

White Oak, Poplar Programs Top Agenda

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers invites you to attend the **2024 Annual Meeting** on **Feb. 21-25** at Hammock Beach Resort. The business sessions will offer key issues for the Appalachian Hardwood industry.

The business presentations include:



*** InventWood Makes Poplar Truly Hard** - A Maryland company has designed a process to press Poplar and other lumber into a stiff building material. The company is a leader in cellulose-based material innovations.

*** White Oak Initiative Educates Landowners**

- WOI Executive Director Jason Meyer will share the group's mission to educate landowners on forest management for White Oak.



*** Railroad Tie Demand in 2024** - Nate Irby, executive director of the Railway Tie Association, will discuss tie demand in 2024.

*** Real American Hardwood Promotion**

- RAH members will report on the Magnolia Network campaign and results from social media. Millions of consumers have been reached.



*** Hardwood Federation & Campaign 2024**

- Executive Director Dana Cole will share key hardwood issues in the 2024 Presidential and Con-

*AHMI Annual Meeting Feb. 21-25
Hammock Beach Resort, FL*



gressional campaigns specifically in the Appalachian region.

*** AHMI Board Member & Officer Elections** - Chairman Tom Sheets will present the State of the Association and member anniversaries. New Board members and officers will be approved.



*** Producer & Distributor Divisions Meetings**
- Separate sessions for these AHMI groups to discuss
(See Meeting on page 3)

REGISTER by DEC. 31

for a drawing on

\$100 Spa Gift Certificate

OR

\$100 AMEX gift card

Make room reservations at Hammock Beach Resort **(866) 841-0287** then option 1 and option 3. Ask for the Appalachian Hardwood block.

The way I see it...

By Tom Inman, AHMI President

....there has been increased interest in recent weeks in AHMI's Certified Appalachian from member companies trying to meet existing and new customer needs. It can be attributed to two things:

1) **European Union Deforestation Regulations** which go into effect in the next two years. The current law will require all wood products to list the geolocation of harvest.

The US hardwood industry does not track this and many believe it is impossible to obtain. However, AHMI's Certified Appalachian program does require participants to list the county of origin.



We are testing a program for sawmills that adds a line on Procurement Verification Forms from loggers or landowners for GPS coordinates of the harvest. Any smartphone can provide that detail.

I have spoken with three log and lumber inventory software companies and all say it can be easily added to handheld devices and databases.

Most sawmills track logs by company or timber tract now to note quality of materials and yield. Another piece of data "could" be added.

There is concern about giving customers information about where logs are harvested. Will that information be shared with competing vendors is a legitimate question and difficult to avoid.

2) **Legality questions:** Buyers around the world face growing concerns about legal resources. Certified Appalachian's documents are signed by the legal owner in transactions and the documents are kept by enrollees.

Certified Appalachian is accepted by buyers because of the third-party review by AudiTech Inc. Each participant receives a signed audit certificate from AudiTech that can be shared.

The application is simple and most companies are approved in 3-5 days. Call AHMI at (336) 885-8315 to enroll in Certified Appalachian.

Deadline For USDA Grants Is Dec. 15

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. and Innovative Funding Partners remind you that the deadline for US Department of Agriculture grants is 5 pm on December 15, 2023.

USDA has \$50 million to invest in 2024 to expand innovative uses of wood as construction materials, energy sources, and in manufacturing and processing input for wood products.

The Wood Innovations Grants Program stimulates, expands, and supports U.S. wood products markets and wood energy markets to support the long-term management of National Forest System and other forest lands.

Focus areas include mass timber, renewable wood energy, and technological development that supports hazardous fuel reduction and sustainable forest management. The deadline to apply for financial assistance is 5:00 pm local time on December 15, 2023.

AHMI members are eligible to hire Innovative Funding Partners as a contractor at a discounted rate. The company will provide full service in writing and submitting the application or provide a review of the application a company completes before it is submitted.

Details are available from Louise Mathias at louise.mathias@innovativefundingpartners.com.

The agency is seeking proposals that support innovative uses of wood in the construction of low carbon buildings, as a renewable energy source, and in manufacturing and processing products. These programs also provide direct support to expand and retrofit wood energy systems and wood products manufacturing facilities.

There are also PDFs available to assist in locating applications and USFS assistance. For more information, contact the AHMI office.



Meeting from page 1

cuss issues of importance. The Producers meeting is limited to that membership category while the Distributors meeting is open to all.

The format follows previous events with business sessions in the morning, sporting events in the afternoon and receptions each evening to network and renew friendships.

