



Softwood Export Council Newsletter

SUMMER 2004

Mexico Staff



The Softwood Export Council, in conjunction with its American Softwood marketing partners, APA-The Engineered Wood Association, and the Southern Pine Council have hired Fernanda Vale to fill the new Program and Marketing Manager position in Mexico. She will establish an office with the other wood cooperators at the Agricultural Trade Office in Mexico City in September.

Fernanda comes with an excellent background. She has spent the last 5 years as a program manager for the American Hardwood Export Council in Mexico and has been directly involved the planning, development, and implementation of

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China Promotion Week a success

China's furniture and interiors industry continues to be a dynamic market for the sale of US softwood products. In June, the Softwood Export Council led a mission of lumber exporters and trade associations to Dalian and Qingdao China in order to create stronger linkages between US softwood suppliers and potential Chinese buyers.

The group of 10 members participated in the Dalian Furniture Fair in June promoting US softwood species and conducting seminars on lumber grading and species characteristics to the Chinese furniture industry. In addition, several Chinese furniture factories were visited. In Qingdao, the city of 7 million famous for its Ting Tao beer, the SEC and its members participated in the American Hardwood Export Council's annual convention in order to rub shoulders with the Greater



China furniture industry and to better understand the changing nature of the furniture industry in China. Over 500 attendees from the furniture industry participated.

Though the SEC has participated in the Dalian Furniture Fair for several years running the show again proved

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Idaho on board

The **Department of Commerce and Labor, International Business Division** from the State of Idaho have joined the ranks of SEC members. Stephanie Camarillo leads the division, with able assistance by Damien Bard in Asia and Sarah Gridner in Mexico

Idaho will be joining other SEC members in events such as US China Build activities, additional Chinese and Taiwanese trade shows and events, and activities in Mexico. Plans also call for possible reverse trade missions to Idaho.

Alaskans join

Two Alaskan organizations have joined the ranks of SEC membership during this summer.

The **Ketchikan Wood Technology Center**, in partnership with the Juneau Economic Development Council, will be leading the promotion of Alaskan softwood species. Dr Kevin Curtis is the project director and will be the contact point for SEC activities. KWTC softwood product efforts have included in-grade testing, the development of Machine Stress

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Markets

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Carrefour du Bois

Members of the Pacific Lumber Exporters Association and SEC European staff attended the Carrefour du Bois trade show in June. The show is specifically for the timber trade in Europe. Exhibitors primarily consisted of European producers and importers of lumber and panel products from France and the Benelux countries, and attendance was restricted to professionals in the wood products trade. Many of the key importers of US Softwoods from France and Belgium were there and this was an excellent opportunity to meet many qualified customers in a short period of time.

There were various other trade associations in attendance, including AHEC, the French Timber Trade Council, Malaysian Timber Council, Slovenian Timber Trade, etc. The trade association booths generally seemed to draw less attendance than the some of the importers and producers booths who were offering champagne, chocolates, etc. in order to draw crowds. It seems there was a fair amount of business being transacted during the show and there were many opportunities to get in front of the buyers.

The issue of forest certification was a hot topic. Environmental groups are pressuring the industry to provide product certified by FSC, PEFC or comparable. Some importers think SFI would be sufficient, they just need documents to show the wood is coming from sustainable managed forests. Certification is important in the UK, France and Germany, and quickly becoming a topic in Spain, Italy and other countries in Europe. It appears the certification issue in the US and Europe is here to stay and it is important to be proactive in order to remain competitive with foreign producers who have some type of certification.

Sample kits



The SEC has produced a limited number of western softwood sample kits for distribution by American Softwoods staff and SEC members to designers, furniture and interior fittings producers.

The kits feature thirteen commercially available species and are noted by their common and botanical Latin names. The softwood samples currently are available in Japanese, Chinese, Spanish, and Commonwealth English.

Shanghai Fair

Eighteen US building materials manufacturers and exporters, state offices, and wood products associations participated in US-China Build's US Pavilion at the Shanghai International Building & Construction Trade Fair (IBCT) in mid May 2004

With six halls covering 540,000 square feet and over 1,200 exhibitors, IBCT is one of Shanghai's largest building materials trade fairs. Three halls were devoted to kitchen and bathroom fixtures. The remaining three halls featured a range of building materials, including windows, garage doors, interior and exterior doors, treated wood, and insulation.

US participants rated the show highly and reported making a number of contacts that they expect to lead to near-term sales.

During the fair, APA-The Engineered Wood Products Association, and the Southern Pine Council held a seminar about timber bridges and the use of treated wood for structures and landscaping. The show provided an excellent venue for US companies to hold follow-up discussions with seminar participants about project ideas and US products. As a result, member companies are in the planning stages for construction of a wooden bridge project at a Shanghai-area golf course.

