee it. We look forward to meeting your high standards." Again, these are words that Bonnie Hoover, former president of Neff Lumber Mills Inc., said when she was alive and helping to run the company, along with sev-

NEFF -

Continued from page 20

eral of her family members. Neff Lumber Mills Inc. is a member of the Virginia Forestry Association, the Virginia Forest Products Association, NHLA, the Appalachian Lumbermen's Club and Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers Inc. Something the family members who work at Neff Lumber Mills Inc. are very proud of is that a few years ago the Neff Team was presented The Safety Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) Award by the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry. The firm has continued to grow over 80 years with uninterrupted family ownership. The company motto remains the same: "Neff doesn't make all the Appalachian hardwoods....only the best." Management at Neff Lumber attributes their success to having a commitment to quality Hardwoods, on-time delivery and guaranteed customer satisfaction. For more information visit www.nefflumber.com.

NHLA -

Continued from page 6

NHLA's mission is to serve NHLA Members in the North American Hardwood Lumber Industry by: maintaining order,



Brian Lotz, Timber Holdings International, Milwaukee, Wis.; and Gilbert Schille, Braswood, Brazil

structure, rules, and ethics in the changing hardwood marketplace; providing member services unique to the hardwood lumber industry; driving collaboration across the hardwood industry to promote demand for North American hardwood lumber and advocate the interest of the hardwood community in public/private policy issues; and building positive relationships within the global hardwood community. The NHLA is located in Memphis, Tenn., and can be reached at 901-377-1818 and online at www.nhla.com.

AMERICAN HARDWOODS -

Continued from page 8

Manpower, Lee Yi Shyan, said that the fair was "16% bigger than last year, focusing on innovative design and trends with 100% increase in space set aside for designers and design-centric exhibits." James Goh, President of the Singapore furniture industries Council (SFIC), said that "Design focus is the key to sustaining growth and building a competitive industry." Looking at trends in IFFS 2011, high quality, dark colored furniture was abundant, using a range of material from Black Walnut to stained wood and laminates. Oak was a dominant species from the USA, Europe and China. Colors were strong and included some graffiti themes. Glass, often white, was again popular and many models utilized a combination of white with dark wood, paint or very dark stains. Temperate hardwoods, mainly Oak and Ash from Europe and China were well in evidence but American hardwoods were everywhere, particularly White Oak and Black Walnut. U.S. hardwoods featured in four out of the five Best Product winners. American Oak and Chinese Birch were used in the two FDA Grand Award winners. There was more light colored Oak furniture in Singapore than at other shows, reflecting the much higher number of European buyers who chose their suppliers there. There were also many collections in darker colors and styles clearly aimed at the U.S. market. Of the five furniture Best Product Awards (Living, Dining, Bedroom, Office and Outdoor) at this year's IFFS, four featured American Walnut or White Oak,

reflecting the extent to which these two species are being used in higher end Asian made furniture, as exhibited in Singapore. The Indonesian Furniture Fair, Jakarta (IFFINA) in Jakarta was the biggest and the best in Indonesia so far and perhaps a little more international than previously. For anyone not interested in Teak or Rattan furniture, this show is still relatively small. According to ASMINDO this year's show was 60 percent larger than last year with 3,500 pre-registered visitors, of which 300 were from overseas. Dark stained and highly decorated, colored furniture, particularly made from local plantation species, was the order of the day, although there was slightly more furniture featuring American and European hardwoods than previously. Both the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) and French Timber had promotion displays. There is a manufacturing trend towards more veneered panels in furniture that is also creating an increasing demand for imported wood species. The chair winners of the 1st Indonesian Furniture Design Competition (IFDC) in American Oak, Ash and Tulipwood sponsored by AHEC were displayed in two locations at the show. In Saigon the Vietnam International Furniture & Home Accessories Fair, Saigon (VIFA) was a small but potent show organized by HAWA Corporation at the Saigon Exhibition & Convention Center, during which there were reports of many key buyers attending. The wood materials used were predominantly local native species, as well as plantation species including Rubberwood and Acacia. However many manufacturers also showing American hardwoods, particularly White Oak and some Walnut. According to the most recent data from HAWA, Vietnam's furniture exports increased to US\$3.4 billion in 2010 recovering from a dip in 2009. The USA remains by far the largest buyer of Vietnamese furniture, with bedroom furniture the leading sector for exports, although there is a fast developing domestic market for all furniture. Prototypes from the annual Hao Mai (Apricot Blossom) furniture design competition organized by HAWA and sponsored by AHEC were exhibited at the show, made in Tulipwood and Red Oak. The Thai International Furniture Fair, in Bangkok (TIFF), in a new location at BITEC, was smaller than many visitors would have liked and much quieter on the first day than exhibitors wanted. However Japanese buyers and exhibitors were prominent. It opened with a demonstration of strong government support. The theme of the show was "Finding Green Piece" and the welcoming display was "Eco Design in Thailand". A centerpiece of the show was a pavilion dedicated to the American Hardwood Design Camp showing 10 prototype furniture pieces designed by the young participants for small living spaces. This project, commenced last year, is a collaboration between the Thai Furniture Industries Association (TFA), King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL), American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), and The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Embassy of the United States Bangkok, drawing attention from visitors and the media. The project provides University students an opportunity to experience the furniture product design process in a real-world environment under the guidance of experienced professionals, and encourages them to design furniture products that are not only aesthetic to look at, but are also highly functional and can be produced for real-life commercial use.

BUSINESS TRENDS (ABROAD)

Ghana—According to the Timber Industry Development Division (TIDD) of the Forestry Commission, wood and timber product exports from Ghana recently totaled 23,948 cu.m valued at Euro 7.9 million, compared to 26,430 cu.m and Euro 8.27 million in the same time period last year. This represents a decline of 9.4 percent and 4.4 percent in volume and value respectively. Exports of all timber products declined except for plywood, moulding and parquet/flooring. Primary product exports including poles and billets were valued at Euro 3 million compared to Euro 3.6 million last year.

