

## Summer Conference Sizzles In Williamsburg

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. members and guests learned the hottest topics in the hardwood industry at the 2026 Summer Conference in Williamsburg, VA.

A good crowd of sawmillers, secondary manufacturers and suppliers heard sessions on domestic and export markets, AI and promotion. There was a special visit by the fourth U.S. President James Madison portrayed by a local actor.

The group also had a reception and dinner at an 18th century tavern on Duke of Gloucester Street sponsored by PLM Insurance.

The following is a recap of the business session. The presentations are posted online at the AHMI website [www.appalachianhardwood.org](http://www.appalachianhardwood.org).

### AI in the Sawmill

Virginia Tech Associate Professor and Extension Specialist Pipiet Larasatie shared advances artificial intelligence for sawmills for business and log bucking. She said AI software learns patterns from data to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence and then helps make better decisions.

At the sawmill, software can assist grading, log inspection, inventory and general business tasks. She noted that the output still requires human oversight and companies should start with low-risk workflows.

Virginia Tech researchers are compiling data on ways to use AI and computer vision to improve hardwood log bucking decisions. The tests simulates real log stems, defects, grades, and market conditions and provides hands-on, scenario-based practice.

The research will be integrated into Virginia's SHARP Logger Program with the goal to improve bucking decisions and higher value recovery. The findings will be reported in the fall.

### Domestic Markets For Hardwoods

Hardwood Market Report/Fastmarkets Editor



***Fife & Drum team and AHMI Chairman Scott Cummings and wife, Robyn, along with Alexander Turman lead attendees to tavern dinner on Monday***

Andy Johnson provided an update on domestic and international markets for hardwoods from a recent survey. The publication surveys buyers annually to determine current and future trends.

Johnson reported on market conditions in 2026 and noted that many customers of grade hardwood lumber were flat or declining. These include residential and truck flooring, and furniture.

Improved markets were reported for cabinets, millwork and wood components. He noted that purchases of pallet and road mat products were improving.

The purchase of grade hardwood lumber was forecast at less than 2 billion board feet in 2026, a record low. He said industrial hardwood purchases will likely be stable.

On the international front, Johnson said sev-  
**(See Conference on page 3)**

## *The way I see it...*

By Tom Inman, AHMI President

...we just completed a great Summer Conference and while the numbers were down a little, the information and sentiments were terrific.

I want to thank everyone who attended and made it a success. A huge shout out goes to PLM Insurance for sponsoring our Tavern dinner on Monday evening where all experienced a traditional Colonial gathering and meal.

Williamsburg is unique as the world's largest living history exhibit and attendees experienced it. We received a visit from President James Madison who welcomed the lumber industry and toured a pit sawmill from the 1700s.

During a previous Summer Conference, PLM President John Smith learned the CW sawmill was in fundraising mode to rebuild. His company, AHMI and several member companies donated to the cause and the mill was rebuilt.

CW staff opened the mill for AHMI and explained the process of "pit sawing." The mill produces lumber for use at CW properties from local poplar, pine and maple.

The craftsmen still hand cut and hue the logs that are delivered by local loggers. The pace is about a linear foot a minute.

It gave all a new perspective on what people were able to accomplish with hand tools and ingenuity at the time the nation was being built.

Another great time of networking, fellowship and business - what AHMI is about!



AHMI welcomes the following new members:

### Distributor

#### **Meherrin River Forest Products**

Don Bright  
PO Box 100, Alberta, VA 23821  
Phone: 434-949-7707  
Email: [don@meherrinriver.com](mailto:don@meherrinriver.com)  
Web: [www.meherrinriver.com](http://www.meherrinriver.com)

### Suppliers

#### **Fire Rover**

John Gibson  
24505 Indoplex Cir., Farmington Hills, MI 48335  
Phone: 248-762-8908  
Email: [jgibson@firerover.com](mailto:jgibson@firerover.com)  
Web: [www.firerover.com](http://www.firerover.com)

#### **Nicholson Manufacturing Co. LLC**

Rodney Williams  
110 Bamberg Dr., Pell City, AL 35125  
Phone: 206-972-6049  
Email: [rodney.williams@nicholsonmfg.com](mailto:rodney.williams@nicholsonmfg.com)  
Web: [www.debarking.com](http://www.debarking.com)

#### **Wagner Meters**

Kirt Metcalf  
326 Pine Grove Road, Rogue River, OR 97537  
Phone: 541-582-0541  
Email: [kmetcalf@wagnermeters.com](mailto:kmetcalf@wagnermeters.com)  
Web: [www.wagnermeters.com/forest-products](http://www.wagnermeters.com/forest-products)



### **Pit Sawmill Tour**

Attendees participated in a tour of the Colonial Williamsburg method of producing lumber. The pit mill was rebuilt with funds from AHMI, PLM and AHMI members. It produces thousands of board feet of lumber and building materials for use in restoration projects each year. Craftsmen saw along the cant about 12 inches at a time to keep the cut straight and allow them an area to stand while working. The workers switch positions every hour.

