October 2026 Newsletter

A monthly publication of Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc.

Forecast Improves At Market With Wood Designs

Hundreds of new case goods and upholstery products were unveiled in High Point in September during pre-market to prepare for the Market that begins Oct. 17.

Manufacturers introduced a mix of products highlighting design capabilities in wood finishes others in mixed-media and chairs and sofas with exposed elements. The forecast for wood is great from designers offering finishes that show off grain.



Pre-market is one month before the High Point Market and gives furniture retailers a peak at what will be shown at Market. It is estimated that 15 percent of High Point Market's 1,200 exhibitors open up for pre-market and preview fall lines.

Early reports include new room settings for consumers seeking to redesign existing homes at a time when many are not moving. Makers added one to five pieces into collections introduced in the past two years to respond to consumer requests.

Bernhardt introduced the 25-piece Pavilion collection which has modern design elements in case pieces of oak solids and veneers with bronze metal accents. Vaughan-Bassett Furniture launches Nantucket solid white oak bedroom collection with three beds, chest, a bedside table, nightstand and a seven-drawer dresser with mirror.

AHMI will again sponsor a International Society of Furniture Designers Pinnacle Award for the Designer-Maker category. Real American Hardwood will sponsor an award for the Biophyllic Design category. The presentation is Monday, Oct. 19 in High Point and open to attendees.

The **Fall Market is October 17-21 in High Point**. Register at www.highpointmarket.org and there is a fee for suppliers to attend.

AHMI can assist with contacts, directions and visits to new and existing customers. Please consider attendance on Monday, Oct. 19 and Tuesday, Oct. 20.

Need Legal & Sustainable? Sell Certified Appalachian

AHMI members seeking certification for products to meet customer needs should enroll in Certified Appalachian Legal & Sustainable.

Since 2018, the program has provided a third-party audit of Appalachian hardwood lumber and log resources for the assurance of a sustainable and legal material. Most customers care and a growing number want documentation.

It also verifies by county of origin the lumber that is being shipped in all transactions. As geographic location of timber becomes more important for domestic and export customers, Certified Appalachian has the county of harvest.

These details are simple to secure from landowners and loggers. The standards were approved by he AHMI Board of Trustees in 2018 and application is quick with most companies approved in seven days.

Program participants have learned Certified Appalachian provides value to their customers. Will it meet every requirement for every buyer? That is still to be determined as sales teams educate their buyers about the program.

For more information, call the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315. Please view online at appalachianhardwood.org/certified-legal-sustainable

The way I see it...

By Tom Inman, AHMI President

....events in September and October report that sales of hardwood lumber products are mixed.

There's a bold statement that explains little but below the bark there has been increased interest in industrial materials like railroad ties, road mats and pallets. Sawmills report slight increases in inquiries and orders.

Grade hardwood lumber continues to have its species and grades that are positive - white oak and walnut are moving in furniture, cabinet and flooring markets. Hard maple has a little uptick in cabinets and furniture. Poplar is stable and most other species are flat or have declined slightly.

Many mills are also finding it more difficult to move 2COM and 3COM lumber. Markets for these products in flooring, cabinets and furniture framestock have been overwhelmed by plywood, particleboard and MDF.

Former lumber buyers cite the yield gain from sheetgoods over solid hardwood. Once a factory purchases a CNC machine, the production moves to wood fiber products.

That's a challenging change for a sawmill. There is a large portion of the center of the log that makes lower grade materials. Without a profitable place for it, the mill moves it below cost.

There are efforts to find new markets. AHMI has worked diligently to secure approval for poplar to be approved for cross-laminated timber. It is in the 2026 Building Code but it takes states 3-5 years to adopt the new codes.

There is a new effort in Pennsylvania to research and seek approval for red maple to be added to CLT. Penn State University has a grant proposal in front of funding sources to build and test panels.

NHLA recently announced plans to return structural grades to their grading rules. This should help bring other species into the market.

The forecast for mass timber building in the U.S. is 7% growth for the next five years. That is a market that the hardwood industry needs to gain a small foothold with products that have proven to work.

The forest is making the trees and the marketplace is moving toward them.

