

alized System of Preferences duty was.”

David Whitten
Bingaman and Son Lumber
Inc.
Kreamer, Pennsylvania

“By the numbers, YTD 2015 to 2014 to China, we are down 21 percent volume (24 percent value), but note the China boom took place mid-2013 through mid-2014, so last year was an aberration. Since Europe has been dramatically lower, China was very important. Random-width-and-length lumber demand and prices are also dramatically lower due to the China purchasing decrease, but we are producing less to control inventory. We ship to 32 countries.

This year, our most popular export products have been North American hardwood products, logs, KD lumber, fixed width lumber, ripped strips, and glued products. We’ve not had any dramatic changes in shipping these products either.”

Brian Stordeur
Downes & Reader Hardwood Co. Inc.
Stoughton, Massachusetts

“Mostly we import our wood. The main ones that we import are the African species, which include Mahogany and Sapele. That’s in rough sawn lumber. Since we don’t export then I’m not aware of overseas demands, but domestically White Oak still seems to be in very high demand, even with the absence of much purchasing being done by China.

As far as pricing for imports that have come in currently – in regard to anything from Europe or Africa, the price has come down because the Euro has weakened and the dollar has strengthened quite a bit. You see a bit of that movement out there.

I do hear that on the domestic front what’s happening now is some of the domestic woods are starting to drop in price with availability going up. That’s not necessarily on all of the domestic species, but some are experiencing downward movement. Rather than price, there’s been a little of an increase in availability for some species too. Maybe that’s a sign before the price goes down – stable price, but availability up is basically some of the reports that we’re getting.

In regard to shipping and transportation, I don’t believe that we’ve seen many issues with delays.

Los Angeles was really choked up for a long time. Obviously that’s lifted, but it was quite a long time that the strikes went on causing delays.”

Stacey Treat
Treat Hardwood Lumber
Wilkesboro, North Carolina

“With exporters reporting sales to



Jordan McIlvain
Alan McIlvain Company
Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania

“Our customers are in the U.S. and Canada and they are either re-sellers, distribution yards, lumber yards, architectural millwork operations, and homebuilders.

We re-export some imports to Canada, but it’s mostly all imports that we do. We import Genuine Mahogany, Spanish Cedar, Sapele, Mahogany, African/Khaya Mahogany and Jatoba (Brazilian Cherry.)

We aren’t currently experiencing shipping issues, however, everything’s a little behind from where it would have been. Regardless, we feel things are still coming along steadily in the market, at least for us it is.” ■



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Genuine Mahogany	5/4	16,558'
Jatoba	4/4	47,236'
Red Grandis	5/4	14,282'
Sapele (R&Q FSC)	4/4	27,203'
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WHO'S WHO – Rogers – Continued from page 2

and importation, quality assurance and product development. Newman Lumber offers length-and-width sorts, LTL, half-truck, full truck and container shipments. Newman Lumber also offers certified wood. The company is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association and the International Wood Products Association. Rogers and his wife of 10 years, Glenda, have three daughters. In his free time, Rogers enjoys fly-fishing, golf and soccer. For more information visit www.newmanlumber.com. ■

CX JOY – Continued from page 9

committed to American species, such that it is now an overseas member of the American Hardwood Export Council.

Through adopting an advanced optimized cutting system from Germany and quality assurance systems, the company gained the support of high-end customers, mostly furniture producers in Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom as their preferred panel component supplier. As a high-performance partner for the solid wood furniture industry, CX JOY Hardwoods now offers various kinds of products, including solid edge glued panels, finger-joint edge-glued panels, fixed-length cut stock and multi-layer glued panels. These are widely used in tabletops, wardrobe cabinets, doors, benches, stair treads, hardwood flooring and furniture parts, such as table legs and drawers. “Mass producers need quality panels in many grades and sizes, so this is the space we fill,” said Yenling Chen, products and marketing manager.

CX JOY Hardwoods focuses on American kiln-dried hardwoods and has been the destination of more than 2,500 cubic meters of Red Alder lumber shipped every month from North America. While the majority of production is in Red Alder, the range also includes substantial volumes in



This solid wood American Black Walnut dinette is a popular CX JOY Hardwoods design.

White Oak and Black Walnut. Current direct imports are running at 70 to 100 containers per month of kiln-dried lumber. Exports run at about one container per day, or 1,500 cubic meters of finished products per month.

On the evidence of a recent inspection of high-end furniture made by its customers, CX JOY Hardwoods obviously sets high standards in material procurement, manufacturing and quality control to assure its overseas customers that every shipment will possess the same consistent high quality standard. When running the complete value-added process, the company trains its dedicated work force of 100 people in management systems, such as: ISO9001:2008 Quality Management System, ISO14001:2004 Environmental Management System, and OHSMS18001:2001 Occupation Health & Safety Management System. Furthermore, CX JOY Hardwoods was certified Chain of Custody by FSC and PEFC in 2012 and is committed to sustainably produced raw materials.

The plant, which processes only solid wood, currently has two automatic cutting lines. Using a Weinig advanced optimizing system with scanner, boards are ripped to width and cut-to-length and organized according to outstanding orders. There are two finger-jointing lines and the company is proud of its capacity to produce short (4mm) finger joints. Production incorporates grading, color matching, four-side planing and 120 grit sanding before the edge-gluing line – completed as one operation – with PVAc D3 glue. In a neat recovery, the short offcuts are sold to specialty handle producers in Europe. In species such as Black Walnut, CX JOY Hardwoods has been pioneering and promoting the use of low grade and sappy material to make artistic panels for designers of quality furniture.

The company has been seen regularly at Asian trade shows and is often located near the AHEC pavilion. Interzum and ZOW, both in Germany, are regular shows at which CX JOY Hardwoods also exhibits. At the Interzum 2015 furniture industry show in Guangzhou, and more recently at the Sylvawood show in Shanghai, it was AHEC's neighbor. With 75 percent of its products exported and 25 percent now sold in China, sales targets are changing. While the European Union, mainly Germany, has been the main market in past recent years, accounting for 60 percent of all exports, the company is now looking to expand its markets within Asia, particularly in Japan, Korea, Indonesia and Vietnam. Since the 2008 crisis, sales have grown in China, but not in a way that one would expect – by the company cooperating closely with top German designers who themselves supply the Chinese domestic market through many retail outlets.

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WHA – Continued from page 10

executive director of the American Hardwood Export Council, who addressed the globalization of the wood products industry. He outlined AHEC's goals as follows: to find new markets for grade lumber; to find new applications; and to capitalize on green credentials. Snow added that currently 60 percent of domestic hardwood lumber is sold to the industrial market, and 40 percent consists of graded lumber.

