



Tariffs issues become top priority

A July meeting of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministers indicated progress towards lowering tariffs in the forest products sector.

United States Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky announced that APEC representatives decided to conclude an agreement on accelerated tariff liberalization (ATL) before the end of the year. An ATL agreement would give an important boost to launching a new round of trade talks including forest products issues.

The ATL could be adopted at the World Trade Organization's upcoming Ministerial in Seattle. The meeting will take place from November 30 through December 3 and be the first WTO Ministerial held in the United States. World environmental groups have vowed to be in Seattle in full force to fight the acceptance. For more information on how you can help,

Agencies host quarantine delegation

During the first week in August, SEC members welcomed representatives from the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS) and key Australian importer groups to discuss concerns over the import of "green" unseasoned lumber.

In the past months, Quarantine officials in Australia have grown

concerned over pests infesting green Douglas fir imported from North America. To provide help in developing a solution to the perceived problem, SEC and the Council of Forest Industries, asked AQIS to tour the Pacific Northwest and observe the quality check systems currently in place in each country.

(Continued on page 3)



Bruce Shaw of Stimson Lumber explains handling procedures to the AQIS delegation

In this issue

New EU certification	2
Market review	2
Carpenter training	3
New publications	3
Calendar of events	4
Member listing	4
Housing Conference	4

SEC meeting registration growing

Pre-registration sheets have already started to roll in for attendance at the first annual SEC meeting.

The meeting takes place on Friday, September 17, 1999 beginning at 8:30 am at the Doubletree Guest Suites at Southcenter in Seattle. It is structured as a Board of Directors meeting and open to all interested stakeholders of SEC.

Topics will include an FAS update, overseas office reviews, advertising and member projects during the past year, a discussion of future markets and activities, and business matters.

There is no charge to attend but attendees are asked to pre-register by contacting Dick Krieger at SEC.

Markets

August / September 1999

Future industry

Two SEC members have announced future changes in their association leadership.

The Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers Association announced at its annual meeting that Stan Blaine of the association staff would be succeeding Bob Weiglein as the Executive Vice President upon his retirement in 2000. Stan has been on staff with the WMMPA since it relocated its offices to California.

The Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau has named a new Assistant Manager, Jeffrey Fantozzi to its staff in Bellevue, Washington. Jeff will assist the Bureau's manager, George Thompson, through the rest of 1999 at which time he will take over the Manager position upon Mr. Thompson's retirement.

Jeff has a masters's degree from Oregon State University, and has held wood technology positions with both the California Redwood Association, and the Western Wood Products Association.

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Certification issues discussed in EU

Within the last year, the European forest industries has developed a competitor certification program to the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) system for sustainable forestry. In early June 1999, the German Forestry Council founded a national PEFC (Pan-European Forest Certification) council.

The PEFC is the European industry response to FSC. The FSC was founded by globally active environmental organizations to protect large-scale forest areas from devastation through ecologically unsafe harvesting practices.

About 65 percent of European Union forests are in private ownership, representing about 12 million individual private forest owners. The major objections of the Europeans to the FSC system are economic. However, market-oriented forest owners and timber traders also objected to the heavily weighted ecological and social aspects of the FSC system.

PEFC intends to certify forest production regions in contrast to FSC which only certifies individual forest operations. According to calculations by the German Forestry Council, FSC certification and auditing would cost a private German forest owner on average about DM 42 per hectare. Annual average returns from German forests amount to about DM 50-100 per hectare. Certification per forest operation would eat up their returns.

SEC promotes direct links to members

The summer SEC world wide advertising campaign is appearing on two fronts. An ad introducing the SEC and listing all the member organizations will be appearing the Import / Export Wood Purchasing News. A similiar ad will be featured in the Forest Products Export Directory. Each publication has an international circulation of more than 10,000 . These ads are designed to acquaint the softwood buyers around the world with member organizations of the SEC.

A second series of advertisements is running in the major wood industry journals in Japan. this ad features the four major grading agency members and introduces the new

In Germany, PEFC plans to operate on a state certification level. PEFC aims to finish the certification process for three German regions by September, 1999. Forest owners in those areas will then be entitled to use a PEFC logo.

So far, forest owner organizations in 16 European countries have committed to PEFC, with eight more countries worldwide looking further into certification.

Programs

August / September 1999

Annual program trains carpenters

More than 45 construction professionals were on hand to learn about 2x4 building techniques at the third annual Carpenter Training Course in Korea this July.

