

AMERICAN

HARDWOOD NEWS



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AHEC to hold first ever lumber grading workshop in Egypt

On 1st July AHEC will host a workshop on the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA) rules for grading American hardwood lumber in Cairo, Egypt. Bob Sabistina, AHEC's International Grading Consultant will provide a practical demonstration of how American hardwood lumber is graded according to the NHLA standard. Information will also be given on American hardwood species, products and end uses. All agents, importers and manufacturers are welcome to attend. In the past, the response to its lumber grading workshops in the Middle East have been so good, that AHEC has decided to hold an event for the first time in this important and growing North African market. American hardwoods are not new in Egypt and are in high demand for the substantial furniture manufacturing sector, as well as for the growing high end interiors sector. However, in-depth understanding of the lumber grading rules is not widespread and AHEC feels that it is crucial to provide as much awareness as possible on this complex, but key system, which forms the basis of every successful transaction between US hardwood exporters and importers around the world. In terms of lumber shipments, Egypt im-

ported some 5,558 m³ or \$3.7 million of American hardwood lumber directly from the United States last year, marking an increase of 40.3% and 32.0% respectively on 2007. In addition, last year Egypt imported some \$8.5 million of American hardwood veneer from the US, marking a substantial increase of 60.0% over the previous year.

The grading workshop will take place on Wednesday 1st July at the Semiramis Intercontinental Hotel in Cairo. The event is free and open to hardwood agents and importers, as well as furniture, kitchen, joinery and flooring manufacturers.

The
American Hardwood Export Council
cordially invites you to attend a

Hardwood Lumber Grading Workshop

Cairo
Wednesday 1 July 2009
Semiramis Intercontinental Hotel
Comiche El Nil, Cairo 11511, Tel: 2 2795 7171
from 09.30 onwards

AHEC's International Grading Consultant, Bob Sabistina, will be the main speaker at the workshop. With over 30 years experience in grading hardwood lumber to the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA) rules and as former Chief Grading Inspector of the NHLA, Bob is an acknowledged expert and an accomplished teacher.

During the Cairo workshop, Bob will provide an introduction to the NHLA rules for grading North American hardwood lumber, including practical demonstrations. These rules form the basis of every successful transaction in American hardwoods.



The workshop is free of charge and all hardwood importers or end users are welcome to attend.

However, spaces will be limited and AHEC would appreciate registrations in advance.

If you would like to attend, please contact Philippa Brough at AHEC's Europe/Middle East/India Office.

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The workshop will be followed by a complimentary luncheon.

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Turkey: American Hardwood Pavilion to take centre stage at Intermob Istanbul 2009

For the very first time, AHEC and the Hardwood States Export Group (HSEG) will be hosting a pavilion for a number of US hardwood exporters at Intermob Istanbul - Turkey's premier fair for the Furniture Side Industry, Accessories, Forest Products and Wood Technology. The show, which will take place from 26-30 September this year at the Tüyap Fair, Convention and Congress Center, near Istanbul, will be the 12th edition of this important wood industry event in this significant wood producing and consuming market.

Now, more than ever before, American hardwoods are becoming increasingly well-established in the Turkish market and, according to the latest data available, US\$11.8 million worth of hardwood

logs, lumber and veneer were shipped from the US to Turkey during 2008, marking a rise of 68.4% over the previous year. Of all these products, hardwood logs accounted for the majority and shipments reached US\$6.2 million last year - an increase of 60.1% on 2007. At the same time, hardwood lumber shipments reached US\$2.1 million or 3,243 m³, while hardwood veneer shipments reached a value of US\$3.5 million.

With a population of around 72 million, a growing furniture industry and a relatively stable and buoyant economy, as it works towards possible EU accession, Turkey is a potentially substantial and long term growth market for American hardwood products.

UAE: AHEC confirms as Gold Sponsor of IFI09Dubai - World Interior Design Congress

This November 7 to 12, AHEC will be sponsoring the 24th General Assembly and World Congress of the International Federation of Interior Designers/Architects, which is to be held in Dubai's Grand Hyatt Hotel.

The UAE joins a list of host nations that have recently included Japan, Ireland, Australia, India, South Africa, Denmark and Korea in hosting this prestigious biennial event that brings together the cream of the interior design community. The 2009 International Interior Design Festival will mark the start of an annual celebration that will keep the spotlight on design trends and innovations in the Emirates.

IFI is a world body and the apex body of interior designers which includes 70 members associations from 45 countries with over 65,000 members. The event will run for 6 days, which will include the IFI General Assembly, IFI Board Meeting, World Interior Design Congress, International Design Competitions, and International Interior Exhibition and will be the

launch of International Festival of Interior Design to be held annually in the UAE.