"We're finding new markets and new uses for exports," he said. "The long term trend is very, very positive. China is our biggest lumber consumer, followed by Canada, Vietnam, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan, Germany, Thailand and Spain. 2015 will be the second highest year of total exports for us in terms of dollars and volume."

He added that room for growth exists in the China market. "It is a mature market in China along the coast, but inland has barely been penetrated."

Steve Zambo, of Ally Global Logistics, focused on the current state of logistics during his presentation. "As China goes, we go," he said. "We will have slow, steady growth without China, but of course it will be faster with China onboard, although less volatile without them. Also, trucking continues to hurt the export market due to idle time resulting from chassis management."

"We see India trending up in regard to housing structural growth and the development of the middle class. We receive more lumber inquiries from India every day. Additionally, regarding imported lumber, it's grown from an annual \$1 billion forest products market in 2001 to a \$5 billion industry today. While that has grown, some experts predict a 12 percent decline in wood exports from 2014."

He was followed by Dana Cole, executive director of the Hardwood Federation, who covered the impact of federal policies on the hardwood industry, and reviewed the Hardwood Federation's mission. "We are educators and lobbyists. We tell politicians who you are, what you do and we support Congressional members who support us."

She outlined this year's priorities as addressing the following issues: the Northern Long Eared Bat; management of the national forests; EPA regulations and their impact on the wood products industry; legislation that affects export programs.

She was followed at the podium by Scott Leavengood, of the Oregon Wood Innovations Center at Oregon State University, whose presentation was titled "Innovation in Wood Use: What opportunities might be on the horizon for western hardwoods?" He emphasized that the innovation driv-

ers that exist for the wood products market include: efforts to increase durability, yields and to cut costs. Tactics to enhance sustainability include these wood modification options: furfurylation, a sustainable alternative to hardwoods from tropical regions; thermally modified lumber, an alternative to imported hardwoods that is increasing in popularity among European lumber manufacturers; and mechanical hardening, such as the use of hybrid Poplar. He mentioned, too, that cross laminated timber is becoming a product that is growing in use and demand as well.

Closing out the speaker's schedule was a question and answer session among attendees about the Hardwood Checkoff program.

Additionally, the Fellowship of Christian Lumbermen held a brief membership meeting in conjunction with the WHA event.

The WHA was founded in 1955 to assist western U.S. hardwoods to a position of prominence in the manufacturing of fine furniture, cabinets and pallets. Members consist of sawmills, manufacturers, re-manufacturers, wholesalers, pallet producers, timber owners and service organizations.

For more information, visit online at www.westernhardwood.com. ■

TUPELO FURNITURE – Continued from page 11

point. Additionally, approximately 30,000 retail furniture buyers visited the showroom floors, which is near the average number of visitors yearly.

Tupelo Furniture Market exhibitors reported good sales at the event, which supports the national trend of an increase in shipments of furniture and related items up about 6 percent over last year.

The Tupelo Furniture Market began in 1987 and today comprises 1.6 million square feet of space. The event will be held again Feb. 4-7, 2016, and Aug. 18-21, 2016.

For more information, visit online at www.tupelofurnituremarket.com. ■

AWFS – Continued from page 12

The recent AWFS Fair offered an in-depth platform for attendees to review new products, services, and equipment developments. Additionally, participants were invited to attend educational programming presented during the Fair in the College of Woodworking Knowledge® (CWWK). This was designed to meet the current needs of the show audience demographics with nearly 50 sessions spanning topics to enhance busi-

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ness management acumen, improve skill sets and increase knowledge of the latest technologies. Updates were also available regarding safety, sustainability and legislative updates.

Over 60 guest speakers presented informational sessions during the AWFS Fair. Meanwhile, the venue's tradeshow floor was filled with hundreds of exhibitor booths where the latest products were on display for attendees to view.

The AWFS Fair is held every other year.

The Association of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers began in 1911 as the Suppliers Chapter of the California Furniture Manufacturers Association. In 1979, the organization became a separate entity in order to better focus on representing the interests of companies and individuals who supply the home and institutional furnishing manufacturing industries.

Today, it is a national association with international membership that includes manufacturers and distributors of machines, hardware, lumber, upholstery materials, bedding, wood products and other suppliers to furniture and cabinet manufacturers. From its headquarters in Southern California, AWFS works closely with other trade groups.

To learn more, visit online www.awfs.org. ■

BUSINESS TRENDS ABROAD

Mänttä-Vilppula, Finland—Metsä Wood, headquartered in Espoo, Finland, the wood products business of Metsä Group, will start statutory employee negotiations to adjust its production in sawmills in Finland.

Oversupply and price competition that have prevailed in the sawn timber market have resulted in poor price development of Finnish sawn timber.

Metsä Wood laid off all of its employees at the Vilppula and Renko sawmills for three weeks. The statutory employee negotiations were completed during August, and any restrictions will primarily be implemented by the end of November.

Metsä said that the market situation for Pine-sawn lumber is challenging as well, and its development will be monitored closely during the autumn.

The Vilppula sawmill is located in the town of Mänttä-Vilppula. The annual capacity of the sawmill is approximately 450,000 cubic meters with five weekday weekly production and it has about 100 employees.

Metsä's Renko sawmill produces an estimated 280,000 cubic meters of

Whitewood per year.

China—According to China's Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine Announcement No. 143, 2015 imports of the species of Ash associated with a die-back disease (*Hymenoscyphus pseudoalbidus*) can be resumed provided the timber undergoes high temperature treatment.

Ash products must be accompanied by a plant quarantine certificate issued by the exporting country and this must provide details of treatment. Ash sawnwood from areas where the die-back disease is not found must also be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate.

Vietnam—Vietnam's wood industry gained growth in its export value in the first seven months of 2015, but will have difficulty maintaining its growth until the year-end, according to the daily Vietnam news reports.

The General Department of Customs reported the industry had gained a year-on-year increase of 8.4 percent in total export value to reach US\$3.7 billion. The U.S., Japan, and China were the three largest export markets for Vietnamese wooden products, accounting for 66.3 percent of the total export value.

Nguyen Ton Quyen, deputy chairman of the Vietnam Wood and Forestry Product Association, said that the domestic wood industry had achieved strong growth since 2000, seeing a surge in total export value from \$294 million in 2000 to \$6.2 billion in 2014, with an average growth rate of 15 percent each year.

Quyen added, "This year, the industry expected to gain a total export of \$7.2 billion. Vietnam would become the fourth largest exporter in the world market, after China, Italy, and Germany. In the near future, the top five export markets for Vietnamese wooden products would be the U.S., Japan, China, South Korea, and the European Union."