MEMBERSHIP

AHMI welcomes the following new members:

Suppliers

Caliber Packaging & Equipment
Dave Sebra
1548 Roger Dale Carter Blvd, Ste E
Kannapolis, NC 28081
(704) 743-2020
dave.sebra@caliberpackaging.com
www.caliberpackaging.com

Jozana Grant Services
Joel Dulin
PO Box 1016
Owensboro, KY 42302
270) 236-5258
jdulin@jozanagrants.com
www.jozanagrants.com

Please contact these companies to learn more about their services.

New members are the lifeblood of the association. If you know of companies that should be members, please share that information with the AHMI office and we will contact them.

Paper Mill To Reopen in OH

The owners of the former Pixelle paper mill announced the factory will once again produce paper. U.S. Paper Mill Company (USPM) said they are hiring new employees for paper production, prioritizing some of the 800 former employees who lost their jobs when the Pixelle plant shut down in 2025.

USPM has announced another venture: the return of paper production. USPM leadership said 13 current employees have been tasked with reviving the plant's 12 paper machine, dubbed The Chief, and will be fully operational by December.

Chillicothe has a rich history of paper production, with the first paper mill opening in the early 1800s.

Prepare Now For Wood Innovations Grant Applications

Appalachian Hardwood Manufacturers, Inc. encourages members to prepare now to apply for US Department of Agriculture's Wood Innovations Grants.

USDA invested more than $80 million in 2026 to expand innovative uses of wood as construction materials, energy sources, and in manufacturing and processing input for wood products. Many AHMI member companies were recipients.

Since 2015, the Wood Innovations and Community Wood Grant programs have provided more than $240 million to more than 500 recipients to support wood products and energy projects. WIG can fund:

- Architectural and engineering designs, cost analyses, permitting for commercial wood construction or wood energy projects development.
- Establishing or increasing wood products manufacturing to support forest restoration.
- Developing wood energy projects that use residues from wood products or woody biomass.
- Developing commercial woody biomass and wood product industrial parks.
- Overcoming market barriers to use wood.
- Purchase and install manufacturing equipment at a mass timber production facility.
- Expand a sawmill to add higher value production lines that incorporate innovative technologies and cost cutting measures.
- Purchasing stationary processing equipment to create markets.

The grant period typically opens during National Forest Products week in October for 60 days. Please visit https://www.fs.usda.gov/science-technology/energy-forest-products/wood-innovation to watch for updates.



SAVE THE DATE

HYATT REGENCY COCONUT POINT RESORT & SPA

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

AHMI Benefits Programs

AHMI has established partnerships with a variety of companies to provide financial services, insurance and benefits to member companies and employees. Please contact these companies for more details and to sign up.

Preventative Wellness Program

Employer's Choice is a national company that provides preventative wellness programs through the Affordable Care Act and funded by federal tax savings. These wellness programs have proven to reduce long-term health risks and are available to all employees.

Wellness programs improve employee benefits and health while increasing company profits. There are no out of pocket expenses for the program. For more information, contact Grant Deviney at grant@deltawealthservices.com or call (828) 382-7755 ext. 1.

401k Multiple Employer Plan

The AHMI plan allows hardwood companies to pool existing retirement accounts or start new programs for employees. Participants have access to low-cost investments that are typically only available to very large corporate plans. There is 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.

For more information, please contact the AHMI office at (336) 885-8315.

Hardwood Federation Pursuit of Relief Continues

By Dana Lee Cole, Executive Director

The Hardwood Federation is proud to be the united voice of the hardwood industry on federal policy issues in Washington, D.C., since 2004, representing 31 hardwood-related trade associations from across the supply chain.

The Federation's presence in D.C. gives the industry a consistent voice on a wide range of issues. Some of that work is bread-and-butter: securing ongoing funding for the export promotion programs run by the American Hardwood Export Council, advocating for business-friendly tax policy, and pushing Congress to expand truck weight caps on federal highways. These priorities carry long-term implications for the entire industry, and they keep the industry and the Federation in front of key decision makers in Congress, the Administration and federal agencies.

Like building any skill set, it's important to first focus on mastering the basics and developing a solid base for taking on the big challenges. That is what the Federation has done consistently over the years. We take care of the fundamental, pocketbook and operational issues that impact the industry so that when we must tackle the big challenges, we have the relationships and connections to build support and maintain momentum.

Over the past year, we have heard from member associations and industry leaders, who have spoken to the need to address the declining domestic demand for hardwood products and pursue strategies for maintaining and expanding export markets. The Hardwood Federation took on the task of securing an economic relief package specifically for the hardwood industry. The path to success has not been quick or direct, but we have made significant progress.

