Countdown to the 2017 WPA Annual Meeting

- Things to Do in Palms Springs
- FEFPEB Congress Highlights
- New Members Welcomed
Visit Viking at the WPA Annual Meeting!

Sign up for our new Parts Store at our booth,
Receive a $100 Parts Credit!

We’ll also be sponsoring a “Closest to the Pin” Contest during the annual Golf Tournament, so bring your A-Game!
Northwest Hardwoods alder pallet components exceed the NWPCA uniform standards. Our consistent precision milling is the industry benchmark and our on-time delivery puts it in your yard when you want it. Northwest Hardwoods pallet stock: an easy choice to make.

For more information contact Jeff Carr, Pallet Sales Manager jeff.carr@northwesthardwoods.com 877-345-1421 or 541-485-0377 northwesthardwoods.com

Grinder + Hammermill

Nothing beats a Rotochopper grinder for grinding junk pallets. Nothing beats a hammermill for producing fine texture wood fiber. Put them together, and you have a single-pass solution for animal bedding and short fiber fuels.

Starting at 300 combined horsepower, Rotochopper two-stage grinding systems can turn any volume of pallet scrap into fine texture wood products with unbeatable simplicity.

Which Rotochopper system is right for your volume of pallets? Contact us today to learn more.

320-548-3586
www.rotochopper.com
WPA MAGAZINE

WPA EXECUTIVE
Kathleen Dietrich  President
Dave Uppal  Vice-President
Lindsey Shean  Secretary/Treasurer
Carolyn Beach-Skinner  Past President
Dave Sweitzer  Executive VP

DIRECTORS
Sukhi Brar
Eric Conklin
Rod Lucas
Annie Montey
Greg Vipond
Tom Worthen

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS
Tyrone Konecny
Rob Myers
Derek Sampson

Please direct inquiries about the WPA to
David Sweitzer, Executive Vice-President
P.O. Box 1095, Camas, WA 98607
Ph. 360 335-0208
Email: wpa@westernpallet.org
Website: www.westernpallet.org

Ian Liddell of Accord Equipment Financing
A quick introduction to Ian and Accord Equipment Financing.

Palm Springs Never Gets Old
There are always things to explore in Palm Springs.

Softwood Lumber Prices
Our monthly softwood price graph, courtesy of NRCAN.

WPA Welcomes New Members
This month, the Western Pallet Association welcomes three new members.
Membership Drive
This year's membership drive is already in motion.

“Our 3 Optimax Saws are real workhorses. We run 12,000 plus recycled deckboards a day on two of them and our third saw runs recycled stringers all day long. We could not be happier with their performance and endurance.”

Jamie Gilbert
Custom Pallet & Crating
Charlotte, NC

CONTACT US TODAY TO FIND OUT HOW WE CAN ADVANCE YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH AUTOMATION

OPTIMAX Trim Saws

Stackers - Conveyors - Dismantlers - Trim Saws - Band Saws - Splicers - Platers - More

North American FOREST PRODUCTS LTD.


Toll-Free: 1-877-666-0220 | Email: info@naforest.com | Website: www.naforest.com

NOVEMBER 2016
Cover Story:
Palm Springs
Never Gets Old

Other Features

16 Rancho Las Palmas Then and Now
19 Hours of Service; PECO Pallet
20 Stimson Lumber CEO Elected
21 Universal Forest Products
   Purchases Ubeeco
22 Chinese Pallet Standardization
23 FEFPEB Congress Highlights
26 EPAL Takes Responsibility
27 Further Reading
28 Upcoming Events

2016
Membership
Now Due

WPA membership payment is now due. If your dues are still outstanding, please pay online by following the appropriate link:

Associate Members
Regular Members

Alternatively, please remit by mail to:
Western Pallet Association
PO Box 1095,
Camas, WA 98607
California in January – More Than PALLETable

Western Pallet Association Annual Meeting
January 13-17, 2017
Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa
Rancho Mirage, CA

For more information and meeting registration, visit www.westernpallet.org.
Wood is a natural and renewable resource. Wood harvested from North American forests follows some of the world’s best forest management practices which have for decades provided net forest growth. Net forest growth refers to land which is reforested once the forests have been harvested; preventing a loss of forest acreage with the result being actual forest cover in North America is increasing.