The theme of this year's event is 'Celebrate Interior Design'. Conference participants will debate and discuss topical issues such as social responsibility, the business of interior designers, the influence of technology on design, the role of tradition and culture, sustainability, and interior design within academia. Leading organizations and research firms will share their insights into new business opportunities throughout the Middle East and Africa.

The Congress will also lay down opportunity for new and upcoming talents. A special programme is also being developed that will offer workshops and master classes given by well-known professionals for university students.

Although not yet confirmed, AHEC will be proposing a well known furniture maker and architect/interior designer for the event, who will speak authoritatively about using hardwoods in furniture and interior design.

Hardwood Events in Europe, Middle East & India

(Black denotes AHEC participation)

2009

13-19 May	Interzum	Cologne
18-22 May	Ligna	Hannover
22-31 May	Hay Festival	Hay-on-Wye
22 Jun	AHEC Grading Workshop	Mumbai
24 Jun	AHEC Grading Workshop	Chennai
26 Jun	AHEC Grading Workshop	Kochi
1 July	AHEC Grading Workshop	Cairo
24-27 Sep	Segovia Festival	Segovia
24-27 Sep	100% Detail	London
26-30 Sep	Intermob	Istanbul
30 Sep-3 Oct	NHLA Convention	Boston
12-16 Oct	UNECE Timber Committee	Geneva
14 Oct	Wood Awards	London
21-23 Oct	AHEC Convention	Athens
2-7 Nov	Batimat	Paris
7-12 Nov	IFI 2009 World Congress	Dubai

2010

2-4 Mar	Ecobuild	London
4-8 Mar	Indiawood	Bangalore
30 Mar-1 Apr	Dubai Wood Show	Dubai
18-21 Apr*	Cityscape	Abu Dhabi

* to be confirmed

If you would like more information on AHEC's participation in these events or would like to know how to attend, please contact Lucy Peacock at: lucy.peacock@ahec.co.uk

American hardwood lumber grading Q&A series:

May/June 2009



by Bob Sabistina- Grading consultant to the American Hardwood Export Council

The Grading Rules for North American hardwood lumber were established 100 years ago by the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA), which is now headquartered in Memphis, Tennessee. I have been writing a series of articles, answering a variety of questions pertaining to the application of those grading rules. This month's article is intended to refresh, inform, and stimulate the reader about the grading rules. All the questions in these articles have been generated from individuals in the hardwood trade all over the world.

Question 1: I live in India and purchased some American white ash for a hotel project last year. We used the wood throughout the project in doors, mouldings, and window framing. We were very pleased with the outcome and found the wood to be very workable. Now we have a big problem as a lot of the wood is cracking, joints are loose, and the overall craftsmanship looks shoddy. We were concerned about using this wood in our climate and now I am disappointed. What can we do?

Answer 1: My first response to this question is to ask whether the ash had been purchased in log form for milling and drying in India, or whether it was imported as kiln dried lumber. The answer, as I suspected, was that it had been imported in log form for processing in India. I think this solves the riddle of why the ash has not performed as expected in application.

Drying temperate hardwoods is a very specialised, highly technical process and great care is taken in, not only getting the moisture content correct, but also in the conditioning of the wood. I am certain that what happened in the case in question is that the wood was high in moisture content when installed and, over the last year, has had a chance to dry out. This would cause the wood to crack and joints to open up. This is certainly not the first case like this that I have heard of and, unfortunately, there is not much that can be done now, except to live with it and hope it swells up with the rainy season.

I have no doubt that kiln dried white ash lumber would have worked perfectly in this project. All wood will "move" with the seasons, but starting with the proper moisture content is critical. There is a huge risk involved with buying sawlogs and converting them to lumber and Indian buyers and end users need to consider this when specifying them.

Question 2: Could you tell me the difference between hickory and pecan, and something about the properties of both?

Answer 2: First of all, note that both species are of the same family, *Carya*, and that the fruit bearing trees are called pecan hickory, while the rest of the family are true hickories. The wood is virtually identical and often sold unsorted. As a general rule, in the northern and Appalachian regions of the USA, the wood is sold as hickory, while in the southern region, it is pecan. Even in the NHLA grading rules for hardwood lumber there is no distinction made between these two and no separation will be made. The hickories are the hardest of the commercial American species with a specific gravity of 0.75, as compared to the oaks or hard maple, which are in the mid 0.60's. This very dense wood has an interlocking grain which makes it ideal for heavy duty use in handles, such as axes and hammers. We even use it for the lumber grading rulers used by inspectors worldwide. Hickory is susceptible to bird pecks and the grading rules allow for these natural characteristics. Bird pecks tend to be a "V" shape with purple streaks of colour emanating from them. The sapwood is a creamy white to yellow and the heartwood runs light tan to dark brown. The dense wood lends itself extremely well to hardwood flooring, especially when a character look is desired. Hickory has also become very popular in kitchen cabinets as well as western style furniture.