Hammock Beach Resort is an hour south of Jacksonville in Palm Coast, FL. It offers excellent dining, golf, spa and miles of unspoiled cinnamon sand beach along the Atlantic. Guests call it an extraordinary treasure and an oasis of tranquility and relaxation.

FUN!! planned daily:

Annual Golf Tourn. Friday at Ocean Course.

Annual Fishing Tourn. Friday sportfishing.

Golf Scramble Saturday at Conservatory Course.

Croquet Tournament Saturday.

Afternoon on the Beach Saturday.

Evening Receptions daily.

Time for networking, dinner with friends.

Please complete the registration form on page 6 of this newsletter, print and mail or visit **our website**.

Hammock Beach Resort activities

The premiere destination for relaxation and enjoying the best of Palm Coast Florida, the resort has two breathtaking Signature golf courses — the iconic Jack Nicklaus designed Ocean Course and the Conservatory Course designed by Tom Watson. They have spectacular oceanfront views, dramatic rolling hills and challenging layouts.

- All guests can enjoy the nine-hole professionally manicured putting course.
- The full-service spa offers serenity and luxury with relaxing massages, cleansing facials, hair treatments and nail services.
- The Fitness Center offers state-of-the-art equipment, including Peloton bikes and offers both cardio and weight training.

• Float down the lazy river, ride the water slide or build a poolside sandcastle; all with full food and beverage service in the lounge areas. There are separate upper and lower-level pools, an adult pool, a 32-person hot tub, volleyball and poolside bar.

Register and make room reservations today!



Hammock Beach Resort offers pools, lazy river and is on the Atlantic Ocean with private beach

AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, FEB. 21

6 pm - Early Bird Reception

THURSDAY, FEB. 22

Morning activities on your own

2 pm - AHMI Board of Trustees Meeting

3 pm - Registration

6 pm - Welcome Reception sponsored by Stringer Industries

Dinner on your own

FRIDAY, FEB. 23

8:30 am - General Session

Business Presentations

12 pm - Golf Tournament – Ocean Course

12 pm - Fishing Tournament

6 pm - Reception

Dinner on your own

SATURDAY, FEB. 24

8 am - Producers Meeting – *Producers only*

8 am - Distributors Meeting – *(open to all)*

9:15 am - General Session

Business Presentations, Annual Meeting, Election of Officers

12 pm - Golf Scramble Event

2 pm - Croquet Tournament

2-4 pm - Fun on the Beach

6 pm - Reception

Dinner on your own

SUNDAY, FEB. 25

8:30 am - Fellowship of Christian Lumbermen

Travel home safely!

2024 Resource Guide Materials Due Soon

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. will publish its **2024 Appalachian Hardwood Legal & Sustainable Resource Guide** in February 2024 to assist more than 8,500 consumers of hardwood lumber make wise buying decisions.

The annual Guide is distributed to furniture and cabinet makers, millwork and flooring producers, architects and designers. An electronic version is emailed twice annually to more than 12,000 buyers in Asia, Indonesia, Europe, and Mexico.

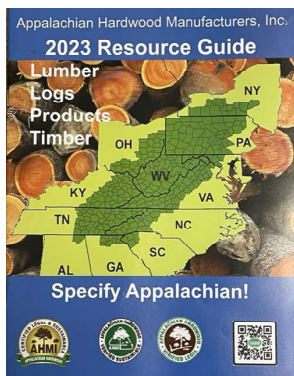
The Guide promotes AHMI members by listing contact information for all active members, species of lumber available, other hardwood products and certifications. It also details the specific characteristics of Appalachian Hardwood Lumber that wood consumers should demand!

Are you an Exporter? The AHMI Export Division offers you an exclusive section aimed at international customers of Appalachian Hardwoods. We ask that you complete the "Guide Exporter" form to list your company in this section. There is an additional \$225 fee to be an Export member and this information is emailed to international customers.

We look forward to your participation in the 2024 Appalachian Hardwood Legal & Sustainable Resource Guide. Please send your materials immediately to be included.

The Guide will be published in February in time for more than a dozen industry events in 2024. This includes the Expo Richmond in April, two High Point Furniture Markets, IWF Atlanta in August and GreenBuild in November.

Advertisements are available in a variety of sizes. For details, please contact the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315.



AHMI Event Calendar

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. plans to attend the following events to promote AHMI member companies and products.

