

Wood Products Expo

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are certified. About 18.5 million are in the U.S. and Canada. About 3,400 companies have received certification.

Bubser noted that there are 556 members in about 61 countries certified under FSC. Estimated value of the products and service total about \$6.12 billion worldwide.

Certification, Bubser said, is scheduled to double in the next three years.

The government has the most active participation in certification programs for green building programs. The green building programs link their birth to the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, Bubser said, when "environmentalism" became a movement.

FSC formed in 1993. The need for certification was recognized when it became harder "to conduct commercial forest management on properties," he said, because of various environmental group political pressures.

The first public land certification under FSC began in 1997. Through the years, the program developed. In 2004, noted Bubser, the tree farm "Standards for Sustainable Forest Certification" may be implemented.

Federal, state, and local building projects are well under way, with the directives supplied by the Green Building Council. All state projects in Pennsylvania have to conform to the "silver requirements" of the Council's program.

Pennsylvania falls in second place, nationally, for registered projects, totaling 45. California has the lead at 83.

Major home improvement and lumber stores, including Home Depot and Lowe's, have enacted certified preference policies.

The U.S. stands apart as the world's leader in wood consumption, in front of Western Europe and Japan, countries who are also big importers, Bubser noted.

Bubser noted that SmartWood, Richmond, Vt., is the "oldest forest certification organization in the world," accredited by FSC. SmartWood has customers in nine different countries.

What makes certification successful is that it provides the following key elements, according to Bubser:

- Credibility through rigorous standards.
- On-product labeling.
- Third-party certification through manufacturing and distribution.
- International recognition and approval.
- Addressing the "triple bottom line" — the environment, the economy, and social responsibility.

The certification process provides best management practices to use in place of regu-

lation. Bubser called certification the "antithesis of regulation." He said regulation is the "extreme expression of frustration — if we can't or won't do it, someone else is going to do it for us."

Certification provides the "standards of responsible forestry," he said. It allows homeowners to "reward responsible companies."

Benefits include healthy, productive forests, sound forestry management, stronger industry relationships, access to world markets, improved company image and morale, and better business-to-business recognition.

The third-party certification is critical, because with consumers, credibility is an issue. When a company decides to simply "certify" its own product, trust could be lost. "Only 13 percent of consumers believe companies are credible," noted Bubser. (Half the consumers believe newspapers are credible, according to Bubser.)

Certification, while an involved process, takes more than three months to complete.

The bulk of certified lumber in North America is hardwood, through there is a growing need for softwood certification to meet increasing demand. Some pub-



Butch Rogers, manager of Timber Wolf Wood Processing Equipment, Rutland, Vt., operates the Pro-MX inline cutter/processor during Timber 2003.

lishers, such as Times-Warner, noted Bubser, require at least 80 percent of their paper to come from certified companies by 2006.

Public Relations

Companies would do well to offset criticism and conflict from

the general public through some type of public relations strategy.

And good PR is not all that complicated, according to Pat Wood, senior account manager with William J. Green and Associates, Hummelstown.

Wood, who also spoke during Timber 2003, noted PR can be as

simple as having a checklist of what your company is about, your certification, and other information on a fact sheet with contact names. Printed or photocopied fact sheets can be sent to customers, neighbors, and community leaders.

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Dave Bubser, regional manager/northern U.S., SmartWood, left, with Paul Lyskava, executive director of the Pennsylvania Forest Products Association, last week at Timber 2003.



Eric Hertel, sales representative for Hudson Forest Equipment, demonstrates the Farm Boss 36-inch cutter in the demonstration area of Timber 2003 last week in Harrisburg. Photos by Andy Andrews, editor

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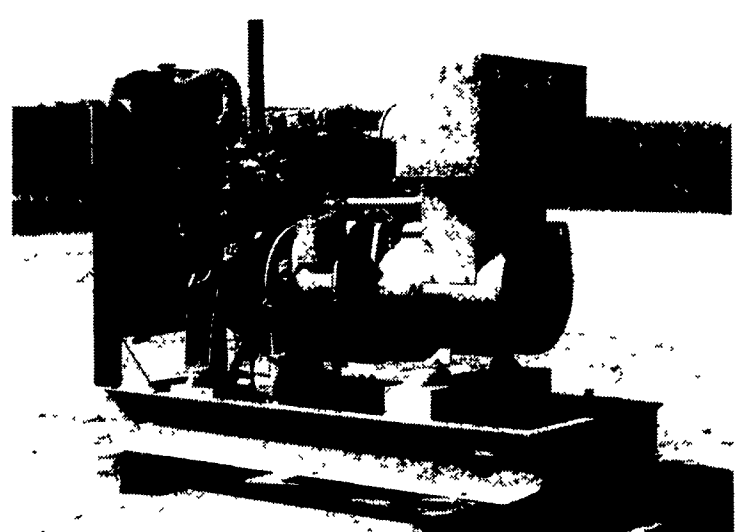
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