Forest covers approximately 751 million acres, roughly a third of the land mass in the US. 54% of the forest is publicly owned with the balance held in the hands of private land owners. Canada has 860 million acres of forest cover of which 94% is publicly owned and managed with the remaining 6% owned privately.

While harvesting wood occurs under different types of land ownership, forest management is governed by federal and state/provincial regulations that ensure that forest resources are well protected for the future.

The North American wood products industry is a world leader in sustainable forestry practices. Forest certification involves independent third party assessment that companies are operating in accordance with the principles of sustainable forest management that value the socio-economic and environmental contributions of forests.

The total size of managed forests in the US and Canada under the four internationally recognized forest certification programs used in North America is 500 million acres. This represents roughly half of the world’s certified forests.

North American forestry management practices ensure that deforestation and other threats to biodiversity do not occur.

---


---

**CHOOSE THE SUSTAINABLE WAY**

Promoting the use of wood-based packaging and pallets to users seeking sustainable, responsible and economical packaging solutions *NATURESPACKAGING.ORG*
The WPA recently welcomed industry veteran Ian Liddell of Accord Equipment Financing as a new member. Ian has worked with the pallet industry since 1993. He started his career by walking into the Atlanta Forest Expo in 1993 and introducing himself to Bronco Pallet Systems. Since then he has financed pallet and sawmill equipment for clients from almost every equipment manufacturer. The equipment finance program for pallet manufacturers and recyclers focuses on simple competitive finance. Application to $150k same day approval is possible where Accord handles any downpayments on deposits.

Let the leasing company make the downpayment to vendor and keep the cash in your day to day operations!

Ian has been a regular contributor as a contributing author to Pallet Enterprise (Strategies for Getting Favorable Financing Terms for Pallet Operations and Improve Your Financing Chances) as well as American Lumber and Pallet.

Ian Liddell
Accord Equipment Financing
c- 513-293-4480
d- 513-605-1059
iiliddell@4sfg.com or ian@accordlease.com

"Keep the cash in your day to day operations," says Liddell.
I just stopped to do some addition. The 2017 Western Pallet Association Annual Meeting will mark my 19th meeting as newsletter/e-mag editor, and each year the event just gets better and better.

The thing about Palm Springs is that in spite of coming here all those years, and having done the Aerial Tramway, Living Desert, etc., with my family, there never seems to be a shortage of new and/or different things to try. Staying earlier this year in uptown Palm Springs, we developed a daily ritual of riding our bicycles past houses of some of the old Hollywood stars. We rode past the former residences of Marilyn Monroe, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr. and the Las Palomas estate of Cary Grant (see photo below.)

Growing up in Bristol, England, Grant said that he could never get truly warm enough, pressed next to the tiny coal fire to try to shed the cold. That, he said, was why he came to enduringly embrace the sunny climes of Palm Springs.

That sunny weather and the Hollywood colony homes are just a few of the extra reasons to warm up to if you are considering coming to the desert for the 2017 Annual Meeting.

*Seasons greetings!*

*Rick LeBlanc*
Two Different Watering Holes to Visit: McCallum Grove and CVB

About 12 miles from Rancho Las Palmas is the Coachella Valley - Thousand Palms Preserve. At the preserve, the McCallum Trail to the McCallum Grove (at right) is a pleasant hike on a well maintained trail. The McCallum Trail has numbered stops which describe the fan palms, San Andreas Fault, desert pupfish, and various geologic and ecologic features of the preserve. Taking the McCallum Trail from the Visitor Center is about a two-mile round-trip walk, and if you want you can also hike the Moon Canyon Trail which will bring your adventure to over four miles.