However, enterprises continue to face many challenges in achieving further growth in exports, such as the complications of exchange rates in the unstable supply of raw materials.

According to Quyen, the rising value of the U.S. dollar drove up the cost of imported raw materials, so enterprises had made little profit or had even suffered losses if the company could not recover its production costs.

Additionally, local producers import 70 percent of their raw materials while input costs of coal, electricity and water continue to rise. As a result, competition for Vietnam's wooden products is lower than for products from other countries, such as Myanmar, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

Russia—According to statistics from the Federal Customs Service of

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Russia, in January to June 2015, Russian logs export volumes went down to 9.2 million cubic meters, having decreased by 8.97 percent year-on-year.

In value terms, the decrease equaled -32.45 percent. The total value within that six months was US\$682.8 million, while in the respective period of 2014, this amount almost reached a billion-dollar threshold of US\$904.4 million.

With sawn wood exports, in the first half of 2015, the country exported 7.5 percent more sawn wood in volume terms than in the first half of the previous year. In 2015, the figures were 6.95 million cubic meters, compared to 6.47 cubic meters in 2014.

Despite better sawn timber exports in volume terms, in value-terms, there was an observed steady decline of 21.61 percent from US\$1.92 billion in January to June 2014 down to US\$1.58 billion in the respective period of 2015.

Additionally, Russian plywood exports grew in volume terms, but declined in value terms.

Switzerland—The Swiss Timber Market Commission (HMK) saw a timber market negatively impacted by a weak economic environment and a massive strong Swiss franc. The euro area is no stimulant for growth and the downturn in China recently unsettled the whole world.

At a meeting recently, the HMK agreed on two separate trends; Swiss sawyers, which indicate stable prices and forest owners, which expect to adapt to the slightly improved exchange rate.

Sawmills in Switzerland are supplied and in some cases, oversupplied. The sawmills aim to keep their production close to last year's levels, and therefore need fresh wood supplies.

A decline in demand from the packaging and pallet industry is also a matter of concern. For many, felling the current price level is not or barely adequate, so for forest owners, this situation can be very hard. If the Swiss franc comes closer to 1.10 CHF/EUR, Swiss Roundwood exports could revive and more sales could be ensured.

Japan—Housing starts in Japan slowed more than expected recently, according to data from Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism.

The increase is by 7.4 percent, but the growth is much lower than the double-digit expansion of 16.3 percent seen in June. Economists had expected a growth of 11 percent.

Additionally, at the same time, the number of annualized housing starts declined to 914,000 from 1.03 a month ago. Construction orders received by 50 big contractors dropped by an annual 4 percent, down from June's 15.4 percent rise.

Finland—Versowood commenced statutory co-operation negotiations concerning the adjustment of capacity to the current demand and order backlog. The negotiations cover all of its Finland sawmill units, which are located in Vierumäki, Otava, Riihimäki, and Hankasalmi.

Restrictions are primarily targeted at the production of Spruce timber, but there is also uncertainty regarding the production of Pine timber.

The statutory co-operations will be held according to the so-called shorter procedure, involving layoffs of a maximum of 90 days and employment termination of a maximum of 10 employees. The negotiations cover both blue-and-white collar employees. The layoffs are scheduled for late 2015 and early 2016.

Ville Kopra, Versowood's managing director, said, "The market situation has remained uncertain and challenging since last autumn. The prices of sawn timber have gone down, while timber prices have not been reduced accordingly, which has deteriorated profitability in this industry. These negotiations aim at adjusting our production to the current situation."

Sweden—Harvesting volumes in Sweden increased by 7 percent in 2014, according to most recent statistics from the Swedish Forest Agency. Gross felling in 2014 was estimated to 91.5 million cubic meter standing volume (stem volume over bark from stump to tip). It is the highest figure since 2007. This is an increase by 7 percent compared to 2013.

The total removals was estimated to 73.3 million cubic meter sold volume excluding bark, of which coniferous sawlogs accounted for 36.3 million cubic meters. This is an increase by 14 percent compared to 2013.

A comparison of gross felling in the three-year average (2012-2014) and (2011-2013) show a moderate increase of 1 percent to 87.5 million cubic meter standing volume.

Compared to the corresponding three-year average of gross felling divided by ownership class, there are no major changes. Individual forest

Continued on page 28

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Nelson Weaver, general manager, at Independence Lumber, Inc. and the owner of the firm, Randall Eller, are standing in front of the company's dry kilns in Independence, VA. Between both sawmill locations, the firm has 940,000 board feet per charge of dry kiln capacity.



This is a picture of Independence Lumber, Inc.'s 60 bay bin sorter located at their band mill operation in Independence, VA. They also have a planer at this operation.

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BUSINESS TRENDS ABROAD - Continued from page 27

owners accounted for 60 percent of gross felling, private sector companies, corporations and other private sector accounted for 29 percent and public owners accounted for 11 percent.

Africa—Okoume demand and prices continue to be depressed in contrast to prices and demand for Sapele and Sipo, which remain firm. Paduak is also in demand and prices have improved slightly.

The overriding factor influencing the market is slow demand from China. For China, demand for species such as Belli, Okan and Sapele have declined and prices have eased.

The stabilization of equity values on China’s stock markets has improved consumer confidence but importers remain cautious and will need time to reassess domestic demand prospects, which are largely dependent on a more positive outlook for the housing and construction industries. At the moment, buyers for China say there is no reason to place new orders when domestic sales have virtually halted. ■

BUSINESS TRENDS CANADA

ONTARIO

At the end of summer, contacts noted that production controls were in place to avoid stain in Soft Maple logs and green lumber. It was noted that volumes were down for this species, but that the supply was not limited. With the dryer weather of late summer, there was increased logging activity for Red Oak. Mills are striving for efficiencies as they produce the various species. Despite the slowdown in demand for White Oak from Europe, contacts expect to see more activity for this species this fall. Regardless the slowdown, there was enough volume being traded, which kept inventories in check and prices stable. Markets for the regionally important Hard Maple did not pick up as expected. Even though residential construction increased, consumer trending for painted interior fittings cut into this species’ demand. Contacts noted sawmill production was down, with only marginally adequate supplies to meet buyers’ needs for upper grade stocks. Caution was used to log, mill and produce Soft Maple products during the summer months. As for other species, green stocks were controlled and being absorbed by wholesalers and secondary manufacturers.