## Conference from page 1

eral countries were reporting gains in 2026 and more than 45% of grade hardwood lumber produced is exported.

He said lumber increases are reported in Vietnam, Canada and Mexico. Log exports are rising faster with dramatic increases to Vietnam and China.

### Tariffs and the EUDR

American Hardwood Export Council International Program Manager Tripp Pryor discussed export markets and the latest updates on the European Union Deforestation Regulations.

The US hardwood industry has exported products for decades and much of that was grade lumber. Sales in 2025 fell to levels recorded in 2020 and 2021 or less than \$2 billion annually. Other hardwood products like cooperage and millwork are also down. The volume of log sales, however, has increased as sawmills have been built in Vietnam to manufacture logs from around the world.

In the first half of 2026, log exports to Vietnam are close to \$300 million in value, more than half of the volume in 2025. Pryor said log sales will likely double the volume of lumber sales to Vietnam this year.

That is troubling news to lumber exporters as Vietnam had become a leader in purchases.

Pryor also spoke about the new rules in the EU that go into effect on December 31, 2026 and July 1, 2027. These require importers of wood products to show geolocation of harvest.

AHEC has developed the American Hardwood Assured program to help exporters meet the requirements. Pryor said the program allows users to enter the county of harvest in the U.S. and it determines a geolocation for the county. This data is then translated into a format that sellers can upload into the EU system for customers to report. More details at [www.hardwoodus.com](http://www.hardwoodus.com).



*AHMI Chairman Scott Cummings and President James Madison*

### Real American Hardwood

AHMI's Tom Inman presented the latest videos, social media and design contests promoting solid hardwood products to architects & designers. There have been more than 30 videos and hundreds of social media posts in 2026 educating consumers and prosumers on the benefits of real American hardwood.

Inman showcased the videos that are 25 to 40 seconds in length and offer great details. He encouraged meeting participants to follow the Coalition on Instagram, X and Facebook and ask employees to also. #RealAmericanHardwood

## Visit AHMI In Booth C715 At IWF

Woodworking industry employees from across the U.S. and around the world will participate in the International Woodworking Fair in Atlanta on Aug. 25-28 in the Georgia World Congress.

It is billed as the industry's must-attend show and thousands of exhibitors will showcase new products. The following % of IWF buyers say:

IWF 2024 met/exceeded expectations - 93 %  
attend IWF to see and do business - 87 %

expect to see woodworking's newest technologies, machinery, equipment and supplies - 86 %  
discover/specify products for purchase - 82 %

**IWFATLANTA**

find new product introductions - 81%.

**Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers will exhibit in space C715 along with Real American Hardwood in C717.**

Please plan to visit or work out of the AHMI booth. You will meet new customers or have your existing customers contact you there.

# Farm Bill Debate Drags On In Congress

Congress is working towards renewing the comprehensive statute known as the Farm Bill that underpins our nation's row crop, dairy, forestry and renewable energy initiatives. It was last renewed in 2018.

The current effort is focused on programs that the Federation cares about in the Forestry and Energy Titles left out of last year's measure. Following House passage of the Farm, Food and National Security Act (H.R. 7567) in April, Sen. John Boozman (R-AR) released on June 23 the Agricultural Act of 2026—known as Farm Bill 2.0.

The bill largely mirrors the House-passed product on April 30 and includes Hardwood Federation policy priorities:

§ ***Jobs in the Woods Act:*** Amends the existing Rural Innovation Stronger Economy (RISE) program to specifically include forestry and forest products. This language essentially captures the Jobs in the Woods Act (JWA), which would provide grants of between \$500,000 and \$2 million to stand up job training and career pathway programs tailored to careers in sawmilling, logging or other forestry and forest products sector jobs. RISE is structured similarly to JWA but currently does not include our sector. This language rectifies that situation and will provide needed workforce development assistance.

