



AWDA puts US woods in spotlight

SEC is co-sponsoring a major promotional event in Japan this spring. The American Wood Design Award (AWDA) project, administered by the American Forest and Paper Association (AFPA) Tokyo Office, invited Japanese architects and builders to submit designs and photos of structures built using American wood. Over 160 projects have been submitted, and AFPA reports that there are many high quality submissions reflecting the broad variety of projects hoped for, from schools and temples to hotels and homes.

US wood and building products featured range from structural engineered products to exposed Douglas fir solid sawn timber applications, to wood fenestration, pine flooring and interior finish applications. The Judging and selection of the winners will take place on January 26 and 27, 2000. Winners will be featured in a four

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SEC conducts Oceania research

Australia, New Zealand, and several small island nations of the South Pacific make up the region of Oceania. Over the past few years, the smaller nations such as Palau, Tonga, and the Federated States of Micronesia have combined to form a \$17+million market for U.S. treated and untreated softwood lumber.

SEC recently received special funding from the Emerging Markets Office of the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) to evaluate the South Pacific and its potential for future lumber exports. SEC traveled with FAS to the Island nations of Palau, Fiji, and the French Pacific Islands in December to meet with builders, importers, and government officials to gather market research.

The mission revealed that U.S. structural lumber is the product of

choice for most builders in French Polynesia (often referred to as Tahiti, its largest island) and Palau. In fact, most housing in Tahiti is single family wood frame construction built with treated U.S. Douglas fir.

However, over the last few years, builders have become tempted to source framing lumber from New Zealand, Malaysia, and Canada. Many had questions about the U.S. grading system and proper specifying and usage of U.S. products. To combat this, SEC is considering a follow up activity to provide seminars in the region, educating members of the construction industry about U.S. softwood lumber and its suppliers.

A complete copy of the report and list of Oceania contacts are available by accessing the SEC web site, or by contacting SEC.

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A new home built to the government standards of French Polynesia; framed with U.S. Douglas fir

Markets

January/February 2000

NZ courting China for export sales

New Zealand is chasing a wood deal in China that would consume nearly all New Zealand's pine forest. International wood marketer Wood NZ is trying to persuade the Chinese Government to change its building standards to include NZ lumber.

The prize would be 1.3 billion square meters of lumber trade. Wood NZ spokesman Darrell Carlin said that with the significant increase in Chinese population and construction, there were huge implications for the wood industry if they were successful. "Every piece of floor space has four times the wall space and there is a huge opportunity in high-rise internal walls, which are usually brick and plaster. Because the brick and plaster is so heavy the cost of the foundations is high. We're trying to show that building with timber framing and wall board is light and easy to build, and then you can insulate and soundproof." It is believed it would take about a year to break through and that they are at the halfway stage.

Contact Information

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Craig Larsen, President

Japanese agencies to merge

The Japanese Government has announced that the Ministry of Construction (MoC), will be reorganized in January 2001.

In January 2001, the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Transportation, the National Land Agency and the Hokkaido Development Agency will merge and be one ministry "the Ministry of National Land and Transportation (MNL)". This name was translated from the Japanese official name "KOKUDO-KOTSU-SHO" so the English name is not the official one.

New ministries will reduce the number of bureau but the Housing Bureau will continue after MNL's birth. The work of MNL's head office (Kasumigaseki, Tokyo) will only be planning policy and strategy and the MNL's region branches will do local public works. The total annual budget of MNL is said to be about 75 billion dollars.

The Housing Bureau will reduce one division (Private Housing Division) but the Building Guidance Division (in charge of the Building Standard Law) and the Housing Production Division (in charge of the Housing Quality Assurance Act) will continue. The Building Research Institute (BRI) will move to MNL between January and March 2001. After April 2001 BRI will be independent.

For more information check out: www.nrc.ca/corporate/english/media/news/ircjapan_e.html

Grace period for wood packaging rule

As a consequence of USDA efforts to ensure uninterrupted trade, Chinese officials on December 29, 1999 informed USDA representatives that China would delay full implementation of a new rule requiring certification of all solid wood packing materials (SWPM).

The new rule, intended to prevent the introduction of pinewood nematode, was officially implemented January 1, but with flexible provisions for enforcement during the two-month grace period. In the case of SWPM containing coniferous wood, shipments must be accompanied by an APHIS certificate affirming that the wood has undergone heat treatment at 56 degrees C. for a minimum of 30 minutes (easily attained by typical kiln drying in the US). China's willingness to phase-in enforcement was confirmed in a written response to Secretary Glickman's letters to several Chinese Ministers.

Inter-agency meetings will be held over the next few weeks to assess the impact of the new rule on US trade, discuss other possible options for compliance, and to develop a protocol for response if cargo fails to meet the Chinese requirements.

For more information contact: Roseanne Freese, 202-720-0770 or contact the APHIS website by going to the SEC home website and clicking on the CHINA SWP Requirements button. The SEC website is at www.softwood.org

Programs

January/February 2000

Missions and shows spell busy springtime

There is no shortage of activities as 2000 begins for SEC member associations and overseas representatives. Trade show attendance will be strong this year with U.S. product promotion at several major exhibitions.