Members are welcome to participate in the AHMI exhibit and we can assist with registration if required. Please check with the AHMI office:

2024

Jan. 9: **ALC**, Embassy Suites, Greensboro, NC

Feb. 5-7: **IHLA**, Marriott Downtown, Indianapolis, IN

Feb. 21-25: **AHMI Annual Meeting**, Hammock Beach Resort, Palm Coast, FL

March 7-8: **Appalachian Carbon Forum**, Lexington, KY

March 12: **ALC**, Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke, VA

March 25-27: **HMA National Conference**, Charleston, SC

April 2-4: **KFIA**, Lexington, KY

April 11-13: **Expo Richmond**, Richmond, VA

April 13-17: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

April 23-25: **Virginia Forestry Summit**, Charlottesville, VA

May 2-5: **ALC Beach Meeting**, North Myrtle Beach, SC

June 25-27: **Pellet Fuel Institute Annual Meeting**, Charleston, SC

July 20-23: **AHMI Summer Conference**, Asheville, NC

Aug. 6-9: **International Woodworking Fair**, Atlanta, GA

Oct. 2-4: **NHLA Convention**, St. Louis, MO

Oct. 26-30: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

Nov. 12-15: **GreenBuild**, Philadelphia, PA

For more information, please call the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315 or info@appalachianhardwood.org.

If you know of events that AHMI should consider for participation, please contact the office. AHMI also has materials member companies can use in exhibitions to explain the benefits of Appalachian Hardwoods and forest management.

Appalachian Hardwood Successes In 2023

PROMOTION

- Increased participants in the Certified Appalachian Legal & Sustainable program that provides third-party audit of member companies.
- Maintained the Appalachian Hardwood Verified Sustainable and Verified Legal programs for member companies utilizing U.S. Forest Service data for the Appalachian Region that proves growth-to-removal is 2.4 to 1. Legality is proven by records from timber owners.
- Developed member videos on benefits of Certified Appalachian and Verified Sustainable and Legal programs and posted on YouTube channel.
- Published 2023 Appalachian Hardwood Verified Sustainable and Legal Resource Guide with member information mailed to 8,000 domestic buyers. The Guide was distributed at events.
- Hosted webinars on Appalachian Hardwood benefits for secondary manufacturers.
- Participated in High Point Furniture Markets in April and October.
- Participated in 20 state, regional and national association meetings and trade shows as a speaker, exhibitor and attendee.
- Distributed hundreds of promotional brochures and wood sample kits to wood consumers, individuals, schools and civic groups.
- Videos on YouTube channel explaining "Forests to Finished Goods" and "The Hardwood Resource: Grown in Seconds."
- Financial support of the American Hardwood Export Council, Hardwood Federation and Real American Hardwood Coalition.



PROMOTION - Export

- Distributed the 2023 Resource Guide to more than 12,000 lumber buyers in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and north Africa.
- Hosted lumber buyer delegation from Mexico, China, Vietnam and India during High Point Furniture Market.
- Distributed trade leads to Export Division members.
- Member of the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) Board of Directors.
- Links to AHEC Market Reports from AHMI website.

EDUCATION

- Appalachian Hardwood Training Institute offers courses for industry workers to learn skills on three community college campuses.
- Scholarship to a West Virginia University student in the forestry program.
- Scholarship to Kendall School of Furniture Design student.
- Hosted webinar on grant writing assistance for USDA grant programs.

MEMBERSHIP

- Membership stable at 204 member companies.
- Successful Annual Meeting and Summer Conference with key business presentations and networking opportunities.
- Expanded Appalachian Hardwood 401k Multiple Employer Plan for retirement accounts for member companies and employees.



Congress Passes Farm Bill Extension Into 2024

*By Dana Cole, Hardwood Federation
Executive Director*

Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund federal programs into January. House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) gained support from 209 Democrats and 127 Republicans to break a significant legislative impasse.

The Senate followed up on the House action by also approving the CR and sending it to the President's desk the following day. Of particular interest to the hardwood industry, the CR includes a one-year extension of the 2018 Farm Bill. This provision will guarantee funding for key hardwood initiatives the Market Access and Foreign Market Development programs through 2024.

Momentum for the farm bill extension began in early November when farm bill leaders on the agriculture committees, which include Chairman GT Thompson (R-PA) and Ranking Member David Scott (D-GA) on the House side and Chairman Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) and Ranking Member John Boozman (R-AK), released a [statement](#) outlining the need to provide certainty for agricultural producers while not abdicating responsibility for crafting a bill to replace the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, the current iteration of the farm law.

