



January 2026 Newsletter

A monthly publication of Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.

Automation, Grants Highlight 2026 Annual

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers invites you to attend the **2026 Annual Meeting on March 4-8, 2026** at Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL. The business sessions will offer details on key issues for the Appalachian Hardwood industry and there is ample time for networking and recreation.

The planned business presentations are:

* **USDA Funds Rural Development** - The USDA offers grants to companies in rural regions to fund energy development assistance and efficiency improvements. The guarantees also support loan applicants who want to establish, reopen, expand, or improve sawmill or wood facilities.

* **Automation Progress For 2026** - AHMI has enlisted a panel of suppliers to discuss minor tweaks and major upgrades that are available in 2026 to increase efficiency.

* **SUSTA Connects Foreign Buyers** - The Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA) works to increase the export of southern U.S. agricultural products. It offers 50% cost share / reimbursement for export marketing expenses.

* **Hardwood Federation DC Update** - HF Executive Director Dana Cole will share advocacy success and plans for advocacy.

* **Real American Hardwood Update** - Coalition Board members will discuss new strategies in 2026 targeting architects and designers.

* **AHMI Group Health, Retirement, Software Programs** - Delta Wealth will explain health insurance and wellness benefits for member companies. One program is funded through tax savings.

* **Annual Business & Board Elections**

* **Producer & Distributor Meetings**

FUN!! scheduled daily:

- **Annual Golf Tourn.** Friday
- **Annual Fishing Tourn.** Friday sportfishing
- **Golf Event** Saturday
- **Croquet Tournament** Saturday
- **Afternoon on the Beach** Saturday
- **Evening Receptions** daily
- **Chairman's Banquet** Saturday

AHMI Annual Is March 4-8 Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL



Relaxation on the Gulf Coast DAILY

NETWORKING - CONNECTING - SOCIALIZING

AHMI has visited the Naples Grande Resort twice in the past 12 years. It is located on the Gulf Coast with a boardwalk to a private beach, three pools, spa, golf, tennis and excellent dining.

There is shopping and dining just minutes away in Naples. Attendees should book travel to Fort Myers International Airport with taxis and private shuttles available to the resort.

The property has excellent meeting space that will add to the success. There are networking locations for business and friendships.

Make room reservations at Naples Grande Resort at www.appalachianhardwood.org/meetings. **The block ends Feb. 4, 2026.**

Please complete the registration form on page 7 of this newsletter and print and mail or visit **our website to register.**

Call AHMI at (336) 885-8315 or email office@appalachianhardwood.org for more info.

See the **Full Agenda on page 2**

Sponsorships are available - see online or contact the AHMI office.

The way I see it...

By Tom Inman, AHMI President

....sawmillers and lumber distributors are an optimistic group and the New Year brings this to the forefront.

My conversations with several Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. members reflect bright forecasts for 2026. There are a number of economic indicators that are positive for the U.S:

1) Most of the stimulus benefits from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) start this year;

2) Federal tax refunds are expected to rise by 44% over 2025 levels in 2026, boosting corporate and consumer income starting in February;

3) The Federal Reserve's rate cuts have amounted to 1.75 percentage points and two more reductions are expected in 2026;

4) Data indicates the majority of consumer spending in 2026 will be from the top 10% of households by income (*that's our customer!*)

I am certainly not an economist but I can understand these points. I am also an optimist and know it is time the hardwood industry shared in the positives.

....a very humble thank you to my friends at *Fastmarkets - Hardwood Market Report* for naming me the "Guy in the Glass" for 2025. I am honored to join a list of men and women who have contributed greatly to the industry since 1960 and appreciate their kind words to me.

There has been a tremendous amount of change in the industry in my 31 years. We have had great success with many initiatives. We face our greatest challenges today from fiberboard and vinyl substitutes that have taken lumber markets.

I shared with the Executive Committee recently that university researchers and the wood industry have spent billions of dollars and years of effort developing uses for wood byproducts. While this has helped utilize dust and chips and move low grade material, it has come at the expense of solid common and better lumber markets.

This unintended consequence has idled mills and forced closings. While we were supporting that research, no one saw "replacement" as a result.

2026 AHMI Annual Meeting Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL

Agenda

Wednesday, March 4

5:30 pm - Early Bird Reception

Thursday, March 5

Morning activities on your own

2 pm - AHMI Board of Trustees Meeting

2-4 pm - Registration

5:30 pm - Welcome Reception by Stringer Ind.