Only slightly off-route, the Coachella Valley Brewing Company (CVB) is a different variety of watering hole to enjoy on your way back to Rancho Las Palmas, with several popular brews on tap.
The Unique Landscapes of Joshua Tree National Park

If you think lumber and pallet markets can get contorted, you might want to check out Joshua Tree National Park! Two distinct desert ecosystems, the Mojave and the Colorado, come together in Joshua Tree. A land sculpted by strong winds and occasional torrents of rain, the park provides a rich cultural history, and surreal geologic features add to the wonder of this vast wilderness in southern California. Admission into the park is $20 per vehicle and occupants, and just in case you are not participating in the WPA Golf Tournament, it is free on Martin Luther King Day (January 16, 2017). Allow for 75 to 90 minutes travel each way from Rancho Las Palmas.
North American Softwood Prices

Weekly softwood lumber prices to December 6, 2016 are shown below, sourced at http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/forests/industry/13309.

---

CAPE Nailing Machines

“We installed our first modern automated pallet assembly line in 2002 and we were so pleased with the results that we added a second full line a few years later. I am pleased to confirm my company’s satisfaction with CAPE in all areas.”

Gil Covey, Managing Director
Unit Pallets Limited
Cheshire, United Kingdom

CONTACT US TODAY TO FIND OUT HOW WE CAN ADVANCE YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH AUTOMATION

866-546-8864 PRSGroupInc.com

Stackers - Conveyors - Dismantlers - Trim Saws - Band Saws - Splicers - Platers - More
Get More Production AND Profit... Without Compromise!

In Today's Market, You Need Equipment That Requires Minimal Investment Yet Help You Stay Ahead Of The Competition.

**Go Fast, Produce Fast, Profit Fast!**

**CHOPSAWS**
- 24" CARBIDE BLADES - STANDARD
- 26" BLADES AVAILABLE
- 6 X 10 CAPACITY
- 7-1/2 HP MOTOR — STANDARD
- 10 HP MOTOR AVAILABLE
- MANUAL AND AUTOMATED MODELS

**RESAWS**
- PRODUCE PALLET LUMBER, SLAB RECOVERY, FENCE BOARD, LAPP SHINGLES & SHINGLES
- NEW - POWERED BELT RETURN
- QUICK AIR TENSION SYSTEM
- HEAVY DUTY ARBOR BEARINGS
- ENCLOSURE HYDRAULIC PACK
- ADD BAND HEADS AS YOU NEED THEM

**GRADE SYSTEMS**
- 16" x 16" x 16" CAPACITY
- 30 HP GRADE RESAW
- 30" BANDWHEELS
- COMPUTER CONTROL SETWORKS
- SAW POSITION DIGITAL DISPLAY
- HEAVY-DUTY FRAME CONSTRUCTION

**DEDUSTERS**
- HYDRAULIC DRIVEN BOARD KNOCKER PREVENTS NEARLY ALL JAMS
- 0-700 FPM — VARIABLE SPEED
- CHANGE FOR BOARD THICKNESS IN UNDER 60 SECONDS!
- SIDE DESURING BRUSH OPTION

**STACKING RACKS**
- STRAP CHANNELS MAKE BANDING BUNDLES EASY
- SIMPLY OPEN THE DOOR FOR FORKLIFT ACCESS
- CASTERS AVAILABLE
- CUSTOM SIZES AVAILABLE

**DOUBLE-END TRIM SAW**
- 20" BLADES - STANDARD
- VARIABLE INFED CHAIN SPEED
- PRECISION LASER GUIDES
- SIMPLY ADJUST LENGTH OF CUT WITH THE TOWN OF A HANDLE
- INCLINED WASTE CONVEYOR OPTIONS

Be Sure To See What's New On Our New Website! [www.gofastmfg.com](http://www.gofastmfg.com)

1-800-854-7439
E-Mail: sales@gofastmfg.com • Fax: 920-227-1961

We Have New and Refurbished Units Available

Notcher Systems • Single-End Trim Saws • Custom Equipment
WPA Welcomes New Members

The Western Pallet Association is pleased to introduce the following new members:

Mike Goldston  
Brewco, Inc.  
PO Box 150  
Central City, KY 42330  
Ph: (270)754-5847  
Fax: (270)754-9249  
Web: www.brewcoinc.com  
Email: mgoldston@brewco.com  
Sponsor: Randy Panko, Wood-Mizer LLC