The course is organized by the American Forest and Paper Association Korea office to help Korean carpenters learn how to use U.S. materials and technology in single-family wood frame construction. The two-week class starts with three days of classroom work studying technical information, scheduling procedures, and product specification. The remainder of the time is spent building an actual wood-frame structure under the guidance of professional American carpenters.

Erik Wilson, Technical Product Manager for Western Wood Products Association attended the opening days of the course, giving the students lectures on American lumber standards and grades. Other speakers covered topics such as blueprint reading, engineered wood products, and wood anatomy and moisture issues.

AFPA Korea Director K.H. Ahn noted, "One of the largest barriers to increasing wood frame construction in Korea is the lack of skilled carpenter labor. U.S. industry support and private contributions continue to allow us to overcome this obstacle by providing this very effective training course each summer."

(AQIS Delegation - Continued from page 1)

The SEC organized a comprehensive two-day visit of the US west coast Douglas fir production chain – from a standing tree to finished lumber being loaded onto a ship.

The educational tour started with a half day orientation which included representatives from the United States Department of Agriculture – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau, West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau, and Western Wood Products Association. The roundtable discussed U.S. grading standards, Grub hole and debarking certification and other agency based quality control programs.

The group visited the Port of Vancouver, a key Austrian lumber shipping port, a Stimson Lumber Company mill producing large section flitches for Australia, and the VanNatta Brothers stained yield forest, supplying logs to the Simpson mill.

After the U.S. visits, the delegation left to Vancouver, B.C. for a similar set of visits organized by COFI. As part of a larger scientific study, AQIS plans on sending a second team of pest experts to North America in September to conduct

Publications enhanced for world markets

SEC member associations have completed two major projects to provide more informational literature to overseas markets.

The *Western Softwood Species and Grades* guide is a result of the cooperation between California Redwood Association, Pacific Lumber Exporters Association, West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau, and Western Wood Products Association.

The guide gives the reader detailed photographs of dimension and appearance grade lumber, as well as an explanation of U.S. grade stamps and grading characteristics all in one convenient piece.

The publication is available in

Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Commonwealth English and is already being promoted in major Japanese trade publications.

The Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers Association has just released an international version of their *How to Measure, Install and Finish Wood Mouldings and Door Jambs*. As the name implies, the 6-page piece explains how to install mouldings and millwork. It comes in Japanese, Spanish, and Commonwealth English versions.

Other SEC members developing international publications include the Pacific Lumber Exporters Association and the Western Wood Preservers Institute .

Events

August / September 1999

MEMBERSHIP ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Department of Commerce

American Institute of Timber Construction

California Redwood Association

Center for International Trade in Forest Products

Evergreen Building Products Association

Idaho Department of Commerce

Industry Network Corporation

North American Wholesale Lumber Association

Oregon Economic Development Department

OSU Forest Products Department

Pacific Lumber Exporters Association

Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau

West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau

Western Wood Preservers Institute

Western Wood Products Association

Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers Association

CINTRAFOR hosts fall housing conference

There is still time to register for the semi-annual Pacific Rim housing conference hosted by CINTRAFOR, and set for September 15th and 16th in Seattle.

This year's conference, "*Exploring Change in the New Asia: Opportunities for US Building Material and Housing Exports*" will look at the current and future Japan housing conditions, the challenges encountered in entering the Korean and mainland Chinese

marketplaces, and marketing opportunities for US wood products in non-structural applications.

The two-day conference will include open forums on Japan, China, and Korea, allowing participants to interact directly with conference speakers and other housing experts. For registration information, contact CINTRAFOR at 206-543-0867 or visit their web site via the SEC website link.

Upcoming Events

- 📅 Pacific Rim Housing Conference-Seattle, Sept. 15-16, 1999
- 📅 SEC Annual Meeting - Seattle, September 17, 1999
- ◆ Country Style Living Fair - Seoul - September 17-20, 1999
- ◆ Japan Home Show - Tokyo - September 28 - October 1, 1999
- ◆ KY Housing Fair - Pusan - October 2-5, 1999
- ◆ WoodMac/Furnitek China - Shanghai - October 12-15, 1999
- 📅 Philippines Treated Softwood Seminars - October, 1999
- ◆ Batimat - Paris - November 8-13, 1999
- ◆ Maderalia - Valencia - November 10-14, 1999
- ◆ China Building 99 - Beijing - December 1- 4, 1999
- ◆ Taipei Int'l Building Materials & Furniture Show - Dec. 17-20
- ◆ West Japan Total Living Show - March 17-20
- ◆ Good Living Show - Tokyo - April 27 -30

Call Dick Krieger for more detailed information

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