Question 3: We keep hearing about the 4% allowed to be off grade every time we buy a load of lumber. What is this and where does it say we have to accept it?

Answer 3: The 4% you refer to is probably one of the most misunderstood issues in the NHLA rule book. First of all, if a buyer and seller disagree on a load of lumber and there is mutual agreement that this

dispute be resolved by a national inspector, the outcome of this inspection is determined by this 4% factor. If the outcome of the national inspection is within 4% of the original dollar value of the lumber, then the wood will be on grade and the buyer keeps and pays for the wood, plus the national inspection. If the two inspections are not within 4% monetary value, the buyer keeps and pays for the on grade lumber and it is up to the shipper to take care of the off grade and pay for the national inspection. This has been the procedure for many years in resolving disputes and the industry has adopted this 4% factor in lumber transactions. The key is money value, not volume. For instance, if I have 100 board feet at \$1.00 per foot, the total for this shipment is \$100. If my buyer re-grades this lumber and comes up with 75 board feet at \$1.00 per board foot and 20 board feet at \$0.70 per board foot his total value is \$90, a difference from the original shipment of 10%. This is how the 4% was intended to be used.

Question 4: Are mineral streaks considered a defect in red oak?

Answer 4: Mineral streaks are not considered a defect, but they are limited to one twelfth of the clear cutting area. This is calculated by taking the number of cutting units required to make the grade and allowing the same amount of square inches of mineral. For example, a board with a four foot surface measure needs forty cutting units to make the FAS grade. This piece would allow forty square inches of mineral and still be considered on grade. This is not measured in great detail in most cases and usually comes down to a visual assessment by the inspector. If there is excessive mineral streak, the grade is lowered.

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Tulipwood research project demonstrated at Interzum, Cologne

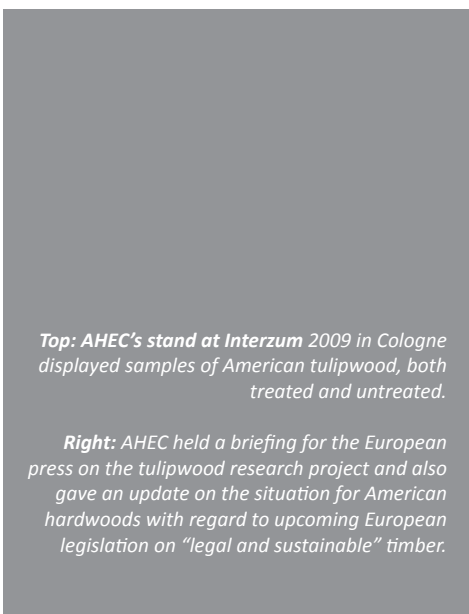
An innovative new research project, the first step in a sustainable hardwood solutions strategy, took centre stage on the American Hardwood Export Council's stand at Interzum in Cologne. Early results of research into commercial treatments for American tulipwood, which is designed to extend this adaptable species to a range of exterior applications, such as cladding, were presented on the stand. The research is being undertaken in partnership with treatment specialists Osmose, and Timbmet, one of the largest timber product suppliers in the UK. In a series of tests, American tulipwood has been treated with Osmose Stabilising Oil at various strengths and exposed to weather-

ing to assess its exterior performance potential. Samples of treated and untreated tulipwood on the stand showed the inherent qualities of this prolific American hardwood and how treatment can enhance these qualities to produce a stable, good looking, cost-effective and sustainable timber solution for exterior use.

Says David Venables, AHEC's European Director: "While it is still relatively early days for this research, Interzum provided a wonderful opportunity to showcase our forward thinking and, crucially, to get the expert feedback from the market, which can inform our ongoing research. All the key requirements for specifying timber exposed to weathering are, of course,

being taken into account, but we see face to face discussions with our potential customers as vital for our project development programme."

The underlying theme of AHEC's Interzum participation is sustainability – highlighting a commitment to developing sustainable hardwood solutions against the backdrop of the findings of its independent study on legality and sustainability. Published last year, this confirmed that US hardwoods are low risk for FSC Controlled Wood, with the American industry setting the standard for 'due diligence' and risk assessment.



Top: AHEC's stand at Interzum 2009 in Cologne displayed samples of American tulipwood, both treated and untreated.

Right: AHEC held a briefing for the European press on the tulipwood research project and also gave an update on the situation for American hardwoods with regard to upcoming European legislation on "legal and sustainable" timber.

