



Softwood Export Council Newsletter

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2003

CIHAC Week

The Mexican construction industry's largest and most important trade show, Expo CIHAC was the venue for a combined American Softwoods and American Hardwood Export Council display which featured wood frame construction in treated wood products, and a variety of hardwood floors. The display had a good location and drew a steady stream of visitors. The mid October show in Mexico City, which is the Mexican answer to the NAHB show in the US, drew more than 60,000 participants over its six day run.

In conjunction with Expo CIHAC, the National Association of Homebuilders held its first International Housing Conference of the Americas. The conference was co-located with EXPO CIHAC, and provided a broad array of technical information on housing construction and Mexican market opportunities

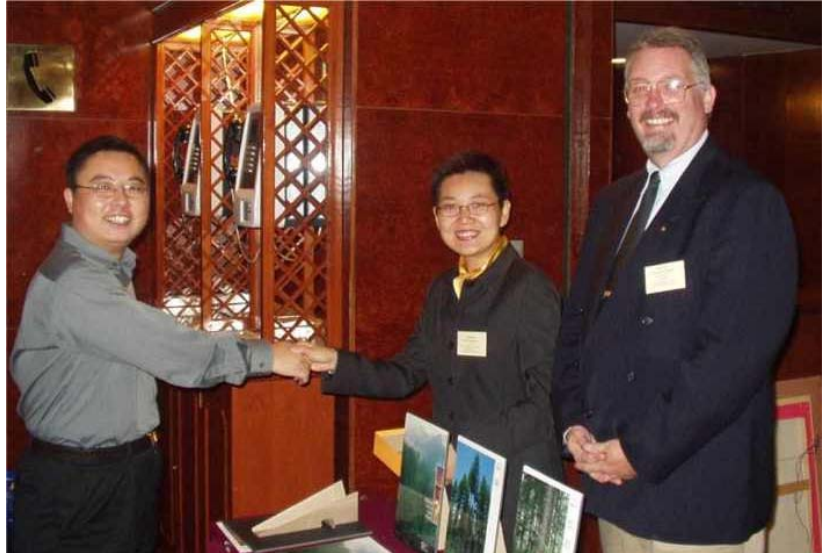
A day before the opening of the EXPO, Conference representatives of APA, SEC/SPC, and AHEC gave technical presentations, and APFA hosted kick-off conference for the press and wood construction trade

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US China Build Trade Mission



Butch Bernhardt, WWPA and Fanny Wu, SEC distribute softwood literature

By Rose Braden

The second annual US China Build trade mission was successfully completed during the last week of September. The mission is a coordinated effort lead by the Evergreen Building Products Association and supported by APA-The Engineered Wood Association, the American Forest and Paper Association, and the SEC and its member organizations. This year's program participants included a group of representatives from eight companies, three trade associations, and one state trade office.

The mission included one-day seminars about wood frame construction and US building materials in each of three major cities, Shanghai, Beijing, and Shenzhen. In addition to presentations about wood frame design and construction, the seminars included 15 minute presentations by

each of the participating US organizations. Each seminar was also accompanied by mini-trade shows featuring US building materials and services. Afternoon Q & A sessions featuring seminar speakers and company representatives provided detail of the US softwood products to the attendees. Subject matter of the presentations included topics such as: *Improved Housing Performance and Lifestyle with American Building Products, Why Build in China with US Building Products, Perspective of a Chinese Developer, China's Wood Frame Building Code, and Softwoods for Interior Design.*

The turnout included attendees not only from the Chinese manufacturing sector but also construction companies and importers. More than 350 hundred architects, developers, distributors, government representa-

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members. Other speakers included experts in wood construction, building codes and trade policy.

In a related development, The U.S. Department of Commerce awarded nearly \$400,000 to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) that will be used to help fund a three-year project, Access Mexico, NAHB's initiative to expand the export market in Mexico for U.S. home builders and suppliers.

The funding will establish a multi-agency consultative group; organize NAHB International Housing Conferences of the Americas in Mexico City in 2003, 2004 and 2005; organize member trade missions to Mexico, host reverse trade missions from Mexico to the United States; and deliver trade-support seminars and educational information to the industry. The funds are made available through the DoC's Market Development Cooperator Program (MDCP), a public-private partnership developed to help small- and medium-sized U.S. firms expand exports that support jobs.