The federal government announced funding for two projects to connect workers with careers in the forest products and wood manufacturing sectors. The Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) is receiving over \$1 million to create an online database for the forest products sector that will include information on available jobs based on skills and geography. It will also provide a variety of forecasts to help both employers and job seekers anticipate what skills will be in demand. In the second project, the Wood Manufacturing Council (WMC) is receiving more than \$878,000 to study the human resource challenges facing the sector. In addition, it will update the skills requirements for five professions—finisher, wood machinery operator, supervisor, assembler and computer numerically controlled operator—to ensure the current standards are up to date and relevant.

Accurate job market information helps workers connect with available, in-demand jobs while ensuring that employers have workers with the skills they need to help their businesses prosper. It also assists training institutions to align their training with the skills that employers are looking for.

The Canadian forest products industry generates revenues of \$58 billion annually. It employs about 230,000 workers in approximately 200 communities. Labor market forecasts show the forest products sector may soon face a shortage of skilled workers due to retirements and industry changes that are creating new types of jobs.

The advanced wood products manufacturing sector produces veneer, plywood, and engineered wood products, such as furniture. Due to rapidly changing technologies and business practices, there is an increasing need for higher-skilled workers in the wood-manufacturing sector, which could result in a future skills shortage.

The federal government’s Sectoral Initiatives Program aims to address current and future skills shortages by supporting the development, distribution and use of labor market information, national occupational standards and skills certification and accreditation programs.

QUEBEC

Some contacts reported improved logging from earlier in the summer.

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BUSINESS TRENDS CANADA- Continued from page 28

The region experienced late summer dryer weather conditions following the wet weather conditions of early summer, which helped with green lumber production. The secondary manufacturing sector should gain momentum heading into early fall. Consumer spending usually shifts to interior renovations over the fall and winter months. The U.S. housing sector is still in an upward swing, which is good news for the demand of hardwoods. Exports to China are also expected to pick up over autumn.

Contacts stated there is generally a better availability of Ash, but a tapering off of demand for this species. This demand could change as markets regain strength as summer ends. The demand for Aspen is keeping a close pace with production with prices being steady to firm. With the expanded use of Basswood for millwork, mouldings and components, demand has increased for this species. Wholesalers pursued additional supplies for the fall season. Birch stocks varied depending on regions contacted, as some reduced production or purchasing, while others ramped up activity. Hard Maple logging conditions improved since earlier this year despite existing controls. According to sawmillers, production of this species has increased.

Recently, the Quebec government announced it hoped to help the province's forestry sector by allowing lumber use in construction of buildings up to 12 stories tall. Premier Philippe Couillard said regulation changes were developed in consultation with the provincial agency responsible for the building code and with FPInnovations. Quebec said it is the first province in Canada to allow wood construction in taller buildings while still ensuring public safety.

This will stimulate wood use in construction and provide an "enormous" potential for a sector that has lost thousands of jobs. "The new impetus we give today will help revitalize an industry whose potential is huge," Couillard told reporters.

Rule changes in 2010 allowed wood to be used in building with up to five or six floors. The Quebec government unveiled a 60-page technical guide for designing and constructing taller wooden buildings, including what type of lumber can be used, fire resistance and structural calculations. Research in Canada and internationally has shown that safe buildings with more than six floors can be constructed using cross-laminated timber instead of light wood framing and mass timber construction materials. Quebec is following European countries such as Britain, Norway, Austria, Australia, Switzerland and Italy that permit similar wood-based construction methods.

However, the cement and steel associations are not convinced the decision is in the public interest. They called the bypassing of the usual building code development process "questionable," adding it compromises public safety in favor of the wood lobby. They feel that governments should not get involved in the choice of building materials and systems and should leave it to the experts. They also noted that there was not enough research completed to ensure the safety of taller wooden buildings, and that government had not studied this well and saw it as a political move that is problematic.

They say that the guide announced by the Quebec provincial government is not recognized by the National Building Code of Canada, and that FPInnovations is not a standards development organization accredited by the Standards Council of Canada.

The Canadian Wood Council called the safety questions raised by the associations fear mongering. The new construction choice for builders is being provided and will impact a market the steel and concrete sectors currently own, so it is natural they are opposed to it. They add that construction of taller buildings is different from light-frame designs used in smaller structures. Taller buildings use strong and advanced construction technologies and modern mass timber products like cross-laminated timber, glued-laminated timber and structural composite lumber. It dates back 1,400 years, with 19-story pagodas built to withstand earthquakes in Japan, they noted. They foresee that buildings will be hybrid structures using different building materials. ■

BUSINESS TRENDS U.S.A.

LAKE STATES

Contacts in the Lake States agree that the market is fairly stable right now.

In Michigan, a source stated that the species of Ash, Hickory, White Oak, and Soft Maple are moving really well. However, in Wisconsin, hardwood manufacturers are struggling to find Soft Maple.

A contact in Wisconsin said, "Prices are down from six months ago, es-

Continued on page 30



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BUSINESS TRENDS U.S.A.- Continued from page 29

pecially in Oak and Hard Maple, but I think we've hit bottom. We are actively looking for Soft Maple and can't find it – I don't have enough to cover our orders, which is strange because I'm actually getting more for Soft Maple pricewise than I am for the Hard Maple. We are also having a hard time getting enough Basswood, Birch, and Hard Maple."

There's a lack of demand for Red Oak in Indiana. In Michigan, Red Oak is moving slower than the rest of the other species.

Also, in Michigan, a source reported that overproduction, along with lack of demand, were contributing factors affecting the market.

He stated, "Common species are moving well. Soft Maple is moving well for us; Ash, Hickory, and White Oak are moving pretty good. Red Oak is probably the worst, Cherry is pretty bad, and Hard Maple is kind of so-so."

A source in Wisconsin said, "Soft Maple, low-grade Basswood No. 2 Common and Select and Better are moving well, but the No. 1 Common is kind of a dog. Aspen Select and Better and No. 2 Common are also moving steady, but the No. 1 Common slowed up. Inventory levels are extremely low on the Maples. We should have 200,000 board feet here and I'm down to a truckload, so we are having a hard time keeping the customers happy."

He added, "The most significant change is the Ash market. The usage of it has dropped right off, but I have some flooring manufacturers that switched from Oak to Ash and now they are going from Ash back to Oak. Ash prices normally don't get higher than Oak. But they have here."

In Indiana, a source that deals with Poplar, Red Oak, Sassafras, Sycamore, Hickory, and Ash, stated that upper grade Poplars, Sassafras, and Sycamore are moving very well. Prices are pretty steady in all species except for Red Oak.

In Wisconsin, the market in the flooring segment of the industry is fairly healthy.

The source stated, "My customers are cabinet manufacturers, moulding manufacturers, furniture, and flooring. The flooring guy seems to be busy. I know one of my customers and his customer pre-finishes floors and he was up there at the peak of the market and he said the warehouses were full."