Dinner on your own

Friday, March 6

8:30 am - General Session

Business Presentations

12:30 pm - Golf Tournament

12 pm - Fishing Tournament

5:30 pm - Reception by Tampa Wealth | UBS

Dinner on your own

Saturday, March 7

8 am - Producers Meeting – Producers only

8 am - Distributors Meeting – (open to all)

9:15 am - General Session

Business Presentations, Annual Meeting

12:30 pm - Golf Event - Two man tournament

2 pm - Croquet

2-4 pm - Fun on the Beach

5:30 pm - Reception

6:30 pm - Chairman's Banquet by PLM Ins.

Sunday, March 8

8:30 am - Fellowship of Christian Lumbermen

Travel home safely!

Sponsorships Available

AHMI invites companies to consider sponsoring events at the 2026 Annual Meeting to support the association and keep your company in front of customers and prospects.

Please review the **expanded sponsor list** to learn how your company can contribute to the success of the meeting.

Sponsorships include:

Receptions

Snack Bags

Speakers

Tournaments

Golf Holes

Beach refreshments

Contact the office today for the best selections.

We look forward to seeing you there!

AHMI Plans For 2026 - Join Us Now!

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. has an exciting year of promotions, marketing and education planned to help member companies **SELL LUMBER!**

Our primary effort remains true to our mission: promote the forests, logs, lumber and products from the region. We do that daily through email, mail and direct contact with lumber buyers.

AHMI has a database of more than 28,000 domestic lumber buyers, architects and designers and 12,000 international customers that we communicate with monthly or quarterly. The information explains the Appalachian Hardwood resource and its availability from member companies.

AHMI publishes its annual Resource Guide to showcase member companies. Information about the 2026 edition was mailed to members recently to verify company information and select participation levels.

This data is updated weekly on our website by product category, species and location. These updates are pushed to buyers each quarter.

All of our efforts are designed by our staff and approved by the Board of Trustees to help you sell Appalachian Hardwood products and we are your partners in reaching new customers and building relationships with them.

Certified & Verified Appalachian

AHMI members are reminded that 2026 Certified Appalachian and 2026 Appalachian Hardwood Verified Sustainable and Verified Legal materials are available from the AHMI office. These include certificates, letters from AHMI and from the U.S. Forest Service and labels for use on packaging or invoices.

AHMI can also provide you with digital images for use on websites, email and printed materials.

Dues

The association mailed its 2026 Membership Dues recently and are payable by Jan. 31. The dues are annual for Distributor, Consumer, Forestry and Supplier Divisions. Producer members pay monthly. (*Export membership is for Producers and Distributors in addition to primary dues.*)

Rates remain the same for 2026.

AHMI 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:

2026

Jan. 13: **ALC**, Greensboro, NC

Feb. 2-4: **IHLA Convention**, Indianapolis, IN

March 4-8: **AHMI Annual Meeting**, Naples, FL

March 10: **ALC**, Roanoke, VA

March 11-12: **Ohio Forestry**, Columbus, OH

March 25: **SUSTA Trade Mission**, Greensboro, NC

March 26-28: **NWPCA**, Fort Lauderdale, FL

April 16-18: **Expo Richmond**, Doswell, VA

April 21-23: **NWFA Flooring Expo**, Orlando, FL

April 25-29: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

April 30-May 3: **ALC Meeting**, North Myrtle Beach, SC

June 8-10: **Railway Tie Tours**, Union City, TN

Aug. 1-4: **AHMI Summer Conference**, Williamsburg, VA

Aug. 24-28: **IWF**, Atlanta, GA

Sep. 8: **ALC**, Tryon, NC

Sep. 10-12: **Virginia Forest Products**, Hot Springs, VA

Sep. 16-18: **NHLA Convention**, Cleveland, OH

Oct. 17-21: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

Oct. 19: **ISFD Pinnacle Awards**, High Point, NC

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

Appalachian For Your Exhibits

AHMI has brochures, books, wood sample kits and other materials member companies can use in exhibitions to explain the benefits of Appalachian Hardwoods and forest management.

We also have videos and slide presentations for interactive messaging. Please contact info@appalachianhardwood.org.

US Hardwood Economic Impact 2025 Update

By Dana Lee Cole, Executive Director

The Hardwood Federation recently updated its national survey of the economic impact of the U.S. Hardwood Industry.

The initial report was completed in 2019 analyzing data from 2016-2017. It showed the significant impact generated by the domestic manufacture of hardwood products.

The 2025 update was released in December and analyzes 2022 federal economic census data; again the most recently available data. As in 2019, the data showed significant economic impact of the industry on the national as a whole as well as in individual states.

Unfortunately, between 2022 and 2025, the U.S. hardwood industry faced serious challenges to the viability of hardwood sawmills, lumber and concentration yards, and manufacturing facilities. Competition from competing products like laminates and vinyl tiles and trade disputes impacting global markets have contributed to declining domestic and international demand.