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Irish Woods

By Eddie Pearce

The American softwoods UK office recently attended the Woodworking Ireland show outside of Dublin. Although the rural show site was inconvenient for exhibitors, it appeared to be a more convenient venue for visitors from throughout southern Ireland.

American Softwoods debuted a impressive new pop-up display highlighting the growing regions and various wood species available from the U.S. industry. Among popular handouts at the show was a list of American softwood suppliers within Ireland. Also of interest was a laboratory testing report which proves the superior hardness of U.S. Southern Pine vis-à-vis competing softwoods, an important consideration in flooring and furniture. This piece directly answers the misperception within Ireland that Southern Pine and Douglas fir from the U.S. are not suitable species for furniture manufacturing compared with European softwoods such Redwood (pine) and Whitewood (spruce).

During the show some 350 publications were handed out. In addition, 18 quality contacts were recorded who asked for specific information on American softwoods; among these, four trade leads for U.S. product should result.

From discussions during the show with a number of visitors to the stand, it would appear that the "Celtic Tiger" (i.e. Ireland's unprecedented strong economic growth) is coming to an end. European Union cash infusions for infrastructure and other developments have slowed, and Ireland will soon become a net contributor to the EU budget.

Eurowindow

By Ignacio Martinez

The American Softwoods Spanish Representative recently attended the annual meeting of the European window and door federation Eurowindow. The U.S. is losing share of the Spanish and Italian window and door sectors due to perceptions that they are less durable than European species, so participation in this event is to help eliminate this misperception among target audiences.

Issues covered at the conference were the EU Construction Products Directive, CE marking, and Energy labeling. In addition, data was supplied on the European window, doors, and curtain walling markets. The current breakdown of window production in Europe for 2000 is: wood 31.1% (27.27 million window units, 1.69 square meters basis); aluminum 30.8% (27.08 million) and PVC 38.1% (33.45 million) with a slight reduction trend for aluminum and wood and growing for PVC.

American Softwoods participation in the Eurowindow meeting increases European industry awareness of U.S. softwoods through national federations and provides first hand contact with key players of the window and door industries across Europe. It also provides knowledge of current issues of the industry as well as the European Commission administration. Nothing at the meetings suggests that the ongoing certification/labeling works may affect or limit the use of American softwoods in the manufacture of joinery in the EU member countries.

Programs

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tives and members of the media attended all of the seminars in Beijing, Shenzhen and Shanghai.

The first seminar held in Shanghai was attended by 162 individuals. Opening remarks were made by Mark Calhoun, Director, EBPA, the US Commercial Service in Shanghai, and others. Chinese industries represented include Designers, building decoration and materials trade, construction, developers, building materials manufacturers, and others.

After Shanghai, the seminars shifted to Beijing which began with a breakfast briefing. Opening remarks included US companies' opportunity in China's housing efforts in lieu of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Mission members next traveled to Shenzhen where 106 participants attended the seminar. Opening remarks were made by the Department of Commerce, EBPA, and AFPA's China Office. Reporters from the People's Daily and Xinhua Agency Guangdong, and a television crew from Guangdong Television interviewed US participants about the US-China Build Program and US activities to promote wood frame construction in China.

Prior to the trade mission, an ad promoting the seminars ran in ID+C (International Design + Construction). Articles also appeared in Interior Decoration Magazine and the China Construction Times. China Construction Times also ran a follow up article about the seminars. Ellen Xin, Shanghai Program Manager has also been contacted since the mission by reporters from several publications for information about the seminars.

Portland addition



An Di Nguyen has joined the Portland staff as the new International Marketing Specialist on a part time basis. Di has several years experience in global markets and recently just completed his Masters in International Management from Portland State University. His language skills include Spanish, Chinese, and conversational Vietnamese. His past experiences in Latin American economies as well as the Asia Pacific region provides him with direct international marketing experience.

US Participants were able to make on average 52 leads per company with the majority of leads being new prospects. The participants forecasted up to 1 million dollar increase in sales over the next 12 months.

Surveys were distributed to seminar attendees to gather opinions about the seminars, to poll them about their experience using US building materials, and to find out what topics audiences are interested in learning about. This year's seminar included the addition of a presentation by a Chinese developer about his experience with building wood frame homes in China. Developers from each of the cities were invited to give a presentation in the city where their company was located.