Continued on page 22

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BUSINESS TRENDS
(ABROAD)

Continued from page 21

Similarly the value of exports of secondary timber products declined 3.5 percent from Euro 7 million in 2010 to Euro 6.8 million in 2011. However, exports of tertiary products were valued at US\$902,209 up by 32 percent from US\$681,275 of the same time frame last year. Primary products, secondary products and tertiary products accounted for 3 percent, 86 percent and 11 percent of the total export value respectively.

The share of Ghana's exports of wood and timber products to other countries in Africa was reported at 51 percent of the total export value, compared to 36 percent last year. Exports to other destinations included Europe (26 percent of the total export value), Asia/Far East (15 percent) and the Middle East, Belgium, Spain, Ireland and the Netherlands.

Plywood accounted for 38 percent of the total exports of wood and timber products exports from Ghana in recent months. Compared to the same time period in 2010, plywood exports rose 9.2 percent in volume and 32 percent in Mahogany and Ofram were the principal species utilized for plywood production.

Japan—Housing starts for Japan in 2010 came in at 813,126, up 3.1 percent from the record low in 2009. However, housing starts in 2010 remained at the same low levels as in 1964 and 1965.

Units built for sale and used by owners showed some improvement but housing starts for rental units continue to fall to below 300,000 units as in 1962 and 1963. Wood frame units increased by 7 percent accounting for about 57 percent of the total housing starts, up 2 percent from last year.

Populated areas like the Tokyo metropolitan area are seeing the largest recovery in housing starts, jumping 30 percent over the previous year. According to sources the government has taken numerous measures to stimulate the housing sector.

A recent issue of the Japan Lumber Reports (JLR) states log export prices in Sabah and Sarak remain firm on the back of some aggressive purchasing by China and India. As log supply remains tight, there are no prospects for prices to ease. At Tanjung Manis port in Sarawak, Meranti regular log export prices breached U.S. \$255 per cu.m, Freight On Board (FOB) and inched towards US\$240 per cu.m FOB. Prices at Bintulu port are getting closer to those at Tanjung Manis port. In Sabah, log prices are soaring for all species and grades. Log export prices at Tawau port for mix Serayah logs are at US\$245 per cu.m from December 2010, to US\$285 and US\$260-265 per cu.m FOB respectively.

Log supply continues to be tight as a result of harvesting limitations and delays in transportation to the ports. JLR states that even some local plywood mills in Sarawak have been forced to shut down temporarily due to the shortage of logs. As a result of the delays, demurrage and total shipping costs are now higher. Following hikes, the revised freight costs are now at US\$47-48 per cu.m.

The market for imported plywood is said to be very firm following a considerable increase in prices set by the largest plywood supplier in Malaysia. The high pricing is due to the shortage of logs, which pushes prices up. Importers have accepted the higher prices in the face of the continuing tight supply and possible further price hikes, although the higher prices may eventually result in increased supply.

Malaysia—According to recent data Europeans and Americans spent an average of US\$540 and US\$300 per year in terms of consumer spending on furniture. In contrast, Malaysians spent only an average of US\$40 per year. While Malaysian furniture is of international standards, most Malaysians prefer imported furniture to domestic products.

Some 85 percent of furniture manufactured in Malaysia is sold on the export market as a result. Trade statistics show the U.S. remained the largest market accounting for RM1.98 billion of Malaysian furniture exports, followed by Japan (RM573 million), Singapore (RM477 million) and the UK (RM407 million).

Other important export destinations include Australia, Canada, Germany, India, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi

Import/Export Wood Purchasing News

Arabia. Asia is also emerging as an important market for Malaysian furniture exports on account of population reaching 1.3 billion in China, 1 billion in India and 550 million in the ASEAN economic zone.

Myanmar—Teak and other hardwoods are reported as having favorable market conditions in Myanmar. Market prospect for Kanyin logs has also improved particularly for veneer production. At Myanmar Timber Enterprise (MTE) tender sales, the higher-grade Teak SG5 logs fetched lower prices than the lower grade Teak SG6 logs. According to an analyst, this was due mainly to forest area preference and grading. All Teak SG6 logs came from special and first class areas, while 42 percent of SG5 logs originated from second and third class areas. An analyst says that besides the origin, prices are determined by other factors including buyers' preference.

Other hardwood tender sales were at favorable prices indicating improving markets. Some 265 tons of export quality Pyinkadue logs received US\$561-US\$762 per Hoppus tons (MTE list price US\$678). In addition, some 500 tons of export quality Kanyin logs received US\$424-US\$434 per Hoppus tons (MTE list price US\$390).

India—The Ministry of Commerce and Industry recently reported exports reached up to US\$20.6 billion, 33 percent higher than in 2010. Imports also rose to US\$28.6 billion, up 13 percent from the same month last year. Increasing exports to Latin America, Africa and Asia is offsetting exports to North America and Europe.

Reports from an analyst indicate domestic demand for processed timber products is on the rise. Demand for plywood is good with imports from China increasing. However, the quality of the plywood imported has gone down.

Auction sales of timber in government depots were brisk with arrivals of fresh Teak logs. As prices for imported Teak climb, auction sale prices are also up. In addition to fresh logs remaining logs from earlier auctions as well as logs harvested during previous season were sold in auction sales.

Less arrivals of Teak in depots of Maharashtra were reported. Gujarat auctions sales ground halted as bidders objected to the electric auction sales system introduced by the local government to be launched in March 2011. In contrast, sales in Madhya Pradesh was more active. Teak supply remained good in Central Indian depots with arrivals from Hoshangabad, Jabalpur, Harda and Baitul.