Hardwood product sales contributed \$448.2 billion to the US economy in 2022, according to a S&P Global Commodity Insights study commissioned by the US Hardwood Federation.

Economic Contribution Results

1) In 2022, US hardwood products generated \$152.2 billion in direct output.

2) The economic “ripple effects” of these hardwood products supported:

1,927,907 jobs

\$133.7 billion in labor income

\$208.8 billion in gross domestic product (GDP)

\$448.2 billion in total economic output.

For every \$1 million in output, the US hardwood industry supported 4.3 jobs and \$0.47 million in GDP in 2022, compared to 5.3 jobs and \$0.45 million in GDP per \$1 million of output in 2016. To reflect the realities of the current time, the 2025 work was supplemented by a look at the impacts of these challenges between 2022 and 2025. The additional analysis found that adverse impacts on the U.S. hardwood industry include:



- Hardwood exports product exports decreased \$930 million from 2022 to 2024.
- Hardwood lumber exports fell 20% or \$663 million.
- Hardwood veneer exports decreased 15% or \$58 million.
- Hardwood log exports declined 11% or \$209 million.
- The hardwood industry lost 40,000 jobs (down 10%) from 2022 to 2024.
- Hardwood lumber production decreased 29% or 4.9 million cubic meters.
- Hardwood composite prices declined 20% or \$226 MBF (1,000 board feet).
- Hardwood lumber PPI fell 9% from 2022 to 2024.

The Supplemental Report may be viewed at www.hardwoodfederation.com.

This project could not have been completed without the generous funding support of The U.S. Endowment For Forestry and Communities.

Additional funding, resources, and guidance for this effort were provided by:

- American Hardwood Export Council
- Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers Inc.
- Northeastern Loggers Association
- Hardwood Manufacturers Association
- Fastmarkets - Hardwood Market Report
- Maple Flooring Manufacturers Association
- National Hardwood Lumber Association
- National Wood Flooring Association
- Ohio Forestry Association
- West Virginia Forestry Association
- Wood Component Manufacturers Association

Member Benefits

401k Multiple Employer Plan

AHMI members can enroll in the **AHMI 401(k) Multiple Employer Plan** for existing retirement accounts or start new programs for employees. Participants have access to low-cost investments like large corporate plans. There is also no individual company audit requirement, saving staff time and creating efficiencies.

Adopting employers have plan design flexibility and can retain their individual plan features such as a matching formula, vesting, and eligibility. AHMI's retirement consultants, Tampa Wealth Management Group | UBS Financial Services, have over 50 years of retirement plan experience. Contact: John Faircloth 813-227-2892 and Michael Carey 813-227-2837 or AHMI at 336-885-8315.

Group Health, Wellness

AHMI member companies have access to group health insurance and group wellness programs.

The **Benefit Health Plan Inc.** offers four health insurance options and the largest independent, nationwide primary preferred provider organization. There are 920,000 practitioners, 4,800 acute care hospitals and 87,000 ancillary facilities in system.

Employer's Choice offers wellness options that are partially funded by tax savings under ACA. These preventative care programs lower long-term health risks and pair with existing health insurance or the new AHMI/BHPI group medical plan

Call **Delta Wealth Services** today at (828) 382-7755 or email info@DeltaWealthServices.com to schedule a time with a dedicated agent.

Lumber Payroll software

Dough HCM LLC offers unique, proprietary technology to its customers through **Lumber Payroll**. It is specific to the hardwood industry payroll needs and offers electronic access to wages.

AHMI members will be guaranteed a minimum cost reduction from their existing providers. As more AHMI members adopt, Lumber Payroll increases the rebate. For more information, contact Nick Koen at Lumber Payroll at (315) 750-9031 or email: nick@lumberpayroll.com.



Participants Receive Debt Help In AHMI 401k Plan

AHMI's 401K MEP service provide Empower is committed to offering comprehensive experiences that drive positive outcomes for our plan sponsors and participants.

In December 2025, the company provides access to debt counseling services through a collaboration with GreenPath Financial Wellness, a highly rated nonprofit. These new services enhance current offerings with a focus on participants living paycheck to paycheck and struggling with credit card debt.

To help support these 401K participants on their path to financial security, the following services are available at no cost:

- Holistic one-on-one debt counseling with certified financial counselors who will provide an unbiased analysis of underlying causes
- Personalized budget and spending plans that work toward their financial goals, including building savings
- Access to educational materials

In addition to the no cost services mentioned above, participants who qualify may enroll in a Debt Management Program to help pay off their high interest debt. A monthly fee will be charged to participants that enroll in a Debt Management Program while it remains active. In return for the fee, GreenPath will work to negotiate lower interest rates on behalf of the participant and manage monthly payments to creditors.

