WOOD USE IN THE U.S. PALLET AND CONTAINER INDUSTRY: 1995

Center for Forest Products Marketing

Department of Wood Science and Forest Products
School of Forestry & Wildlife Resources

1650 Ramble Road
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0503
WOOD USE IN THE U. S. PALLET
AND
CONTAINER INDUSTRY: 1995

Vijay S. Reddy
Post-Doctoral Research Associate

Robert J. Bush
Associate Professor

Matthew S. Bumgardner
Graduate Assistant

James L. Chamberlain
National Needs Fellow

Philip A. Araman
Project Leader
USDA Forest Service
Southern Research Station
Blacksburg, Virginia

Center for Forest Products Marketing and Management
Department of Wood Science and Forest Products
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
1650 Ramble Road
Blacksburg, VA 24061-0503
(540) 231-5876

June 1997

This research was supported by funds from the USDA Forest Service; Southern Research Station; Hardwood Processing, Recycling, and Resource Valuation Research Unit; located in Blacksburg, Virginia. Technical assistance was provided by the USDA Forest Service, Forestry Sciences Laboratory, Princeton, West Virginia.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides estimates of the volumes of various wood materials used in 1995 by the U. S. pallet and container industry. In Spring 1996, data were gathered using a mail survey of 2,619 pallet and container manufacturers (Standard Industrial Classification codes 2441, 2448, and 2449) across the United States. Using these data, we estimated the volumes of various wood materials used by the industry in 1995, and compared these estimates to the estimated wood material use in 1993 and 1992. The following are highlights of the study.

♦ The industry manufactured approximately 411 million new pallets in 1995.

♦ The pallet and container industry used an estimated 4.53 billion board feet of solid hardwood (lumber, cants, and parts) in 1995. The estimated consumption of solid hardwood in 1993 and 1992 was 4.82 and 4.74 billion board feet, respectively.

♦ Oak (1.22 billion board feet) was the most commonly used hardwood species, followed by yellow-poplar (379.5 million board feet), and alder (165.2 million board feet). In addition, the industry used 2.6 billion board feet of mixed hardwoods.

♦ The industry consumed 1.79 billion board feet of solid softwood (lumber, cants, and parts) in 1995. The estimated consumption of solid softwood was 2.12 billion board feet in 1993 and 2.15 billion board feet in 1992.

♦ Southern pine accounted for 40.9% (730.6 million board feet) and the Spruce-Pine-Fir species group for 30.9% (551.9 million board feet) of solid softwood use in 1995. Douglas-fir accounted for 11.2% of the solid softwood use.

♦ In 1995, the pallet and container industry used an estimated 187 million square feet (3/8” thickness basis) of softwood plywood. An estimated 178 million square feet were used in 1993 and 169 million square feet in 1992. The volumes for 1993 and 1992 were plywood of all thickness, making comparisons difficult.

♦ The industry used an estimated 21 million square feet (3/8” thickness basis) of oriented strand board (OSB) in 1995. Approximately 18 million square feet and 20 million square feet of OSB were used in 1993 and 1992, respectively. As with plywood, OSB volumes for 1993 and 1992 were reported without a common thickness basis, making comparisons difficult.