SEC organizations and participating companies were, Boise Building Materials (WWPA), Vanport International (PLEA), State of Idaho and State of Oregon

Contact Information

Softwood Export Council
520 S.W. Sixth Avenue #810
Portland, Oregon 97204 USA

Phone: 503-248-0406
Fax: 503-248-0402
Email: Info@softwood.org
Web site: www.softwood.org

Craig Larsen, President
Paul Boardman, Director, Intl Markets

Programs

Summer 2004

(Continued from page 1) **China Week** to be of great interest to US softwood companies. China Softwood Week was widely regarded as a dynamic success. Though some of the US company interest was due to pent-up demand from months of inactivity in China because of the SARS outbreak, the companies participating on the mission expressed that there was rising interest in softwood products among their Chinese interiors and furniture industry partners. The large numbers of attendees and interest flowing to our booth seemed to confirm this.



Whereas last year October 2002 (Oct 2003 missed because of SARS), over 99% of the visitors were from Dalian, this year those in attendance seemed to be more di-

(Continued from page 1) **ALASKA** Ratings (MSR) grade rules, and glulam design properties. Its marketing goals are to help raise the market value of Alaskan species and improve their competitive position in the global markets. Initial activities with the SEC will be to develop an Alaskan species guide in a number of international languages.

Joining KWTC in the development of markets for Alaskan species is the **University of Alaska Fairbanks, Sitka Forest Products program**. The UAF-SFFP is headed up by Allen Brackley and is involved in a number of marketing research projects. Initial activities through the SEC will include market studies in Japan and China on Alaskan softwood species.

verse, some even from other parts of the country. Most of the attendees this year were direct lumber users (furniture, panel/lumber and interior application manufacturers).

The presence of the Japanese at the

Dalian Trade Show was large. Many Japanese machinery manufacturers and trading houses participated apparently in order to sell to their fellow Japanese manufacturers looking to set up offshore manufacturing operations in China, or in order to sell to Chinese manufacturers looking to upgrade their factory equipment in order to export to Japan.

A large Japanese furniture company, had its own separate mini-trade

FERNANDA (Continued from page 1) all AHEC activities and programs, and understands the arcane world of the FAS programs, regulations, and requirements. Her educational background includes graduate studies in Marketing and International Business. She is also a certified English teacher and studied at Cambridge, England.

Fernanda will have an orientation period in the Pacific Northwest this fall, and will be providing US support at CIHAC and other American Softwood trade events.

show, selling their Chinese made furniture to Japanese buyers. A Japanese manufacturer of glulams, participated in the show and said that it was expanding operations in China. 100% of their Chinese-produced product (Structural posts)

was going back to Japan into the housing market.

The Chinese furniture factories that we visited were not comparable to each other due to size and capital equipment investment differences but the point of similarity between all

of them is that they were all export oriented and were concentrating largely on Japan.

It appeared that despite interest in US Softwoods there was not much contact or business calling by US companies to Dalian and Qingdao. Every Chinese company we visited expressed an eagerness to have new sources for their raw material quotes and, in addition, to establish more contact with the Americans in order to export product there.

SEC will conduct the same type of mission in the future anchored around an appropriate trade show, along with side factory and company visits. We are now planning a March 2005 cluster of events (Guangzhou Interzum and China WoodMac Show) as the timing for the next SEC China Softwood Week mission.

For more information please contact Paul Boardman at boardman@softwood.org

Events

Summer 2004

SEC MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

American Institute of Timber Construction

California Redwood Association

Center for International Trade in Forest Products

Evergreen Building Products Association

Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor

Ketchikan Wood Technology Center

North American Wholesale Lumber Association

OSU Department of Wood Science and Engineering

Oregon Economic & Community Development Department

Pacific Lumber Exporters Association

Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau

University of Alaska-Fairbanks Sitka Forest Products Program

Washington State Office of Community Trade and Economic Development

West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau

Western Wood Products Association

Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers Association

ACP Program

Get your members companies directly involved in international trade events through the Association Company Participation (ACP) program. Travel funding available for most events. Contact the SEC Portland office for further information

Fourth quarter events —2004

SEC Staff and member organizations will be participating at a large number of shows and seminars in the fall of 2004. Your organization is strongly encouraged to join the SEC international marketing staff at trade shows and other activities. Mark your calendar for your participation. Contact SEC Portland for travel assistance.

Upcoming Events 2004

EBPA Gateway program , Seattle, Portland,	September 2004
US China Build Marketing tour , China	September, 2004
CINTRAFOR Marketing conference , Seattle	September 2004
CIHAC Building Fair , Mexico City	October, 2004
Musical Instrument show , Shanghai, China	October, 2004
ASFI Furniture Suppliers Birmingham UK	October, 2004
Taiwan Construction Show Taipei	November 2004
Japan Lumber Importers Meeting , Tokyo	November 2004
Japan Home Show , Tokyo	November 2004
Osaka Home Builders Show , Osaka	November 2004
SEC Board of Directors , Portland	December, 2004

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

Di moves to D.C.

An “Di” Nguyen has left the SEC offices in Portland to take up a position with the American Hardwood Export Council in Washington D.C. He has assumed the position of program manager with the overall responsibility for China, Taiwan, Japan, and SE Asia.

With his intense and detailed marketing training at SEC, he was the perfect candidate for the opening in Mike Snow’s organization. We wish him well and know that he will grow into his new position