All new adopters will receive the Service automatically. For more information, contact the AHMI office or speak with your human resources professional.

**REAL
AMERICAN
HARDWOOD**

NATURALLY AUTHENTIC™

As 2025 closes and we begin a new year, Real American Hardwood extends our heartfelt thanks for your continued support. Your commitment strengthens our mission to educate consumers and redirect attention toward the beauty, sustainability, and longlasting value of Real American Hardwoods in our homes, workplaces, and everyday lives.

Because of partners, RAH is able to elevate the hardwood industry and inspire more people to choose natural, renewable materials. We look forward to building on this momentum together in the year ahead.

Plans for 2026

1) There will be new videos on TikTok and Instagram to showcase solid hardwood.

2) AHMI, Indiana Hardwood Lumbermen's Association and Real American Hardwood are working with two furniture design universities in North Carolina and Georgia and one architect school in Indiana on competitions in solid hardwood. The winning furniture designs will be on display at IWF in Atlanta in August.

3) AHMI and RAH will again sponsor professional design awards for the International Society of Furniture Designers in October in High Point.

4) RAH will host "lunch and learn" programs for professional architects to receive continuing education credits at meetings across the U.S.

5) NHLA will launch *Hardwood & Design* magazine this spring to showcase hardwood's exceptional role in architecture and design.

Details will be announced at the IHLA Convention in February. Please visit the RAH table in the lobby for information and ways to participate.

Investing in Real American Hardwood: The Power of Long-Term Pledges

At the Real American Hardwood Coalition, we believe in building momentum that lasts. One of the most impactful ways donors support our mission



See new videos on Instagram at [realamericanhardwood](https://www.instagram.com/realamericanhardwood)

is through long-term pledges - commitments that extend over two years or more and help ensure sustained growth for our industry.

These pledges offer flexibility and convenience:

Monthly or Quarterly Contributions - Many donors prefer to spread their support across manageable installments throughout the year.

Annual Giving - Others choose to make a single donation each year for the duration of their pledge.

Whether you're an individual advocate or an organization committed to promoting Real American Hardwood, long-term pledges allow you to plan your giving while making a lasting impact.

Ready to explore a pledge that fits your goals? We'd love to connect—[reach out today to learn more](https://www.realamericanhardwood.com/industry) at [realamericanhardwood.com/industry](https://www.realamericanhardwood.com/industry).

Annual Meeting Naples Grande Resort, Naples, FL March 4-8, 2026 REGISTRATION

All participants must register to accurately plan for receptions, Saturday Closing Banquet and function space. Please complete this form and return with your payment to: AHMI, PO Box 427, High Point, NC 27261. Badges / materials will be on site. **Reserve room online at www.appalachianhardwood.org/meetings** Room cutoff is Feb. 4.

Registration before Feb. 15, 2025:

AHMI MEMBER - \$600 per person GUEST - \$700 per person
SPOUSE & ADULT CHILD - \$475 GUEST SPOUSE - \$575
CHILDREN AGE 10-18 - \$325, UNDER 10 - \$200

Add \$75 to any registration fee after Feb. 15, 2026

Registration includes three receptions, closing banquet dinner, business sessions and breaks, afternoon at the beach, and fun!

Full registration fee refunded on cancellations received by Feb. 1, 2026. Cancellations received after that will be subject to 50% forfeiture.

REGISTER for AHMI'S 2026 ANNUAL MEETING

Name: _____ FEE: \$ _____
Name: _____ FEE: \$ _____
Company: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____



Optional Events I / We will attend

(included in registration fee)

___ Early Bird reception
Wed., March 4

___ Beach Fun & Drinks,
Sat., March 7
from 2-4 pm

Chairman's Banquet Saturday at 6:30 pm *(included in registration fee)*
___ people will attend

Golf Tournament Friday at 11:45 am at Naples Grande Golf Club
(includes lunch, range balls. Rental clubs are available)

Name: _____ FEE: \$360
Name: _____ FEE: \$360

Fishing Tournament Friday at 12 noon sportfishing
(4-hour fishing trip, includes boxed lunch, drinks, tackle, bait, license)

Name: _____ FEE: \$240
Name: _____ FEE: \$240

Golf Event - Two-man Tournament Saturday at 12 noon
(includes lunch, range balls. Rental clubs are available)

Name: _____ FEE: \$200
Pair me with _____

Croquet Tournament Saturday at 2 pm *(on site)*

Name: _____ FEE: \$20
Name: _____ FEE: \$20

Check # _____ Received _____

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

TOTAL \$ _____