West Africa—Timber producers and exporters are upbeat on market prospects remaining strong at firm prices. Although European demand is still subdued, there are signs of increased interest from some European importers in response to improved demand for refurbishment projects rather than new build.

The economic recovery has been strongest in Germany, following France, which has attributed to improved demand. In contrast, timber trading in the UK and Netherlands has yet to see improvement.

Cote d'Ivoire's political turmoil continues unabated and the EU imposed sanctions against Laurent Gbagbo and some members of his administration. Timber producers in Cote d'Ivoire have managed to continue limited production and exports but there are concerns that the on-going crisis may result in the closure of transport and ports in the country.

The latest reports indicate the EU sanctions are already having some effect on Cote d'Ivoire shipments as European importers have begun boycotting imports from the country. For example, Italian buyers who used to purchase Iroko from Cote d'Ivoire, are now making inquiries with other producing countries in the region. For the time being, other species are being sourced from existing stocks in the EU.

An analyst said the overall impact of the EU sanctions is still difficult to assess in light of the absence of relevant details of the move.

Russia—The Russian government imposed a 25 percent softwood log export tax in 2008. Since that time, Russian log exports have decreased dramatically. Russian log exports decreased from a peak of 51 million m3 in 2006 to about 20 million m3, a decrease of 59 percent.

Russian log importers such as Finland, the Baltics, Germany, South Korea and

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**BUSINESS TRENDS
(ABROAD)**

Continued from page 22

Japan have almost halted Russian log imports during the last four years.

The only Russian log export market that has maintained a large log import business is China. Imports to China of Russian logs reached 25.5 million m3 in 2007 and have dropped to just over 14 million m3, a decrease of 45 percent. Including this drop, China accounted for 70 percent of Russia's log exports.

While there have been no official announcements by the Russian government about the new log export tax rates after accession to the WTO, Finnish government officials have stated that the new Russian export tax rate for softwood logs will be 50 percent lower than current rates. Hardwood tax rates will decrease by around 65 percent.

Finland—According to reports, the Finnish forest industry purchased one million cubic meters of timber from private forests in recent months. Timber demand is reported to be good with specific interest in stands, which can be harvested in summer, the Finnish Forest Industries Federation said.

Recent procurements of saw logs came to 0.9 million cubic meters, a third less than a year earlier. Average stumpage price of softwood saw logs increased 2 percent, while the average price of Birch saw logs is up 3 percent. On average, Pine saw logs received Euro 53 and Spruce saw logs Euro 54 per cubic meter. Average price for Birch saw logs was reported at Euro 44 per cubic meter.

**BUSINESS TRENDS
(CANADA)**

Ontario

Industry contacts still agree that competitive business conditions are still prevalent for domestic and overseas markets. Inflationary pressures are increasing for consumers and businesses alike, with the recent fuel price spikes having immediate impact. On the supply side, markets are down somewhat.

Following the March 11 earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan, the forestry sector pledged their assistance to help build temporary shelters for the people of Japan. In a letter addressed to its Japanese customers, the industry pledged to help in the short and long term to rebuild the country and provide housing for those affected by the disaster. The country's timber production has been stalled by the devastation.

The federal budget was tabled March 23rd, and many organizations in the forestry sector saw it as one that will help the beleaguered industry develop new markets and products, become more energy-efficient, and expand its markets and products beyond lumber, pulp and paper. The federal government announced it plans to provide \$60 million in 2011-2012 to help with forestry innovation and accessing new overseas markets as it emerges from the recent economic downturn.

The current FPInnovation's Transformative Technologies Program has been extended. The Finance Minister also prolonged by two years a 50-percent, accelerated capital cost allowance introduced in the 2007 budget for manufacturing or processing machinery – a move the forest industry says will benefit the environment and lead to capital investment in mills.

Several forestry organizations added they were pleased and encouraged that the federal government recognized the value of a strong, sustainable forest industry, both for Canada's economy and its environment. It also recognized that the forest products industry needs to diversify and broaden its markets outside of the United States. This will help build on investments that government and industry have already made that have increased exports to new markets, such as to China.

The budget also extended by two years the Accelerated Capital Cost Allowance, and will continue with the business tax reductions provided for by the 2007 Budget. These initiatives will encourage

capital investment in Canadian mills and the Canadian economy more broadly.

The budget will also help support the North American Wood First initiative, which promotes the use of wood in non-residential construction. This is seen as valuable to the industry in getting exposure of their products.

With the call for a May election, it is agreed that all parties support this section of the budget, and if there is a new party elected, these dollars will be included in the next budget. One wonders, however, what will be the effect of the delay to the industry and to exporting associations that need these funds to promote Canadian wood products abroad. The money will come, but when, is the unanswered question.

Canadians are confident that they are paying down their mortgages, and they also believe they have the means necessary to weather a drop in house prices, contrary to worries that household debt is out of control, revealed a poll in mid-March. Almost three-quarters of Canadians, or 73 percent, believe that they or their families are well-positioned in the event of tumbling home prices, according to the annual RBC Homeownership Study undertaken by Royal Bank of Canada.

The poll found that 85 percent of respondents feel that they are doing a good or excellent job of paying down their mortgage, while 90 percent of Canadians are confident that real estate in Canada is a good investment.

Confidence was drawn from stable employment and rising incomes. The survey was released the week following the Bank of Canada announcement to leave its benchmark interest rate unchanged at 1 percent.

The central bank and other policymakers had flagged personal debt as a danger to the economy, although the Bank of Canada said in March that household debt was less of a concern than it had been in past months. Consumer spending remained strong but was easing to levels more in line with incomes, the bank said.

Worries about personal debt had twice prompted the government to introduce stricter mortgage rules to prevent overheating in the housing market. The survey showed that Canadians, supported by a strong banking system, still had a strong interest in purchasing a home over the next two years. Interest declined slightly in the quarter, but remains high overall with 29 percent saying it's likely they will buy. That was down two points from 2010 but is higher than any other year since 2006, the report said. Compared with last year, however, fewer Canadians said it was better to buy now than wait.