Oscar Betancourt  
Woodland Pallet  
104 Whalen Road  
Woodland, WA 98674  
Ph: (360)624-3935  
Web: www.woodlandpallet.com  
Email: Oscar_palletrec@icloud.com  
Sponsor: Norm Normile, NW Norm

Morris Self  
Bronco Pallet  
Systems, Inc.  
PO Box 1  
Lowes, KY 42061  
Ph: (270)674-6091  
Fax: (270)674-6094  
Web: www.broncosys.com  
Email: broncosys@gmail.com  
Sponsor: Norm Normile, NW Norm

Export Using Wood Packaging and Bracing?

Let TP handle your wood packaging certifications.

TIMBER PRODUCTS INSPECTION  
www.tpinspection.com  
Matt McGowan  
(770) 922-8000 ext. 156  
(678) 480-2451 cell  
mmcgowan@tpinspection.com  
We also offer SFI certification.
Like the Western Pallet Association, the Rancho is a legacy brand that has reinvented itself and remained relevant, while staying true to its roots. It remains a top resort destination in the desert.

Hollywood stars, heads of state and tourists alike descended on the Palm Springs area back in the 1950s to stay at the storied Desert Air Hotel & Resort. Visionary Los Angeles architect H.L. “Hank” Gogerty had transformed 320 acres of barren desert into an ideal sanctuary, complete with a private airstrip. By day, resort guests splashed around in the sparkling pool and played polo on a nearby field while staying in surplus army barracks. When night came, the spirited Compass Room restaurant and bar was the place to see and be seen. The celebrity-laden crowd enjoyed a lively ambiance, strong cocktails and elegant cuisine.

“The Bob Cummings Show,” a popular sitcom from 1955 to 1959, used the popular desert hangout as its backdrop. Rumors suggest the debonair actor piloted his unique Aerocar accompanied by such leading ladies as Marilyn Monroe and Lana Turner.

In the late 1970s, Desert Air made way for today’s luxurious Omni Rancho Las Palmas Resort & Spa. Cary Grant, Roy Rogers, Dale Evans and Bob Hope all appeared at the resort’s 1977 ground breaking. From its Rat Pack era beginnings to a stunning 21st-century renaissance, Rancho Las Palmas remains a timeless classic for today’s discerning traveler.

(Source: RLP)
From first cut, to final user, BPWood delivers sustainable supply chains on the periphery of commodity markets.

Specializing in:
Lumber
Cutstock
Components
Panels
Timbers and more!

Veteran Team.
Global Experience.
Bring us your puzzle.
We'll help you solve it.

250 493 9339
TRADER@BPWOOD.COM
Rancho Las Palmas Resort today (above) and Country Club (below), where the WPA Golf Tournament will take place on January 16.
ATA Thanks Congress for Advancing a Permanent Hours-of-Service Fix

After three long years, an hours-of-service permanent fix was enacted into law as part of the FY 2017 Continuing Resolution, following House approval on December 8 (by a vote of 326-96) and Senate approval on December 9 (by a vote of 63-36).

If FMCSA’s study does not meet the criteria required by Congress – which it is not expected to do – the pre-July 2013 restart rule continues to be in effect indefinitely.

“ATA thanks Congress for including what should be a permanent fix to the hours-of-service restart in this Continuing Resolution, and we look forward to its final passage into law to resolve this issue," stated American Trucking Associations President and CEO Chris Spear. "Reverting back to the pre-July 2013 restart shifts the emphasis back to safety by removing flawed data from the rulemaking process. The entire industry will now be able to comply with this rule thanks to a common sense approach championed by a bipartisan group of legislators.