Mexican office

The successful merger of the offices in Japan of the three American softwood cooperators, APA-The Engineered Wood Association, the Southern Pine Council and the Softwood Export Council has led to the proposal of a second collaboration in Mexico. APA, SEC, and SPC are working on reopening an American Softwoods technical office in Mexico during the first quarter of 2004. The new staff member will be collocated in the FAS Agricultural Trade Office in Mexico City with the existing cooperators, AHEC, and AFPA.

The new American Softwoods representative will have responsibility for all softwood panel products, non structural uses of softwood lumber, including furniture, and trade servicing of the softwood industry in Mexico. Dr. Ramon Echenique, will continue his duties as the Senior Consultant, based in Xalapa, with the direct responsibility for promoting the structural uses of US softwoods in Mexico and the Caribbean.

“American Softwoods”

This will be the fourth office operating under the American Softwoods banner, and the second as a three way partnership. To further recognize and cohesively bring the offices and programs together, a new branding activity has begun to develop a world wide logo and other communications media. The new look will unveiled in the spring of 2004.

Events

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SEC MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Manufacturers Association

American Institute of Timber Construction

California Redwood Association

Center for International Trade in Forest Products

Evergreen Building Products Association

OSU Department of Wood Science and Engineering

Pacific Lumber Exporters Association

Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau

Washington State Office of Trade and Economic Development

West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau

Western Wood Products Association

Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers Association

Winter 2004 trade shows

SEC Staff and member organizations will be participating at a number of shows and seminars in the first half of 2004. Your company is strongly encouraged to join the SEC marketing efforts at trade shows and other activities. Mark your calendars for your participation. Contact SEC Portland for travel assistance.

China: The WoodBuild China show will be held in Shanghai from February 25-28, 2004. It is the single largest forest products and wood machinery show in China targeting users of softwood forest products. This particular tradeshow brings in industry attendees from all over the region. Companies from Europe and Canada will also be participating at this tradeshow. If there is one tradeshow to go to in China, this is it!

Japan: Nihon Keizai Shimibun, Inc. is organizing the 10th ARCHITEC-

TURE + CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS 2004 to be held for the four days from March 2nd (Tuesday) to March 5th (Friday), 2004. Held every year since 1995, this show has grown into a comprehensive venue for display of all sorts of architectural materials and related products for buildings essential to community improvement, from commercial facilities and housing to office buildings.

Europe: SAIE DUE LIVING – The SAIE DUE will be held in Bologna, March 17-21, 2004. This event is to promote the unique Italian interior decorations from materials used in homes to furniture. This tradeshow is the perfect opportunity to promote softwoods the Italians already used to express its fashion. The show has a large section devoted to joinery and millwork applications.

Website Update

The European based website for the American Softwoods offices in the United Kingdom and Spain has been updated and expanded. Visitors to www.americansoftwoods.com can now view the entire website in English, French, Spanish, German or Italian. The site will also be easier to find through internet search engines in these countries

New features to the website include stockist locator links to national trade federations across Europe and a showcase gallery with downloadable high-resolution images. The website also features a new easy to use publications order entry system.

Upcoming Events

Japan Lumber Importers Assoc, Tokyo, November 10-11, 2003

Japan Home Show, Tokyo, November 11-14, 2003

Osaka Home Builders Show, Tokyo, November 17-18, 2003

Maderalia, Valencia, November 12-15, 2003

Taipei Building Materials Fair, Taipei, Taiwan; November, 2003

CINTRAFOR China Conference, Seattle WA; December 3, 2003

SEC Board meeting, Seattle WA; December 4, 2003

Woodmac, Shanghai, February 17-20, 2004

Interwood, Athens, March 3-7, 2004

Architecture and Construction, Tokyo, March 2-5, 2004

SAIE DUE, Bologna, March 17-21, 2004

Fensterbau, Nurnburg, March 31—April 3 2004

Veteco, Madrid, May 5-8, 2004

Carrefour International du Bois, Nantes, France, June 2-4 2004

AHEC China Convention, Quindao June 2004

For links to information on these events go to www.softwood.org/calendar