Rising home prices were the No. 1 concern about purchasing a home followed by rising mortgage rates, the poll showed. The poll found that 40 percent of Canadians feel the current housing market is balanced equally between buyers and sellers, a rise of five points over 2010.

The survey of 2,103 people is considered accurate to within plus or minus 2.2 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

Quebec

The Spring thaw was not so much of a concern to lead to supply strains for the regionally important species Hard Maple. Disruptions in logging are usually expected at this time during the spring thaw, with disruptions in logging expected to reduce sawmill production for a period of time. Demand for this species is not excessively robust, or for any particular grade. The demand for kiln dried Hard Maple is buffered from the decline in sawmill output during this time. The supply was adequate to meet the demand over the winter months and into the early spring.

The Council of Forest Industries of Quebec – CFIQ (Le Conseil de l'industrie forestière du Québec – CIFQ) and its members were upset by the Quebec budget's content with regards to forestry. Far from improving the situation, this budget will hinder the forestry sector, causing it to move backwards rather than forward they said. The CFIQ wonders at the importance that represents the forest industry to the government of Quebec, which the industry enables more than 68,000 direct jobs spread throughout many communities across Quebec and accounts for 12.5 percent of exports for the province.

While the sector needs structuring action to facilitate its transformation, primarily in innovation and investment incentives, the budget is silent on these issues, and what's

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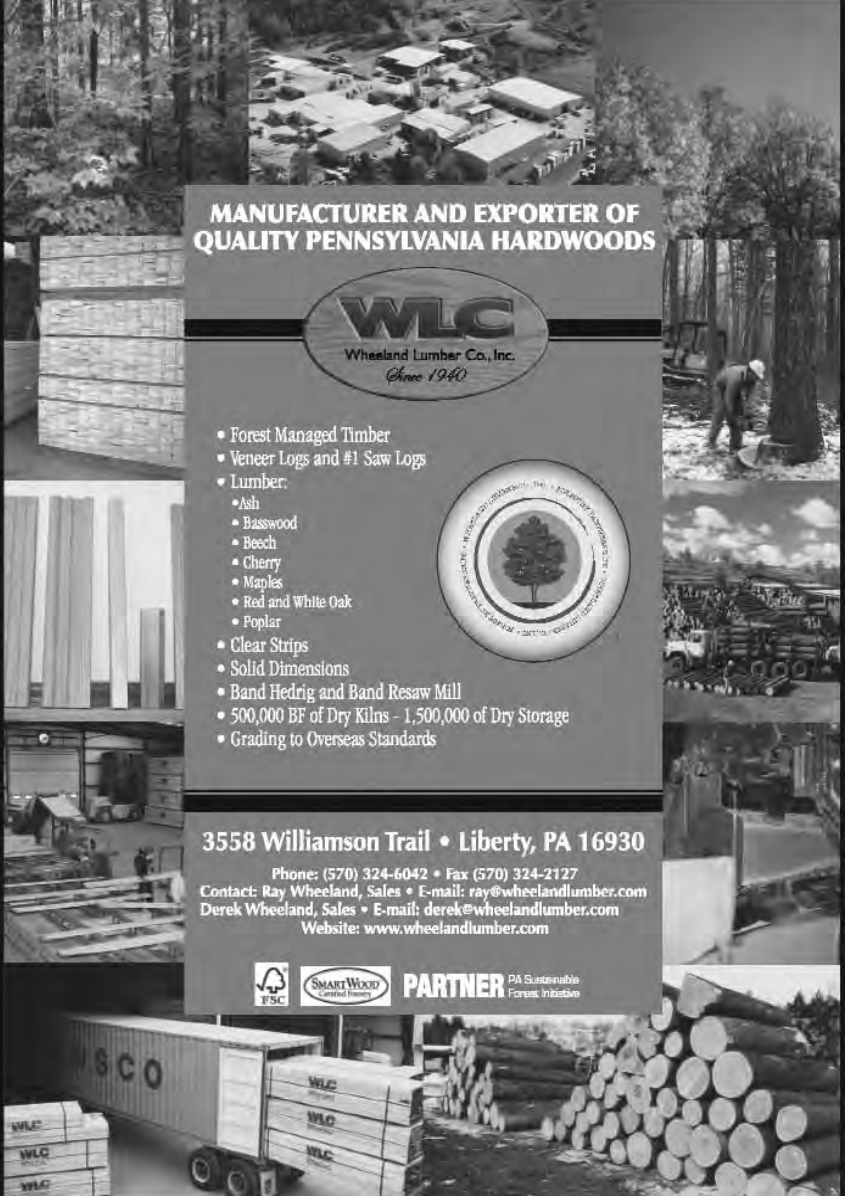
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BUSINESS TRENDS (CANADA)

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more, says the CFIQ, is putting an end to the program known as 'Renfort' that made credit access easier to businesses in the province.

As well, adds the CFIQ, the government has subjected firms to an additional burden by deciding to arbitrarily fix forestry fees rather than letting them adapt to market conditions, which would have reduced these fees by at least \$12 million for the year 2011-2012. The CFIQ is also dismayed that the government did not carry forward, in its 2011 budget, support measures for the forestry sector, notably for the suppression of forest fires and for the battle against pests and diseases. The industry will, therefore, have to assume this \$12.5 million cost.

This is all the more incomprehensible, they feel, as the government will receive tax sums paid by industry for softwood lumber exports to the United States, taxes amounting to 17.6 percent, the highest level in Canada. For the year 2011, this tax will bring in more than \$30 million to the Quebec State coffers.