“While ATA sought the same for preempting states that have added redundant rest break requirements on top of the existing federal standard, ATA will continue to push hard for federal preemption of specific state laws when the 115th Congress convenes next month.“

PECO Pallet Looks to Negotiate Union Agreement for Chicago Service

After workers at a PECO Pallet facility in Chicago voted to unionize earlier this year, they are still looking for a first collective agreement, according to a story at www.nwitimes.com. On December 8, about 50 union workers rallied outside of the depot in support of reaching a contract. According to a union spokesperson, workers decided to unionize because of low pay, working conditions and a heavy workload. Pay reportedly starts at $11 per hour and can reach $18 per hour through achievement of certain goals.

"Local 743 has been a great partner throughout the negotiation process and we have already reached agreement on many key issues," spokeswoman Martha Arendt told www.nwitimes.com. "Peco has always worked to develop strong relationships with our employees because we know that we succeed when our employees succeed. We look forward to swiftly reaching a successful agreement.”
The American Wood Council has elected Stimson Lumber CEO Andrew Miller as new AWC chairman for a one-year term, effective beginning January 2017.

Allyn Ford, chairman of Roseburg Forest Products was elected the first vice-chairman and Danny White, CEO and president of T.R. Miller Mill Company, was elected as second vice-chairman. Current AWC board chairman, Boise Cascade CEO Tom Corrick, will serve as the immediate past chairman.

Furman Brodie, vice president of Charles Ingram Lumber Co., was confirmed as a new member to the AWC board.

The American Wood Council is a trade association that represents over 75% of North American wood products manufacturers. Stimson Lumber is a WPA-member company.
Universal Forest Products, Inc. (NASDAQ: UFPI) has announced that one of its subsidiaries has acquired all outstanding shares of The UBEECO Group Pty. Ltd., a manufacturer of wood packaging based in Erskine Park, Australia, a suburb of Sydney.

Founded in 1970, UBEECO™ manufactures and distributes a variety of wood packaging and alternative material products, including boxes, crates, pallets, skids, protection packaging, packaging accessories and loose lumber. It also offers on-site packing services for many customers. The company’s FY 2016 sales were approximately $21.2 million (USD). UBEECO becomes the second packaging-related Australian acquisition by a Universal affiliate. In 2015, a Universal subsidiary purchased a majority interest in Integra Packaging Proprietary, Ltd., a manufacturer and distributor of integrated packaging products based in Brisbane, Australia.

“UBEECO is a leader in the industrial packaging marketplace in Australia, and we are thrilled that the company and its talented people are joining the family of Universal,” said UFPI CEO Matt Missad. “They have an excellent reputation for quality products and customer service, they’re growing, and they have ambitious goals—and we value all of that. In addition, their leadership team is strong and has created not just a healthy business but also a good, strong corporate culture that fits well with ours.”

**UBEECO becomes the second packaging-related Australian acquisition by a Universal affiliate. In 2015, a Universal subsidiary purchased a majority interest in Integra Packaging Proprietary, Ltd.**

“We are pleased to be joining the Universal family of companies because we know they share our dedication to customers, to excellence, to growth, to profits and to the welfare of our employees,” said Chevalier Joseph Borg, co-founder and managing director of UBEECO, who will remain on the team as part of the acquisition. “We will be able to leverage Universal’s resources and expertise to take UBEECO to new levels of success.”
Slowing economic growth in China speaks to the need for supply chain standardization, according to Peter Mackie, Group President of CHEP Pallets. Quoted by ChinaDaily.com, Mackie stressed that the Chinese supply chain remains very fragmented in terms of truck and pallet sizes.

As a result, goods often require manual handling as they move through the supply chain. With China expected to face a labor shortage over the next few decades, supply chain performance may suffer if standardization is not embraced.

Since 2014 Chep has collaborated with the research institute of the Chinese Academy of International Trade and Economic Cooperation (CAITEC), part of the Ministry of Commerce, with an eye to accelerating the development of standards for pallets, transportation equipment and material handling systems. The result will be greater supply chain efficiency.

According to the ChinaDaily.com article, Chep and CAITEC are running about 30 pilot programs in China that are subsidized by the central government.

China's logistics costs run at 16 percent of GDP, according to the National Development and Reform Commission, which Mackie pointed out is much higher than in developed countries.