The source in Indiana did not have a clear vision of the next six months, but remained hopeful. The source in Wisconsin is also hopeful that the market turns around in the next six months. The source in Michigan is optimistic for the next six months.

A source in Wisconsin stated, "I think (in the next 6 months) margins are going to be down on certain items. We are all after the same species, like everybody is shying away from Oak. There is no margin in it. Between green and kiln-dried, at the low prices, there's no money in it.

"Soft Maple and the upper grade Hard Maple are popular in the market right now. I am starting to see some likes in the No. 1 Common. Aspen is in demand right now."

NORTHEAST

Hardwood suppliers in the Northeast say the market is more mixed than it was six months ago. Exporters report sluggish sales, but domestic markets remain stable.

A contact in New Hampshire, who manufactures White Hard Maple, Northern Red Oak, Black Cherry, White Ash, Soft Maple, Basswood, White Oak, Black Walnut, Yellow Birch, and Hickory, said, "Business is poor, logs are too expensive, and people don't want to sell timber; it's a difficult period of time. The reality is that the hardwood lumber business is a pretty rugged business to be in right now. Lack of demand and the U.S. economy isn't doing anything to speak of. You've got China slowing down. All the usual culprits, I mean this has been a long ride for everyone in this industry with maybe 18 months of decent business approaching almost a decade. Timber prices are down, but they aren't down far enough. The price of lumber is whatever you are willing to pay someone. For most people, if they need to sell it, they will sell it. We are a sawmill/dry kiln facility manufacturer. If you are in distribution, you can control your costs, but we don't have that luxury."

Another source in New Hampshire that deals with Cherry, Walnut, Hickory, Red Oak, Ash, and Mahogany mostly agreed that the market has slowed down and one of the contributing factors to the decrease is that there is a greater supply of lumber and a smaller demand.

He said, "A year ago, things were a lot prickier, our customers were a lot busier, there was a lot going on. In the past 60 days, it slowed right down to a very slow pace. The demands for lumber and needs have shrunk. I think prices have taken a hit, honestly because of slowness in demand and on a bigger scale, overseas demand for lumber has slowed down, especially in China. So the lumber supply and availability has changed drastically. It's just all supply and demand; a greater supply and a smaller

Continued on page 31

The Import/Export Wood Purchasing News October/November 2015

BUSINESS TRENDS U.S.A.- Continued from page 30

demand.”

He added, “Currently, the bulk of my business is Cherry (Cherry is pretty strong), a lot of Walnut, a lot of Hickory; we do a lot of imports like Mahogany. We don’t do as much Red Oak and Ash because the end user manufacturer in this region is not using those species as much anymore.”

A source in Pennsylvania, who manufactures Ash, Hard and Soft Maple, and Red Oak, stated that one of the possible reasons for the market slow down is overproduction issues, especially with China slowing down.

He said, “When they (China) have a big slowdown like they did, it’s just a ripple effect. It comes right back. They (China) are such a big market for everybody.”

Transportation and trucking costs in New Hampshire have increased, which has affected availability and accessibility.

One of the areas in the market that hasn’t experienced a downward trend, however, is the flooring industry. A source in New Hampshire stated, “The demand for flooring in general is steady and the demand hasn’t dropped off. Nationally, the interest in hardwood flooring is very strong, whether it’s with new homes or renovation, there’s a big business available in the renovation of homes, which is ongoing. The renovation of homes is firmer in the market than new homes are right now. People are adding value, changing, and hardwood flooring is still very popular.”

Because of heavy rainfall earlier this year in Pennsylvania, accessibility to Hard Maple was an issue.

A source in Pennsylvania offered, “Based on the wet weather we had here a little earlier this summer, Hard Maple was hard to come by. It is starting to come back now. The logs just weren’t really available or accessible.”

One source from New Hampshire sees slow but steady growth in the market for the next six months.

He commented, “I’m more of a realist and I feel like from now to the end of the year, we may see a little bit of improvement, but I don’t expect us to change a whole lot. Getting into the fall into the colder weather, we should see a little improvement. After we get into the first of the year in January and in spring, I think it will be a lot better than it is now. But I don’t think things are going to change fast – I think it’s going to be slow and steady. But with the colder weather, we will see a gradual improvement in some relief in sales there.”

The source in Pennsylvania is optimistic about upcoming growth in the industry.

He said, “I’m optimistic about the next six months. Most of the customers in China are starting to do inquiries again and want more lumber, so I’m thinking the fall going into winter we should see a little more business perk up, I hope.”

A source from West Virginia stated, “There have also been some improvements in domestic demand to help speed the inventory correction process; more gains in demand are expected as the year continues. Overall, improvement is noted, supply and demand continues moving closer toward balance.”

SOUTHEAST

Sources in the Southeast region are keeping a watchful eye on the market, hoping for improvement.

A source in Mississippi said that there was too much supply and not enough demand.

He stated, “We need a little bit of demand to keep up with the lumber production that had built up over the last couple of years; the demand never showed up and the market got oversupplied. And now there’s been a correction over the last four to six months where people started cutting back, reducing log inventory, prices and production to get a better handle on what the current demand is, so it’s been flat. The way to make volume move, you have to sell it cheap. Everybody will buy something at a deal whether they need it or not.”

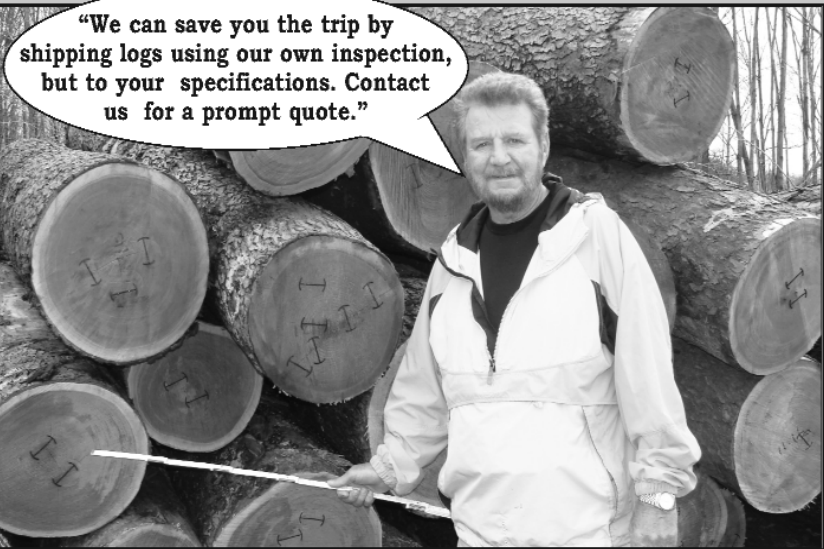
He added, “How much you sell is relative to how cheap you want to sell it, but I think it’s on the bottom, particularly in 4/4 Red Oak, which is the big volume item currently. And we are seeing more activity. However, I haven’t seen a lot of appreciation in pricing. If you are discounting, it’s moving. If you are trying to achieve something particular about your product, it’s difficult, or you are selling smaller volumes, less truckload quantities, you are probably not getting the market for it.”