They believe that as there is nothing in this budget, it means the publication of the development strategy for the forest industry that the Quebec Minister has been promising for several months is imminent. A similar strategy, based on solid initiatives and equipped with adequate financing, is necessary in order to allow the industry transformation. It is urgent that the government reveals this strategy and the means of implementing it in order to show that it believes in the future of the forest industry in Quebec and to this ecological material of excellence.

The seasonally adjusted annual rate of housing starts was 181,900 units in February, according to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). This is up from 170,600 units in January 2011.

"Housing starts moved higher in February because of increases in Ontario and the Prairies," said the Chief Economist at CMHC's Market Analysis Centre. "The bulk of this increase was felt in the multiples segment. From last month, multi-family starts were up in Saskatchewan and in Toronto."

The seasonally adjusted annual rate of urban starts increased by 9.4 percent to 161,000 units in February. Urban multiple starts were up by 14.5 percent in February to 94,900 units, while single urban starts edged higher by 3.0 percent to 66,100 units.

February's seasonally adjusted annual rate of urban starts decreased by 24.7 percent in Atlantic Canada, by 7.1 percent in Québec, and by 5.9 percent in British Columbia. Urban starts increased by 29.3 percent in Ontario and by 26.1 percent in the Prairies.

Rural starts were estimated at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 20,900 units in February.

BUSINESS TRENDS (U.S.A.)

NORTHEAST

Northeastern hardwood suppliers report mixed activity in recent weeks. Weather conditions earlier this year slowed loggers down, which has resulted in some sawmills having low log decks.

In Connecticut, a contact said heavy snow and rain in his area during the winter months significantly lowered his log decks for the spring. "Logging was affected considerably by the weather at the beginning of this year. Our log supplies are down but we don't expect a huge increase in demand this season, so we should be okay with what we have," he said.

However, he mentioned that Ash lumber has increased in demand recently. "Number 2 A and Better is picking up. We have been operating from a limited supply though." He also noted that while his kiln-dried inventory is low, activity is low enough to prevent price increases.

Another supplier in Connecticut reported opposite activity. "We haven't missed any production time due to low supplies," he explained. "Yes, this region is having supply issues, but we have not been affected by them." He said some of his customers actually experienced a slight increase in demand at the beginning of the year. "Some did and many didn't. Some sectors

Import/Export Wood Purchasing News

of the market have actually been restricted in their ordering due to decreases in activity."

The contact said he is paying close attention to his green hardwood lumber production. "We have to make certain we're on the same page with the customer. If 'X' is what they want, 'X' is what they get. Competition is strong right now; you have to be extremely careful."

Adding to profit restraints, he said increases in transportation costs are difficult to pass along to manufacturers. "Distributors are absorbing most of the freight rate increases," he noted.

Manufacturing sources in the region report slow order files with little to no indication of improved conditions to come. A furniture manufacturer said his company is scaling back on hours and raw material purchases. "Business vitality for this industry is becoming almost entirely dependent upon international markets," he said. "Overseas buyers are dealing with a lack of demand just like we are here, so they are also keeping their raw material purchases to a minimum."

A hardwood supplier in Pennsylvania said demand from his export markets is steady but not increasing. "We are sending more of the Common grades to Vietnam and China than FAS. White Oak in particular seems to be the specie that is moving on the export market," he noted.

A hardwood flooring manufacturer, which also supplies hardwood lumber said spring breakup has had an impact on logging activity, adding to the supply shortage. "Some sectors of the market are spotty. For example when Oak strip flooring purchases decreased, tie production increased. Raw material purchases have dropped because sales of finished products are down significantly."

The 12-month hardwood production is still running nearly 35 percent ahead of 2010, thanks to the 2010 first-half surge. However, near term production is only running about 5 percent ahead of this time last year," said a New York source. "As long as we're above the zero line, production is better than last year."

"Bottom line prognosis: the U.S. recovery will continue, slowly, through this year and into 2012," he continued. "Middle East turmoil and the Japanese earthquake may decelerate the near term progress, but barring some event of truly catastrophic global proportions, most of the world's economies will continue to improve during the next year or two. We should continue to be prepared for incrementally increasing demand for hardwoods in the months ahead. Preparation and planning will allow you to take advantage of this growing demand."

LAKE STATES

Hardwood lumber suppliers in the lake states region account for competitive market conditions as temperatures get warmer across the nation. According to some, indicators of a very moderate uptick in demand are also appearing.

A Michigan supplier said seasonal demand is improving. "With winter behind us, remodelers are starting to get more business." In regard to market movement, the contact said Maple and Oak are moving well and Cherry is slow. "Pricing of the Maples and Oaks has reached a level where buyers are increasingly interested," he explained. "Cherry has been difficult to move for the last three years." He also noted that what little movement there is in Cherry is in No. 1 Common and No. 2 A, not FAS grades.

"A lot of our customer base is made up of hardwood flooring manufacturers. Their business has been weak, which negatively affects demand for the upper grades," he continued. "A few of our cabinet customers are anticipating an uptick in the months ahead, so we're keeping our inventory levels adjusted." The supplier said while his operation does have ample inventory, they are reserved and prepared for 'just-in-time' ordering.

An Indiana hardwood wholesaler said his kiln dried inventories are low but due to low sales activity, he is unable to justify increasing his purchases. "Our sales levels are at about 50 percent of what they were three years ago," he explained. "We're not complaining because in this climate, that's 30 percent better than where we were a year ago."

He mentioned recent increases in fuel costs as a significant concern. "We're moving into our busiest season and some of that is expected, but what we're seeing right now are increases that are difficult to

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BUSINESS TRENDS
(U.S.A.)

Continued from page 24

absorb and even more difficult to pass down,” he said.

In reference to supply issues the contact said availability has been good for all domestic hardwood species. However, truck availability is a different situation. “As our industry starts to recover, we’ve realized that we lost a lot of truckers. We also have fewer suppliers, but we are competing with other commodities for transportation.”