§ ***Wood Innovation Grants:*** Reauthorizes the Wood Innovation and Community Wood Grant programs. The bill reduces the non-federal dollar for dollar matching requirement to 50 percent. It also updates priorities for grants to include the use or retrofitting of existing sawmill facilities, the enhancement of carbon reduction strategies and resilience and economic benefits associated with wood products.

§ ***Biomass Carbon Neutrality:*** Includes a binding biomass carbon neutrality provision requiring the Department of Agriculture to assign a greenhouse gas emissions factor of no more than zero to any policy related to combustion of forest-based biomass for energy. The Hardwood Federation, working with other trade associations in the sector, hopes to expand upon this provision to in-

clude an "all of government" approach.

§ ***Biofuel Payments:*** Reauthorizes the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels through 2031. This direct payment program incentivizes wood pellet production as "advanced biofuel" is defined in the law to include wood pellets—both those used for the domestic heating market and export pellets. Producers simply report their tonnage to USDA on a quarterly basis and receive cash payments.

§ ***Forest Inventory and Analysis:*** Updates the Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program to improve national forest data collection and requires, as a data collection method, a timber products output survey and woodland owner survey. The language requires USDA to annually report inventory and analysis of timber within our national forests.

The legislation does not address the "renewable biomass" definition in the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) program; however, we anticipate that an amendment will be offered during committee markup.

In a related development, last week Senators Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS) and Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Representatives Cliff Bentz (R-OR) and Bennie Thompson (D-MS) introduced the Wildfire Reduction Market Expansion Act of 2026. The legislation would expand the definition of "renewable biomass" in the existing statute authorizing the RFS to include forest-based biomass.

If these measures move, they will not be taken up individually and passed. Rather they would be offered as an amendment to other larger legislative vehicles or government funding legislation that may advance later this year.

HF team is actively working in support of these bills and any amendment efforts that may materialize. In terms of process, the current Farm Bill expires Sept. 30.

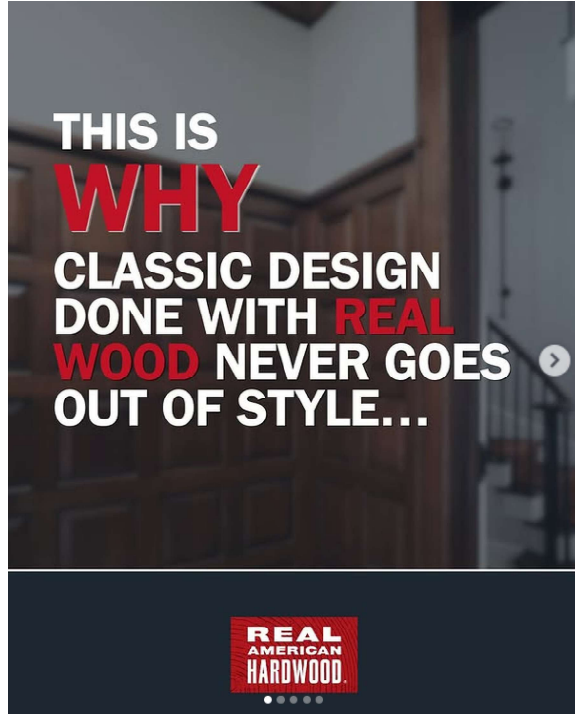


## Real Hardwood Info

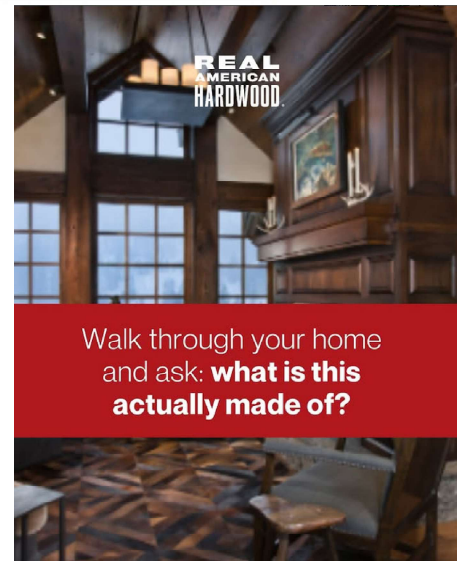
The Real American Hardwood Coalition inspires a stylish and healthy environment by educating consumers on the many benefits of #RealAmericanHardwood.