“I think 4/4 Oak is on the bottom and poised to take a little bounce if we can get some activity. The exchange rate hurt some things too with the dollar getting stronger. Poplar right now is going through what Oak went through three months ago; it just kind of fell like a rock.”

Red and White Oak, Poplar and Pine are the primary species that

Continued on page 32

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Bill Reese standing by prime Cherry veneer logs

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BUSINESS TRENDS U.S.A.- Continued from page 31

source offers.

He added, "They are all moving, but it's relative to pricing right now. If you are sitting here holding trying to get the market better, your business is probably pretty flat to down. If you are selling under the market, then you are active, but you are just not making any money."

A source in North Carolina, who mainly deals in Red Oak and Poplar, is cautiously optimistic about the market outlook, but is still reeling from a mixed market from a few months back.

He said, "Our exports have just about dried up. That has put a lot of pressure on our domestic sales and has not made up for the lack of sales, but I think we see the light at the end of the tunnel. We could possibly see some firming in the market in the next couple months. I think supply is the main issue. I don't think the demand has changed that much; I just think the supply has.

"The main issue we have in the marketplace right now is with Red Oak. We are not really having any trouble with other species."

A source in Arkansas, who manufactures Red and White Oak, Poplar, Maple, and Pine, thinks the market is on an upward, positive trend.

He said, "The species are readily available and inventory levels are down and are in workable numbers now. Prices are down for raw material and lumber for the last six months and they are down for flooring, across the board. There are some possible upward movements in Select."

When asked about the market forecast for the next six months, sources in the Southeast region seemed optimistic.

A source in North Carolina said, "I think in the third quarter, we are going to see shipments pick up. In the fourth quarter, we may see prices firm back up."

A source in Mississippi stated, "We are optimistic about the next six months, but we said that last summer. We are optimistic that things are going to get a lot better because inventory in general is making corrections, so we are poised to get a little demand in the market pick up. If it doesn't happen again before too long, we are going to be in trouble again. We are sitting here thinking we are going to get a bump before China has their holiday next February, so they have to buy it in October, November, or December to make sure they can get supplies before February. We are cautiously optimistic."

A source in Arkansas stated, "In the next six months, we are hoping to see slow, steady continued growth."

WEST COAST

Contacts in the West Coast region all reported strong business activity in the marketplace.

A contact in Oregon, who manufactures a wide variety of hardwood lumber, reported that commercial activity is currently very strong, which is contributing to the current strength in the market.

He said that Alder, Poplar, White Oak, and Walnut are the species that are moving the best right now.

He added, "With the level of activity, I see the prices over the next 60-90 days to be relatively stable. I see some fluctuation up and down. Red Oak is probably close to the bottom I would say, but I could see that one firming up. Alder has also come off quite a bit. Those two I could see firming up over the next 60-90 days."

A Washington contact stated that mid-to-upper grades are moving well, especially in domestics like Cherry, Maple, Birch and in exports such as African Mahogany and Sapele.

According to a source in Washington, one of the reasons the market is doing well is due to the boost in the housing market, especially with new home building and home remodeling. The source in California added to that saying that people are buying wood for their homes for conference tables, coffee tables, dining room tables, countertops, and more.

A source in California, who specializes in Claro Walnut, said that all grades of Walnut from standard to figured, are moving very well.

He said, "Cabinet guys are very busy, they are booked out. It has been very busy over the whole spectrum; flooring has picked up pretty well."

However, transportation costs are affecting business in Oregon and Washington.

Due to a container embargo in Portland, transportation costs have been challenging to lumber manufacturers.

A source there stated, "Transportation costs have been a nightmare. We have not been able to ship the 40-foot containers from the east coast to Portland. That's been our primary way of moving lumber into this market, so we've got some workarounds in place now, but it's been very difficult. Flatbed trucks in general for moving product are very tight and container shipments to Portland and Seattle have been very problematic. And it's

Continued on page 33

BUSINESS TRENDS U.S.A.- Continued from page 32

more expensive.”

A contact in Washington reported, “When it comes to imports, the docks here and in Oregon and this part of the Northwest are still very costly because of issues going on, so that makes it costly to move containers. Just unloading containers across the docks is very timely and costly.”

Nevertheless, in California, transportation costs are not much of an issue.

The contact there stated that since he gets a good discount through the freight companies, transportation costs aren’t an issue.

When asked about the market projection for the next six months, contacts in the West Coast states are optimistic for growth.

The source in Oregon expects the next six months to be similar to where they have been.

He said, “I don’t think it’s going to get a lot better or go down either – probably the status quo.”

A source in Washington said, “I think the market is going to be strong throughout the rest of the year.”

The source in California said, “During the summertime is when everyone is on vacation, but when it goes into winter and people are working on their projects, business starts picking up.” ■

NEWSWIRES

Québec, Canada—The Prime Minister of Canada’s Québec province Philippe Couillard has introduced a technical guideline for the construction of 12-story buildings made of solid wood. Couillard said regulation changes were developed in consultation with the provincial agency responsible for the building code and with FPInnovations, a research institute.

Instead of the traditional timber frame construction, the guideline recommends the use of glulam for buildings exceeding six floors. Québec is geared to Europe, where such structures have already been approved. Currently, a consortium designed a 13-story residential building in Québec City.

Canadian press sees the measure as a promotion for the woodworking industry. Critics see dangers arising from the lack of fire protection. The issue of climate protection seems to get wide attention in Canada, unlike Europe, where public debate about the use of wood is not important. ■

Memphis, Tennessee— *The Import/Export Wood Purchasing News* (WPN) is pleased to announce the addition of Zachary Miller to its sales team.

He is the son of WPN’s Vice President Wayne Miller. Zachary Miller will be traveling extensively across the United States and Canada. “I look forward to meeting all of the people in the forest products industry and learning our family business,” he commented.

A graduate of Briarcrest Christian High School, of Memphis, TN, Miller enjoys cooking, running, swimming and cycling in his spare time. He and his wife Kelly have a daughter, Joelle, and a son, Jax.