Chep has seen around a 20 percent growth rate in recent years, after a decade of operations in China. Its network includes in excess of 80 on-site customer service points and service centers, operating a pool of more than 4 million pallets. Customers include Nestle, P&G and Unilever.

"But the fastest growth occurs when the supply chain is really unlocked, and it is still at the very early stage for us," Mackie was quoted. "There's a very strong correlation between population in a country and the potential size of pallet market, so China's (huge) population means it's the most important market for us in the long run."
Delegates at the 67th congress of the European Federation of Wooden Pallet & Packaging Manufacturers (FEFPEB) heard how pallets and packaging made from wood are the perfect components of a circular economy.

In his welcoming address to the annual congress, held this year in Brussels, FEFPEB president Rob van Hoesel said wood stood apart from other raw materials as a truly renewable resource, making timber pallets and packaging a central part of sustainable business systems.

“Wood can be harvested now and in the far future from sustainably managed forests,” he said. “In the EU as a whole the stock of timber is still growing and most forests are sustainably managed under FSC or PEFC certification schemes. This simple fact makes a world of difference compared to other materials such as iron or plastics.” Together with the fact they can be easily reused, repaired and then recycled into other products or biomass fuel, this means “wooden pallets and packaging are the ultimate examples of circular thinking.”

Van Hoesel added that the industry had to highlight this to civil servants and politicians, many of whom have incorrectly adopted a negative view of wood as a result of campaigns by NGOs concerned about the depletion of tropical forests. “In Europe, we use softwood from sustainably managed forests – these raw material have no connection with the tragic deterioration of tropical forest areas,” he said.

“In the EU as a whole the stock of timber is still growing and most forests are sustainably managed under FSC or PEFC certification.”

- Rob Van Hoesel

The need for the industry to present its attributes correctly and clearly to the European Union was highlighted at the congress by lobbyist and author Daniel Guéguen, who spoke about the implications of the recent Brexit decision in the UK for the EU. Brexit, he believed, had come about due to a “lack of political vision” and rising bureaucracy within the European Parliament. The event has caused uncertainty but could present an opportunity to re-evaluate the EU for the benefit of business in Europe. He concluded by reminding the congress that business has traditionally been less successful at achieving change when lobbying the EU – and accordingly needs a well-considered approach.

(Cont’d on Page 24)
"...the industry...must be proactive and highlighting five action points to capitalize fully on its inherent advantages."

- Patrice Chanrion

A further European perspective was given to the congress by Flor Diaz Pulido of the European economy and MEP Jan Huitema, who highlighted the European Union’s growing emphasis on decreasing its ecological footprint, with concepts of efficiency, bio-economy, and the circular economy becoming more important. This trend, said Huitema, would increasingly affect the content of European legislation. As a result, the wooden pallet and packaging sector, which already has at its core recycling, reuse, and sustainability, was in a good position to benefit.

Patrice Chanrion of French national association Sypal furthered this theme in a presentation titled Wooden Pallets at the Heart of the Circular Economy. Here, he set out the sustainable advantages of wooden pallets in the context of the ‘seven pillars of the circular economy,’ reminding the industry it must be proactive and highlighting five action points to capitalize fully on its inherent advantages. Wooden pallet and packaging businesses must: act to secure supply of raw materials into the future; ensure long-term traceability; continue work to improve pallet quality; encourage innovation in areas such as pallet design and performance; and improve existing and explore new recycling options for wooden pallets and packaging.

Secretary General Fons Ceelaert updated the business session on FEFPEB’s recent activities, including continued work with the industry’s Global Forum, which will meet for the third time in Arizona in March 2017; liaison with DG Sanco on the ISPM 15 regime, which remains unchanged; European lobbying on phytosanitary, environmental and industry issues; FEFPEB’s new taskforces on alternative materials and circular economy and it’s Packaging from Nature PR campaign.