While tying an extension of key farm bill programs to a CR that applies to the entire federal government has complicated processes that typically drive down two separate tracks, it's important to realize that the farm bill largely funds programs important to the hardwood sector without being subjected to the chaos of annual appropriations. The Farm Bill includes mandatory spending for most of its programs while leaving discretionary funding to the congressional budget process.

For example, Title III of the 2018 law focuses on trade and includes funding for the Market Access and Foreign Market Development programs mentioned above. This year, however, a debate surrounding mandatory authorizations for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) have proven to be a major point of contention between Democrats and Republicans and

helped sidetrack a process that is historically bipartisan. Although the CR moving through Congress pushes this debate, among others, well into the next calendar year, this does not mean that budgetary concerns won't cause more gridlock next in 2024 as lawmakers attempt to hammer out a compromise bill to replace the 2018 law.

Although kicking the can into 2024 has frustrated agricultural stakeholders in 2023, lawmakers have faced expired farm laws in the past and deployed a variety of remedies to assure continuity of farm bill programs. In 2018, for example, although the 2014 farm law expired on October 1 of that year, Congress did not move a wholesale extension. Instead, many farm bill programs were able to continue operations until Congress passed the 2018 law in December.

A similar dynamic is at play during the current debate, as many farm bill programs officially expired on October 1 but have continued operations under various bureaucratic tools for the past six weeks without significant disruption of USDA operations.

Fifteen years ago, the 2002 farm law experienced even more turbulence than the current vehicle. When the 2002 law expired in the fall of 2007, Congress extended segments of the law six times before agreeing on a final package in June 2008. As usual, budgetary concerns fueled debate over nutrition assistance and the necessity for massive crop and livestock subsidies during a time when the ag economy was experiencing a major upswing. That said, Congress even passed the bill into law by overriding a presidential veto, adding to the political drama.

While the Federation doesn't anticipate a replay of 2008 with the current bill, there will be challenges to address in the coming year. But we also recognize that the extension gives us additional time to push some of the pro-forest products proposals that have been introduced in recent months.

The Federation team will continue to monitor progress and engage in debate for the balance of 2023 and in the new year. We will be sure to keep you posted on key developments as they unfold.

2024 Annual Meeting on Feb. 21-25 Hammock Beach Resort, Palm Coast, FL

REGISTRATION



To plan functions and include all participants on the Registration List, please complete this form and return with your payment to: AHMI, PO Box 427, High Point, NC 27261. Badges and other materials will be on site.

To reserve your room, call (866) 841-0287, option 1 then option 3. Ask for Appalachian Hardwood block.

The room cutoff is Jan. 24, 2024 and all oceanfront rooms start at \$319. Rate is honored before & after!

You can also register online at www.appalachianhardwood.org/meetings

Registration before Feb. 9, 2024:

AHMI MEMBER - \$450 per person

GUEST - \$550 per person

SPOUSE & ADULT CHILD - \$350

GUEST SPOUSE - \$450

CHILDREN AGE 10-18 - \$250, UNDER 10 - \$150

Add \$75 to any registration fee after Feb. 9, 2024

Registration includes three receptions, business sessions and breaks, afternoon at the beach, and fun.

Full registration fee refunded on cancellations received by Feb. 1, 2024.
Cancellations received after that will be subject to 50% forfeiture.

REGISTER for AHMI'S 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

Name: _____

FEE: \$ _____

Name: _____

FEE: \$ _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Golf Tournament Friday at 12 noon at Ocean Course
(includes lunch, range balls. Rental clubs are available)

Name: _____

FEE: \$250

Fishing Tournament Friday at 12 noon sportfishing
(4-hour fishing trip, includes boxed lunch, tackle, bait, license)
\$200 for each of four slots on multiple chartered boats

Name: _____

FEE: \$250

Name: _____

FEE: \$250

Golf Scramble Saturday at 12 noon at the Conservatory
(includes shuttle, lunch, range balls. Rental clubs are available)

Name: _____

FEE: \$225

Croquet Tournament Saturday 2 p.m.

Number of spaces reserved _____ @ \$25 each

FEE: \$ _____

**Optional
Events
I / We
will attend**
*(included in
registration fee)*

___ Early Bird
reception
Wed, Feb. 21
at 6 pm

___ Beach Fun
& Drinks,
Sat., Feb. 24
from 2-4 pm



Check # _____ Received _____

Credit Card # _____ Exp. _____ Sec. Code _____ Billing Zip _____

TOTAL

\$ _____