The Wood Purchasing News is the product of a company and its affiliates that have been in the publishing business for 88 years.

For more information, visit www.millerwoodtradepub.com. ■



Zachary Miller

Doyle, Tennessee—Savage Lumber Co. Inc., located here, recently announced installation of a new resaw manufactured by Brewco Inc., located in Central City, KY, and a new carriage from Cleereman Industries, Newald, WI.



James Savage

“Installing the Brewco resaw is going to give our operation better yields, thinner kerf and increased production,” said Owner James Savage.

The company is also installing a gang/saw edger at their sawmill in Sparta, TN.

Savage Lumber has been exporting hardwood lumber for nearly 30 years.

The company keeps an average log inventory

Continued on page 34

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NEWSWIRES - Continued from page 33

of at least 500,000 board feet, a kiln-dried inventory of 800,000 board feet, and an air-dried inventory of around 1 million board feet.

Savage Lumber Co. Inc. produces approximately 15 million board feet annually of Appalachian Red and White Oak, Ash, Poplar, Hard and Soft Maple, Walnut, Cherry, Hickory, Sassafras and Aromatic Red Cedar. Thicknesses offered range from 4/4 through 12/4.

Savage Lumber is a member of the National Hardwood Lumber Association, Tennessee Forestry Association, of which James Savage is on the board of trustees, and is an associate member of the Kentucky Forest Industries Association.

For more information, contact **931-657-2211**. ■

Geneva, Switzerland—The Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) billed certified sustainable timber as a core component for the development of green building worldwide, including Asia.

The certification body's chief executive Ben Gunneberg put forward the proposition at the Green Building and Sustainable Construction Conference, which was organized by the Philippine Green Building Council in Manila.

According to Gunneberg, the demand for housing, and environmentally sound housing in particular is set to grow rapidly in coming years, with rapid expansion of urban populations a key driver.

He was addressing a group of representatives from government, business, and NGOs, which had gathered at the event to discuss a wide range of green building issues, from the key market drivers, to the materials used.

He added, "Timber and certified timber in particular could make a vital contribution to the green building revolution, with rapid urbanization and population growth demanding 'ingenious and innovative solutions from architects and the construction industry.'"

He concluded by saying that PEFC-certified timber provides architects and the construction industry with "great opportunities" both to meet housing needs and build sustainably.

For more information, visit www.pefc.org. ■

Maple Grove, Minnesota—Midwest Hardwood Corporation is proud to be a leading manufacturer of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified hardwood lumber in North America.

Midwest Hardwood Corporation recently celebrated its 20-year anniversary of offering temperate North American hardwoods as FSC Certified. This anniversary falls less than a year after the FSC celebrated its 20th anniversary last September. Midwest's certification number, RA-COC-000008, illustrates the early commitment made to this program.

General Manager Mike Mallin, Midwest Hardwood Corporation said, "After 20 years in existence, FSC is the world's strongest certification in terms of global reach, robustness of certification criteria and number of businesses involved in the system. Over 180 million hectares are FSC certified. The organization works with 150,000 small holders around the world. The general assembly is FSC's top decision-making body, where members propose, debate and vote on policy that guides the organization. As a member-led democracy, FSC is unique among forest certification systems."

Midwest offers FSC hardwoods in Northern Red and White Oak, Northern Hard Maple, Black Walnut, Hickory, Cherry and Yellow Poplar among other North American species.

Midwest holds a multi-site certificate covering most of the production facilities and also offers FSC certified unfinished flooring from its flooring manufacturing operation, LaCrosse Flooring by Westby Hardwood Products. "At Midwest Hardwood Corporation, 'We Make Green Easy'," Mallin said.

Midwest Hardwood Corporation is a vertically integrated hardwood manufacturing company and industrial building products distributor that has served domestic and international customers since 1981.

For more information visit www.midwesthardwood.com. ■

Banjul, Gambia—Officials recently reported that Gambia's forestry authorities have suspended issuing timber permits to minimize the over-harvesting of trees in the country. This decision came after an alarming rate of illegal logging hit various parts of the country.

Continued on page 35

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NEWSWIRES - Continued from page 34

According to a recent press release, "It has been brought to the notice of the Department of Forestry that unscrupulous wood dealers are engaged in illegal logging in Gambia, particularly in the Kiang West, Niamina East, CRR North, URR North and other places. This activity is significantly contributing to the reduction of our already limited forest cover."

The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Water, Forestry and Wildlife urged all related departments to enforce necessary measures to stop illegal logging in Gambia.

The press release also stated that some illegal logging dealers forged documents for the transportation of their logs or timbers within the country under the pretext that they are imported logs and timbers.

Memphis, TN—Shannon Lumber Group recently announced the addition of Russell Kelly to its sales team at J.T. Shannon Lumber Co. Inc., based here.

Kelly will engage in sales of hardwood lumber and specialty products.

Previously a partner of PJ Lumber Co., located in Prichard, AL, Kelly brings 21 years of experience in the hardwood industry.

He is a graduate of UMS-Wright Preparatory School, located in Mobile, AL, and obtained his bachelor's degree in business administration from Samford University in Birmingham, AL, along with a Juris Doctorate from Cumberland School of Law/Samford University.

In his spare time Kelly enjoys golfing and spending time with his wife and three children, Nan, Eloise and Russell Jr.

The Shannon Group is the parent organization of four leading hardwood companies: J.T. Shannon Lumber Co., Superior Hardwoods, Sham-

rock Plank Flooring, and Shannon Lumber International. These subsidiaries offer logs, Rough and Surfaced lumber and finished plank flooring. Species available include Red and White Oak, Cherry, Walnut, Maple, Poplar and Hickory.

For more information visit www.jtshannon.com. ■

El Dorado, Arkansas—The Canadian Conifex Timber Inc. recently announced the completion of the purchase of 100 percent of the outstanding shares and shareholder loans of a private Delaware company (AcquisitionCo).

AcquisitionCo had the exclusive rights to acquire a sawmill and related facilities and equipment, including approximately 186 acres of land, located near El Dorado. Concurrent with the closing of the purchase, AcquisitionCo exercised the right to acquire the El Dorado mill for total consideration of US\$21 million, comprised of US\$12.36 million and an US\$8.64 million vendor mortgage.

For more information, visit www.conifex.com. ■

Kodersdorf, Germany—Austrian Klausner Group sold one of their German sawmills to the Austrian Schweighofer Group. The KHS sawmill is located in Kodersdorf in the German state of Saxony.

With this divestment, Klausner wants to strengthen their financial position and the situation regarding raw material. A contract between Klausner and Schweighofer has already been signed.