Taking a look into the coming months, the source said he expects a moderate increase in business activity.

An end user in Minnesota, which manufactures cabinetry, windows and doors, noted that due to the company’s rural location, they have been forced to be more resourceful in these challenging economic times. “Our commitment is to use our resources wisely, and that applies to its products as well,” he said. “Green-built homes are taking an increasingly large percentage of the market in proportion to their price, because home buyers’ motivation today is cost effectiveness.”

“The key is value for every stakeholder in the process, from the manufacturer to the builder and the homebuyer,” said a National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) representative.

The good news, according to the NAHB representative, is that product manufacturers have been able to focus on the creation of new technology during the current building downturn “that will make green building more affordable.”

SOUTHEAST

Business activity in the southeast has seen little change according to sources. Suppliers and manufacturers report challenging market conditions along with uncertainty for the future economy.

As we head into the traditionally busy season many hardwood suppliers noted increases in fuel rates. Particularly those exporting goods overseas are noticing a dramatic spike in transportation costs. “We’re paying more for shipping in all areas,” a supplier in North Carolina noted. “The higher gas and diesel prices are affecting the entire supply chain.”

However, the contact said fuel costs were a minor concern compared to the historically low housing market. “We do have some bright spots though,” he explained. “Demand from China for Red Oak continues to pick up and other foreign markets are improving as we approach summer.”

“Green lumber that sawmills are producing is beginning to match up with demand, which makes the market a better place for us all,” he continued. “Kiln dried lumber inventories have declined also and are aligning better with the demand of the market.”

In Alabama increases in the cost of logistics is also a primary factor for another hardwood supplier. “We coasted along with marginal increases in the winter months. Spring and summer will not be the same.” While the source did say raises in transportation costs are traditional for this time of year, he added, “These increases are steeper than normal and difficult to pass along to our customers.”

Predominately supplying 4/4 No. 2 and 3 Common Oak, the source also noted that wet weather conditions from earlier this year are having lingering effects on hardwoods. “Certain pockets of the south had a really wet winter, which has slowed the drying process down for hardwoods,” he said. “Having said that, I’ll also note that because demand is off so much, it hasn’t had an impact on supply.”

As for demand for individual species, he said, “Traffic for White Oak is dependent on international markets. Poplar sales have been impacted both domestically and internationally. Interest in the upper grades across the board is weak. But industrial grades are picking up.”

“Demand for Oak and mixed hardwoods is picking up,” a supplier in Arkansas commented.

The source reported pricing difficulties and attributed them to swings in sawmill production. “What we’ve experienced in the last few years is unprecedented. Our customers are reporting more stable conditions at this point. But pricing is not at an even balance for us to profit.”

He said demand for boards has not improved, though ongoing business orders and shipments are consistent. As for short-ages of particular materials the source said Soft Maple is becoming harder to find. “We don’t produce a lot of it here, but supplies are getting low.”

According to the Federal Reserve’s Beige Book, homebuilders in the southeast region reported slow growth in new home sales for January and early February, while buyer traffic weakened compared with late last year. The majority of homebuilders stated that construction activity was below the year-ago level.

Many homebuilders in the area reported rising material costs, which they are unable to pass down because of continued downward pressure on home prices. The outlook for sales growth over the next several months improved slightly, but the overall level of sales is expected to remain very low.

Nonresidential construction activity remained at low levels. Most commercial contractors said business climate has not changed since the end of 2010. The majority of contacts expect construction activity to remain at low levels this year.

Lawrence Yun, the chief economist at the National Association of Realtors (NAR), said: “While home buyers over the past two years have been exceptionally successful with historically low default rates, there is still an elevated level of shadow inventory of distressed homes from past lending mistakes that need to go through the system. We should not expect the recovery to be in a straight upward path—it will zig-zag at times.”

Building permits fell 10.4 percent, down to an annualized rate of 562,000 from December’s level of 627,000. Housing starts gained ground, however, to an annualized rate of 596,000.

The Builder’s Confidence Index remained unchanged at 16 for the fourth straight month. Regionally, the southeast posted gains.

Sales of new single family homes were 12.6 percent below December’s annualized rate and 18.6 percent below January 2010’s rate. At the current sales rate of 284,000 (annualized), 7.9 months of inventory are sitting on the market.

The Pending Home Sales Index fell 2.8 percent to 88.9, less than industry experts

Continued on page 26

IMPORT/EXPORT CALENDAR

June

16th Southeast Asia & Greater China Convention, American Hardwood Export Council, The Westin Nanjing, China. Contact: www.ahec-china.org or email ahec@zenithdimension.com. June 29.

July

AWFS Fair, Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact: www.awfsfair.org. July 20-23.

August

Expo Guadalajara, Guadalajara, Mexico. Contact: +52 33 3343 3400. Aug. 17-20.

September

Global Buyers Mission, Whistler, British Columbia. Contact: 604-891-1262. Sept. 7-10.

FMCChina, Shanghai World Expo Exhibition & Convention, Shanghai. Contact: www.fmc.com. Sept. 14-17.

Cairo Woodshow 2011, Cairo International Conference Center, Cairo, Egypt. Contact: www.cairowoodshow.com. Sept. 15-18.

National Hardwood Lumber Association, Annual Convention & Exhibit Showcase, Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center, Nashville, Tenn. Contact: www.nhlaconvention.com. Sept. 21-24.

Timber Expo, Ricoh Arena in Coventry, United Kingdom. Contact: www.timberexpo.co.uk. Sept. 27-28.

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had predicted. The index is just 1.5 percent below the 90.3 level of 2010 when the homebuyer tax credits were in place.

WEST COAST

Positive signs of recovery are still accounted for on the West Coast as hardwood buyers and suppliers continue to report increased business activity. A source in Oregon, which supplies hardwood lumber, said, "Our order files are in much better shape than they were at this time last year."