Join Real American Hardwood on Instagram, X and Facebook. Share the message with your friends and followers.

[www.realamericanhardwood.com](http://www.realamericanhardwood.com)



## HOME'S RESALE VALUE.



## Wood Innovation Grants Awarded

The U.S. Forest Service has announced \$105.5 million in wood innovation grants for 177 projects including a dozen to AHMI members to promote wood and energy infrastructure by increasing manufacturing capacity and operational efficiencies and support rural economic prosperity and jobs.

The grants include \$31 million for 113 wood innovation projects, \$17 million for 23 community wood projects, and \$57 million for 41 wood products infrastructure assistance projects.

A complete list of grant recipients and brief project descriptions are available online at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/>



**SAVE THE DATE**

### 2027 Annual Meeting

*Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.*

**Coconut Point Resort & Spa**

**Bonita Springs, FL • March 3-7**



Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa offers a tropical lush setting for the Annual Meeting. All rooms have Gulf views and the resort has a private island beach on the Gulf. Recreation includes a renovated spa, multiple pools and a waterslide. Fine and casual dining is on site and others just minutes away. Bonita Springs is west of Fort Myers, FL, on the Gulf.

**Industry Business Sessions • Networking  
Producer & Distributor Meetings  
Golf • Fishing • Croquet**

Meeting registration open soon

[appalachianhardwood.org/meetings](http://appalachianhardwood.org/meetings)



## Export Markets

The American Hardwood Export Council issued two guidance statements last week as it relates to a lumber ban on oak sold to Turkey and for packaging materials shipped to the European Union.

Both are below for your review and use:

**1) Turkey** has implemented a **total ban on Oak product imports**. The ban, which was introduced on August 4, applies globally to all Oak product suppliers, and includes products such as red and white oak and kiln-dried (KD) oak timber. This means exporters are now unable to ship Oak products to Turkey, until more guidance is released and unless trade resumes. There is little additional information currently available on why this ban has been implemented, and AHEC will update its members with more details when they become available.

**2) The EU Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR)** is set to go into enforcement on August 12. As with the EUDR, direct legal obligations and liability under PPWR lie with the EU-based importer, and many US exporters are now receiving requests for compliance from their EU customers. The PPWR regulates packaging, not the hardwood products themselves. The goal is to limit “unnecessary” packaging materials and packaging that cannot be recycled or used again in Europe.

AHEC members are advised to contact European customers and verify what requirements they have for you to avoid problems with future shipments. The regulation does not change existing phytosanitary requirements, and wood packaging must still comply with ISPM 15 where applicable.

EU importers are typically responsible for preparing and signing a Declaration of Conformity (DoC), however, they will most likely request technical information on the packaging used by US hardwood suppliers to complete the DoC. Exporters are encouraged to contact their suppliers of packaging materials if they need additional information to help show PPWR compliance.

For more information, contact AHEC's Tripp Pryor at [tpryor@ahec.org](mailto:tpryor@ahec.org).

## AHMI Event Calendar

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

Aug. 24-28: **International Woodworking Fair**, Atlanta, GA  
Sep. 8: **ALC**, Tryon, NC  
Sep. 16-18: **NHLA Convention**, Cleveland, OH  
Sep. 21: **PennYork Club**, State College, PA  
Sep. 22-23: **PFPA**, State College, PA  
Oct. 12-14: **CLT Conference**, Lexington, KY  
Oct. 17-21: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC  
Oct. 19: **ISFD Pinnacle Awards**, High Point, NC  
Nov. 10: **ALC Meeting**, Kingsport, TN

### 2027

Jan. 12: **ALC Meeting**, Greensboro, NC  
Feb. 8-10: **IHLA**, Indianapolis, IN  
March 3-7: **AHMI Annual Meeting**, Bonita Springs, FL  
March 9: **ALC Meeting**, Roanoke, VA  
April 10-14: **High Point Furniture Market**, High Point, NC

To participate in these events or form more information, contact AHMI office at (336) 885-8315.

## 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. AHMI has increased the number of promotion videos posted on our website and YouTube. We encourage members to link these from your website or social media pages.

Visit [www.appalachianhardwood.org](http://www.appalachianhardwood.org) for links to these and meeting presentations. For details, please email [info@appalachianhardwood.org](mailto:info@appalachianhardwood.org).