The congress was addressed by Anders Ek, chairman of the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries, CEI-Bois, which works in close collaboration with FEFPEB.
There were also presentations on the industry’s technological developments. Erik Piil (DK) and Christophe Mathé (France) of IMITEK gave a presentation on dielectric heating, illustrating how ISPM-15 accepted microwave technology can also help protect the wood against fungi, mold and bacteria; and stating that dielectric methods are approximately 0.335 euros per unit cheaper than conventional treatments. Gabriel Robert of French technological wood institute FCBA updated delegates about the use of infrared spectroscopy to verify the results of different heat treatments for compliance to ISPM 15 standards. Bert Wittevrongel of Italian machinery manufacturer Storti gave a presentation on the latest in robotics technology for pallet production lines.

The congress was sponsored by BASF Wolman, Cathild Industrie, Conlegno, Ecoblaks, Eirebloc, EPAL, Euroblock, Lonza, Incomac, Pooling Partners, Friedrich Behrens AG (BeA), Imitek and Storti.

Slides from several of the presentations are posted at the FEFPEB website. Find them by following this link (scroll to the bottom of the page to see the presentation links): http://congress.fefpeb.eu/p/speakers

Jan Huitema is a member of the European Parliament and a dairy farmer in the Netherlands. Wood pallets and packaging in a good position to benefit from the increasing sustainability focus, he says.

(SOURCE: Fefpeb)
EPAL Takes Responsibility for Pallet Pool Safety and Quality

As a way forward, EPAL points to the example of Italy’s decision to stop allowing the exchange of UIC/EUR pallets with EPAL pallets, which it says has resulted in better pool quality.

EPAL, the European Pallet Association, has expressed concern about the erosion of pool quality associated with UIC/EUR pallets - a pool loosely overseen by the International Union of Railways (UIC). When these pallets are exchanged with EPAL pallets and are absorbed into the common pool, the overall pool quality is diluted.

EPAL believes that UIC and their member railways and inspection companies are not undertaking effective action. As a result, ever more users are being confronted with either counterfeit or inferior quality UIC Euro pallets. There have been, it says, serious complaints to EPAL from users that when exchanging EPAL Euro pallets they receive non-conforming UIC/EUR pallets.

With such concerns in mind, EPAL raised the pallet exchange issue at a recent meeting of the UIC Working Group, which was lightly attended by UIC participants. The meeting ended without any actual solution, as to how the UIC quality defects could be redressed. An EPAL meeting with the UIC and the ARGE pallet pool at the did not achieve the desired result for EPAL.

EPAL suggests that the solution taken by Italy could take a leading role for the other countries in terms of exchangeability. In 2015, the EPAL National Committee in Italy prepared a study on the quality of UIC pallets in conjunction with ECR Italy. The focus of the study was the safety and quality aspect of the Euro pallets in circulation.

As a result of the study, exchangeability with the UIC was ceased. The market adopted and implemented the recommendation: In Italy, EPAL Euro pallets are not exchanged with UIC pallets and the number of EPAL pallets produced in the first quarter of 2016 had increased by 27.9% compared to the same period the previous year. The EPAL quality standard has prevailed.

"The high quality and the safety of independent quality assurance is the utmost priority for pallet users of our EPAL products," stated Martin Leibrandt, CEO of EPAL. "That’s why EPAL is acting decisively in all countries against pallet counterfeiters and trademark violations.”
EPAL measures up in terms of quality assurance, the association states.

Suggested Reading

What Woodworkers Need to Know About the EPA Formaldehyde Regulation

The New Electronic Recordkeeping and Anti-Retaliation Requirements

U.S. Lumber Coalition alleges Canadian lumber being sold at “less than fair value”

Anticipated Duties on Softwood Lumber to Dampen Canadian Wood Products Industry Outlook

A Behind the Scenes Look at Operation Christmas Child
Upcoming Events


1/13/2017-1/17/2017  Western Pallet Association Annual Meeting, Rancho Mirage, California. www.westernpallet.org


Western Pallet Advertising Sponsors

Advance Lumber  
BPWood  
Go Fast Manufacturing  
North American Forest Products  
Northwest Hardwoods  
PLIB  
PRS  
Pallet Machinery Group  
Rotochopper  
Timber Products Inspection  
Viking Engineering & Development
Season’s Greetings