He attributes the recent changes in activity to increased demand from export clients. "Our export customers are ordering a little in advance again," he explained.

In regard to particular species he noted most species had improved demand with an exception to Poplar. "Most of our export customers are not ordering Poplar and haven't for quite some time. However we are just now starting to see some indications that international buyers may be interested in making Poplar purchases in the near future."

As for supply availability the contact said some species started to see a slight shortage during spring break. "Many mills, including us, built their log decks up enough to withstand the shortage. But some of the smaller operations don't have the financial backing to store enough logs to prevent an interruption in production."

The source said that while this type of situation is difficult for the sawmill, the supply pipeline is cushioned from short-term production losses at the sawmill level. "Reductions in Poplar production have had an impact on kiln-dried items," he mentioned.

As for what lies ahead for the remainder of 2011, the contact said, "We're almost at the halfway point and it's still really hard to tell what will come from 2011. We certainly can't do any worse than we did in 2010, so with that said, we expect a mild year."

A source in California said sales for his operation are strong. He attributes this specifically to his existing customer base. "Traditionally we have always served the industrial markets. Right now that market is doing fairly well. Our customers are placing orders and our inventory levels are good."

The contact, which had to diversify his operation in 2008 to adjust to a spiraling economy, said, "We found that we had to do things different. Doing things, 'the-way-we-always-did'—wasn't going to work in a market like that," he explained. "So we added equipment to our facility to be able to specify sorts by length and colors. We began manufacturing our own hardwood flooring, which has taken off to some degree. Unlike a lot of companies, we have always reinvested in our business during the good times, and therefore always maintained in the bad times."

Also in reference to measures taken to adjust, he said he hired a company to maximize his company's efficiency. "We had them come in and check us from the top of our heads to the ends of our toes," he explained. "They went through our facility and cut costs in every area." The contact said the only area that went without cutting was labor. "We have excellent people and many of them have been here 20-plus years."

When asked about his plans for the coming months, the supplier said, "We're still playing it close to the vest, but we are looking for more improvements in 2011 than 2010."

According to sources overall price pressures for final goods and services remained modest, despite notable price increases for assorted raw materials and commodities. Regional manufacturing activity continued to grow at a solid pace overall. Activity in regional housing markets however, remained very subdued.

Import/Export Wood Purchasing News



Grafton Cook

named as the association's new Executive Director.

Established in 1912, the purpose of the American Walnut Manufacturers Association is to promote the availability and image of Walnut products while fostering good forest management and raw material conversion practices which maximize the value of the timber resource.

Currently the association is undertaking a study of the feasibility of Forest Stewardship Council certification for Black Walnut. For new membership dues contact Rick Barrett of Midwest Hardwoods, the association's chairman of the membership committee at (763) 391-6746.

Established in 1935, Missouri-Pacific Lumber produces Black Walnut, Red and White Oak, Soft Maple and other raw hardwoods. Eighty-five percent of the company's production is steamed, kiln-dried furniture grade American Black Walnut. For more information visit www.mopaculumber.com.

Mississauga, Ontario—Rick Ekstein, president and chief executive officer of Weston Forest Products Inc., announced that he has completed his acquisition of the outstanding shares of Weston Forest Products.

During a recent company meeting, Ekstein also announced the following promotions:

Steve Ekstein, Executive Vice President and Vice President of Distribution: Ekstein joined Weston Forest Products in 1987 after completing his BA in Economics at the University of Toronto. He is now taking responsibility for growing marketshare in the industrial and infrastructure sectors.

Steve Rhone, Vice President of Operations: Rhone is a career lumberman at Weston Forest Products, having joined Weston as a general laborer in September 1987 at the age of 17. Rhone has built and maintained numerous customer and supplier relationships for Weston, many of which have lasted over 20 years and continue today.

Steven Rustja, Vice President of Trading: In January of 2001, Rustja joined Weston Forest Products as a salesperson, bringing with him knowledge acquired from years in lumber sales and management. Rustja excelled in his position and was quickly promoted to softwood lumber purchasing. By 2004, he was put in charge of a small sales team, which under his leadership grew into the North American Sales Group. In addition to managing his sales team, Rustja has managed to generate the most sales revenue in the company year after year.

Rob Hruby, Vice President of Purchasing: Hruby has been in the forest products industry since 1983. Between his second and third years of the Bachelor of Science in Forestry (B.Sc.F.) program at the University of Toronto, he was appointed assistant plant manager at the RAM Forest Products pressure-treating facility in Vondorf, Ontario. He has held numerous positions in the industry, including Vice President of Purchasing at Great Lakes MSR Lumber and President of Georgian Bay Forest Products, and he has been active in the Lumber Remanufacturing Association of Ontario. Hruby has been with Weston Forest Group for 10 years.

Weston Forest Products is an integral member of the Weston Forest Group of companies. A family-owned and operated company, Weston has been distributing and remanufacturing softwood, hardwood and panel products to industrial customers throughout North America since 1953.

United States—Decisions are being made by the U.S. to decide whether or not to tack additional duties on wood flooring imported from China.

This is yet another trade dispute between the two countries. However, this situation also has American flooring distributors against one another as manufacturer-owned companies seeking the duties face off with independent firms.

The flooring manufacturers filed a petition with the Commerce Department seeking duties on Chinese-manufactured wood flooring, made from veneers. The U.S. market for these goods totaled some \$736 million in 2009 based on the wholesale value

NEWSWIRES

West Lafayette, Indiana—The American Walnut Manufacturers Association (AWMA), based here, recently announced Grafton Cook of Missouri-Pacific Lumber Co. has been elected as President of the association. Liz Jackson has also been

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NEWSWIRES

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of imports and shipments from U.S. producers.

The U.S. firms allege that the Chinese flooring is subsidized by Beijing and dumped on the market at less than fair value. Generally defined as pricing exports below what is charged in the home market, 'dumping' is an ongoing battle between the two countries.