Asian shows early in the year include the Kyung Hyang Housing Fair in Seoul, February 24-29. The American Forest and Paper Association office is organizing a multi-story wood frame construction seminar to be held in conjunction with the show. Speakers from AFPA, the American Plywood Association-The Engineered Wood Association, and the Wood Moulding and Millwork Producers Association will lecture to Korean architects, builders, and government officials about proper wood frame construction and design techniques.

The West Japan Total Living Show in Kita-Kyushu, March 17-20 and The Good Living Show in Tokyo, April 27-30 will be the focus of spring activity by SEC Japan staff.

As for Europe, several SEC members have indicated interest to join SEC

staff in attending Fensterbau in Nurnburg, Germany, March 23-26 or Saiedue in Bologna, Italy, March 17-21. Fensterbau focuses solely on the European window and door markets and remains one of the most effective trade show activities for U.S. softwood suppliers. Saiedue is an important link for U.S. suppliers of millwork, windows and doors to the Mediterranean market.

Beyond trade shows, several SEC members are planning foreign trade delegations for their membership in the next few months. Trade delegations typically allow SEC overseas staff to arrange in-country visits to secondary factories, importers, and trade officials that allow U.S. softwood products suppliers understand a foreign market better and establish contacts for future trade opportunities. The North American Wholesale Lumber Association, Oregon Economic Development Department, Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau, West Coast Lumber Inspection Bureau, and Western Wood Products Association are among the groups that are considering missions to markets such as Australia, China,

(AWDA - Continued from page 1)

color, high-quality 'winners book' highlighting the successful utilization of US wood products in their projects. Their work will be showcased in a press release to over 30 trade publications in combination with a press conference in the spring. At the May 22, 2000 US Japan Housing Conference, the winners will be acknowledged in a ceremony presided over by Ambassador Thomas Foley (invited).

SEC member associations have an opportunity to sponsor AWDA awards and share in the promotional value that this event will receive. Members may create a category relating to their products (moulding, timbers, windows, etc.) and have the AWDA judges select a winner per

China staff grows

Mr. Xu (pronounced shoo) Fang, has joined the wood industry China program as a technical consultant under the AFPA. He is currently based out of Shanghai and will work in collaboration with and under the supervision of Grace Zheng, AFPA Beijing.

Xu is a civil engineer and most recently worked as the Deputy Chief Engineer and Director of Structural Engineering for the Shanghai Architectural Design Institute. He has a degree in structural engineering from Tong Ji University in Shanghai and has completed construction training programs in Canada. He is fluent in both English and Mandarin Chinese as well as

Thompson retires, SEC officers change

George Thompson, Secretary-Manager of the Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau, retired as of January, 2000. Mr. Thompson held his position at PLIB for over 23 years, completing a 44 year career in the wood products industry. He also served as the first Chairman of the Softwood Export Council.

Mr. Thompson's vacancy as SEC Chairman will be filled by SEC Vice-Chairman Dr. Ivan Eastin, Professor at the Center for International Trade in Forest Products at the University of Washington.

Congratulations George on your retirement, and welcome Ivan as new SEC Chairman!

Events

January/February 2000

SEC MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Alaska Department of Commerce

American Institute of Timber Construction

California Redwood Association

Center for International Trade in Forest Products

Evergreen Building Products Association

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

SEC member meetings wrap up winter

The Wood Moulding & Millwork Producers Association's 2000 Annual Meeting is scheduled for February 16-19, 2000 at Sheraton El Conquistador, Tucson, Arizona.

The four-day meeting will combine presentations addressing current industry issues, a furniture factory tour, and social functions. Call WMMPA at 530-661-9591 for more information.

Western Wood Products Association will hold its Spring 2000 meeting, "Viewpoint 2000", on March 4-7 at the Westin St. Francis in San Francisco. Speaker topics

include housing and North American lumber trade issues. For more information, contact WWPA at 503-224-3930.

The Softwood Export Council Board of Directors meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 7 from 2-5pm. The meeting will be held in the Elizabethan Room A of the Westin St. Francis in San Francisco.

Meeting topics will include SEC budgets, the submission to the Foreign Agricultural Service for the 2000-2001 promotional period, and upcoming activities.

Upcoming Events

- ✂ National Association of Home Builders Show, Dallas - Jan. 14-17
- 📄 EBPA Japan Housing Business Program, Seattle - Jan. 18-19
- 📄 SEC Planning Meeting - Portland, January 25, 2000
- ✂ KY Housing Fair - Seoul - February, 2000
- 📄 SEC Board of Directors Meeting, San Francisco - March 7, 2000
- ✂ SAIEDUE, Bologna, Italy - March 17-21, 2000
- ✂ Western Japan Total Living Show, Tokyo - March 17-20, 2000
- ✂ FENSTERBAU, Nurnberg, Germany - March 23-26, 2000
- ✂ Woodtech Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur - April 8-12, 2000
- ✂ Tokyo International Good Living Show, Tokyo - April 27-30, 2000
- ✂ Carrefour International du Bois, Nantes, France - May 5-10, 2000
- ✂ Interbuild 2000, Birmingham, UK - May 21-24, 2000

Be sure to check out
www.softwood.org

for information on:

- SEC members -
- Market reports -
- Upcoming activities -

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