Schweighofer runs four sawmills in Romania. In recent years, the company made several tries to expand to the Czech Republic. With the acquisition of the Klausner sawmill, they now have a mill near Czechia. ■

Blainville, Québec—Autolog Production Management Inc., located here, reported recent installations of its newly updated sorter and tally system in Northeastern U.S. "More customers are asking for this technology and Autolog, with more than 28 years of experience, is the pioneer leading the technology," said Autolog's Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Yvan Rainville.

The lumber industry is following the general trend of gathering more data about what is happening in the mill. As the capacity to retain such input keeps growing, so is the need to catalog and retain the knowledge as much as possible for the longest periods of time.

Rainville said Autolog recognizes this important requirement and has moved to offer systems with a high degree of robustness, which advocate capacity, redundancy and high availability. They recently introduced more robust hardware, which provides redundant power supplies, SAS and RAID drives, allowing two hard disks to fail while the system remains on-line and functional.

Continued on page 36

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NEWSWIRES – Continued from page 35



Autolog's Tally System

“Redundancy and synchronization have also been introduced in software where data is kept live in separate SQL databases on different computers, protecting both from data lost in the case of corruption and downtime. Software is also replicated automatically so that all backups are kept up to date following updates. Accordingly, notifications are sent, be it by email or through the user interface, so that IT personnel can react immediately as soon as the self-diagnostic engines detect an anomaly,” Rainville said.

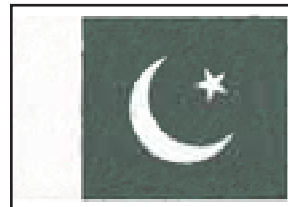
Autolog offers a wide range of products and solutions, from the sawmill to the planer mill, for hardwood and softwood customers as well as customized control systems.

For more information visit www.autolog.com. ■

Islamabad, Pakistan—A Pakistani official was recently caught by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) for illegally shifting a truck loaded with timber worth millions of rupees from the premises of the United States Embassy in Islamabad to some other location.

Sources say that the CDA received a letter from the U.S. Embassy in the recent past in which it requested removal of trees from its premises due to ongoing expansion work.

According to rules, the Environment Wing of CDA issues No Objection Certificate (NOC) for removal of trees anywhere in the capital city without its issuance. Sources claimed that the forest officer wanted to illegally smuggle the tree wood in connivance



Continued on page 37

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IMPORT/EXPORT CALENDAR

October

National Hardwood Lumber Association, 2015 Annual Convention & Exhibit Showcase, Omni Hotel Downtown, Nashville, TN. Contact: 901-399-7560. Oct. 7-9.

APA-The Engineered Wood Association, Annual Meeting and Info Fair, Coeur d'Alene Golf Spa & Resort, Coeur d'Alene, ID. Contact: mlilley@engineered-wood.org. Oct. 17-19.

November

North American Wholesale Lumber Association, Traders Market, Hilton Anatole, Dallas, TX. For more information: www.nawla.org. Nov. 4-6. ■

NEWSWIRES – Continued from page 36

with a private contractor; that was why he neither asked for NOC nor informed any competent authority in this regard.

“The CDA officer succeeded in cutting trees from the United States Embassy and shifted them outside the Domestic Enclave but the local police intercepted and asked for NOC. When the official failed to produce NOC, the police confiscated the truck loaded with timber,” sources said. ■

Tacuarembó, Uruguay—Estonian woodworking machinery company AS Hekotek has concluded contracts for the delivery of sawmill equipment to Uruguay, where in the Northern part of the country, in a town Tacuarembó, a modern sawmill complex is planned to be started up in 2016.

In this project Hekotek cooperates with Finnish partners known from several of its earlier deliveries – Veisto Oy, i.e. producer of HewSaw sawlines and Valon Kone Oy, i.e. producer of wood debarkers.

Within this project Hekotek will deliver a log sorting line, a log in-feed to the sawline, a combi-line for sorting of wet and dry lumber and a conveyor system for collecting, chipping and storage of sawing residues.

Most of the equipment is ready for delivery at the production site of Hekotek and in the autumn of 2015 the company will send out about 90 sea containers with goods.

The start up of the new sawmill complex is planned for the first half of 2016 and the planned production capacity is 150,000 cubic meters of ready saw material from Pine (Pinus Radiata). ■

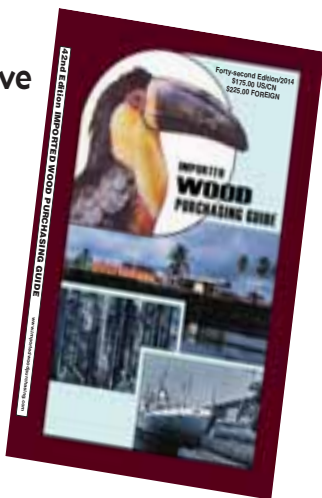
Europe—Published reports indicate that in most European countries architects expect a strong growth of wood and architectural glass. Especially in Belgium, Germany and France the architects expect wood to be a leading material in facade construction. This is one of the conclusions of the European Architectural Barometer report, a quarterly market research among 1,600 architects in eight European countries.

Architects are not only a very important indicator with regards to future building volumes, but also on how these buildings are being built. In the second quarter of this year the European Architectural Barometer has researched the upcoming use of several building materials according to architects European wide. Regarding the use of wood in Belgium, France and Germany, architects mention wood the most when asked which material will be used more in the upcoming five years. This and many other trends concerning the developments of the European construction market can be found in the European Architectural Barometer. This study is conducted in Germany, France, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Poland by Arch-Vision four times a year. ■

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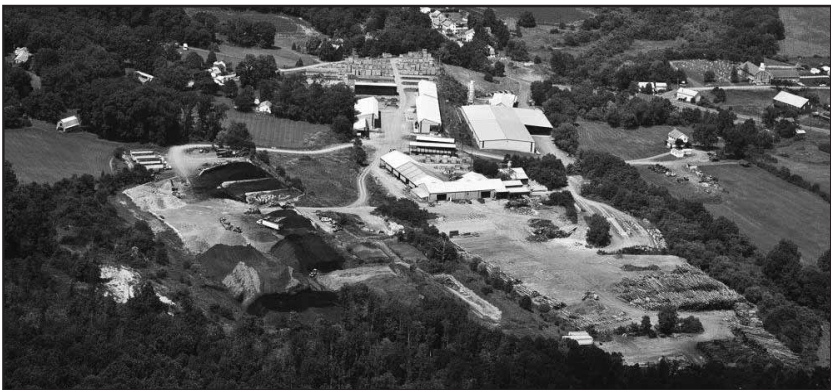
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