Of the eight U.S. manufacturers seeking duties in recent years, six have also imported Chinese flooring and distributed it along with their domestically made products. Some were imported from China because their flooring retailer and home-builder customers were requiring lower-priced flooring, according to a source.

Portland, Oregon—The Softwood Export Council (SEC), headquartered here, recently introduced Natalie Macias as its new International Marketing Manager. Macias graduated from Oregon State University (OSU) where she obtained her master's degree in forest products marketing.

According to SEC, Macias is familiar with the forest products industry due to the variety of internships she fulfilled while attending OSU. "Natalie looks forward to making new contacts and learning more about the industry through her work at SEC," a representative of the Council said. "She will be your contact for future travel needs at SEC."

Macias can be reached at natalie@softwood.org.

New Orleans, Louisiana—The Southern Forest Products Association (SFPA), headquartered here, launched a new website to serve markets for Southern Pine lumber around the world. SouthernPineGlobal.com is now available online to serve international traders of Southern Yellow Pine (SYP) in nine languages. The site provides a new business-to-business presence for its affiliated exporters.

"Exporters now have a high-visibility internet domain, an online kiosk in the international marketplace for the world trade of Southern Yellow Pine," SFPA Director of International Market Development Richard Kleiner said.

According to SFPA three features help importers find sources of supply—a purchase inquiry service, product locator, and a directory listing 33 export firms. Purchase inquiries are immediately distributed to all SFPA producers, or importers may choose to find a specific exporter of SYP material using the product locator. Selections include rough export grades, dimension lumber, pressure-treated, certified wood, pallet and packaging stock, piling, poles and logs.

SouthernPineGlobal.com joins a family of websites sponsored by American Softwoods, a promotional partnership of SFPA, APA-The Engineered Wood Association and the Softwood Export Council as cooperators with the U.S. Foreign Agricultural Service market access and development program.

Washington, D.C.—The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) reported that multi-layered wood flooring exported from the People's Republic of China was unfairly subsidized.

Preliminary findings by the DOC determined that Chinese producers/exporters have received countervailable subsidies ranging up to 27 percent, giving them a pricing advantage in the U.S. market versus domestic flooring manufacturers.

Some of the firms were found not to have been subsidized and others were presumed to have been subsidized because they did not respond to the inquiry by the Commerce Department.

Included in the list are 127 Chinese firms that allegedly received a 27 percent advantage in subsidies. Two firms analyzed—Fine Furniture (Shanghai) Ltd. (and its affiliates Great Wood (Tonghua) Ltd., and Fine Furniture Plantation (Shishou) Ltd.—allegedly received a preliminary net subsidy rate of 2.25 percent.

The DOC is scheduled to make a final determination by the end of summer.

Washington, D.C.—Hardwood lumber exports from the U.S. recently rose 34 per-

Import/Export Wood Purchasing News

cent to 1.067 billion board feet, the largest increase in four years. Exports had fallen to 799 million board feet in 2009, a 22-year record low from record highs of 1.324 billion board feet in 2006.

According to sources, shipments have increased to each of the five largest markets and every major region. Averages for 10-year exports to some of these destinations were still reported slow.

Average shipment value rose 8 percent to \$1,234 per thousand board feet, driven by higher average lumber prices and growing Chinese purchases of upper grades, the total export value surged 44 percent to \$1.318 billion.

Washington, D.C.—AF&PA President and CEO Donna Harman issued the following statement regarding the announcement of agreement on the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement.

"AF&PA applauds the Obama Administration for reaching an agreement with Colombia on labor and judicial issues that will allow for Congressional action on the long-dormant U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (TPA). We believe trade agreements, such as the Colombia TPA, are essential for U.S. competitiveness and creating a level playing field for companies here at home. When companies are able to compete, they are more likely to grow and create jobs. The agreement will lower trade barriers for U.S. forest products and will promote sustainable development and management of forest resources in Colombia.

"The U.S.-Colombia TPA will facilitate the development and improvement of environmental protection, including sustainable forest management. This is significant since U.S. forest products companies operate in a global market where issues surrounding the legality and sustainability of timber and other manufactured forest products are growing in importance."

Peterman, Alabama—Georgia-Pacific recently sent more than 300 severance payments to workers laid off from its plywood mill here.

According to the Press-Register, the company did not say when the mill would reopen.

Melodie Ruse, spokesperson for Georgia-Pacific said that the company had taken an optimistic view that the market would rebound when it closed the mill, but now believed it would be fairer to the mill's employees to pay severance and let them get on with their lives.

Georgia-Pacific however, is not removing equipment or trying to sell the property, Ruse said.

British Columbia, Canada—Aspen Planers and United Steelworkers approved a labor deal, which cleared the way for the Savona Specialty Plywood Mill to reopen here.

Previous owners of Ainsworth Lumber closed the facility about 18 months earlier stating market conditions and the strength of the Canadian dollar as the cause. The layoff resulted in 150 lay-offs at Savona and 100 at Lillooet.

Both operations were purchased by Aspen Planers and negotiations began last year. The Savona mill has been out of operation for nearly 18 months.

OBITUARY

Cheshire, Ore.—Michael Glazier, 35, recently died of acute leukemia.

He was born June 3, 1975, in Eugene to Edward and Delores Abarr Glazier. He married Nicole Parker on June 19, 1999, in Triangle Lake.

He graduated from Triangle Lake High School in 1993. Glazier worked as procurement manager at States Industries for 17 years. He also worked in construction, remodeling, rental home management and hog and chicken farming.

Survivors include his wife; his parents, Dee Glazier and Ed and Carolyn Glazier; a son, Parker of Cheshire; two daughters, Kaylee and Madeline Glazier, both of Cheshire; a sister, Alisa Glazier of Houston, Texas; and a brother, Wade Washburn of Albany.

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