Through our efforts, HF has secured $200 million in hardwood producer relief within the pending agriculture supplemental package, which is currently awaiting action in Congress. Our priority is to get designated funding for the hardwood industry approved and over the finish line.

Once we have achieved this first step, we will then work with USDA to figure out exactly how to allocate funds to the industry. No finalized formula has been created yet, and input from all our member associations will be crucial to this work.

Most importantly for long term federal government support, this initiative would create an established relief program within the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) that will be primed to provide much needed assistance to the industry as markets, consumer preferences, and global demand continue to evolve. While the currently proposed $200 million may not address every challenge we are facing, it will set up a precedent and a procedure for future assistance.

This would be a watershed moment for the industry. A long held goal that we are on the cusp of achieving.

As with most things related to Congressional action, especially in an election year, this effort has moved in fits and starts, and the timeline for forward motion is unclear. But we are working closely with our allies to ensure that by the end of the year this package will be passed and the funding moved to the USDA for allocation to the industry.

Making it this far did not happen overnight. In fact, the current process started immediately after the 2024 elections and built on efforts started during the first Trump Administration and continued through the Biden years.

Federation staff and board developed a strategy to advance a long-held goal: persuading the federal government to include the US hardwood industry in the same relief efforts that support crop and livestock producers. That recognition would benefit not only those of us who work in the industry, but also the rural communities that depend on our jobs and economic contributions and the forest systems that benefit from our sustainable management practices.

We reached out to long time contacts and allies, including the Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, GT Thompson and his counterpart in

(See Federation on page 5)

Federation from page 4

the Senate, Chairman John Boozman, members of the Agriculture Committees as well as USDA political and career staff…many of whom we had consistently engaged with between Trump Administrations. The support for providing financial relief to the industry has been significant. Chairman Thompson personally took on our cause as one of his top priorities as Committee Chairman and has consistently reaffirmed continued commitment.

The Federation brought in Monument Advocacy, a DC-based political advocacy consulting firm to provide additional support and resources, funded primarily by company contributions. Their engagement expanded the Federation's reach by developing a website dedicated to industry facts, ramping up Hill and Administration meetings, activating the industry to send a letter with over 450 signatures to the Administration making our case and generating over 40 local, state, and national media hits around the challenges facing the industry and our proposed relief effort.

During the Federation's annual Fly-In to DC in June, attended by over 60 industry leaders, members of the Hardwood Federation Board of Directors met with USDA officials to discuss our relief program and were assured that providing assistance to this valuable industry sector is on the radar…when funds become available, they are ready to take quick action to distribute them to industry.

The Federation team will continue to work with Monument to push forward on these top tier issues. Is progress slow? Yes. Are the guarantees of success? Nothing in DC is guaranteed, except that the Hardwood Federation team will continue to make the industry's voice heard on these and the multitude of other issues that impact the industry daily in both big and small ways.

The Board is also looking at how the Federation can better serve our member associations and the industry at large, into the future. Government relations, like any other practice, evolves, and we realize we must adapt. I will be working closely with the Federation board, our association executives, and other members of the industry to ensure the needs of all our association members are met as we look to 2027 and beyond.

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

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
April 27-29: **NWFA Expo**, TBD
Sept. 21-23: **NHLA Convention**, Cherokee, NC
Oct. 23-27: **High Point Market**, High Point, NC

To participate in these events or form more information, contact AHMI office at (336) 885-8315. If you know of other events, please share those with AHMI.

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 for links to these and meeting presentations. For details, please email info@appalachianhardwood.org.

RAH Pushes Media Posts, *H&D* Magazine

Real American Hardwood targets consumers and prosumers with twice weekly social media posts and the second edition of *Hardwood & Design* magazine.

New information is posted at Instagram, Facebook and X. There are new video posts on TikTok and Instagram to showcase solid American hardwood. The latest explains the benefits of hardwood over substitute materials like plastics and fake wood.

RAH has also contracted with two design influencers who post weekly about the forests, hardwood products and their benefits. Ethan Tapper and Van Wagner have thousands of followers of their work and travels.

The second edition of *Hardwood & Design* magazine explains "Hardwood Reimagined" in residential and commercial spaces.

How can you help?

Contribute with 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.

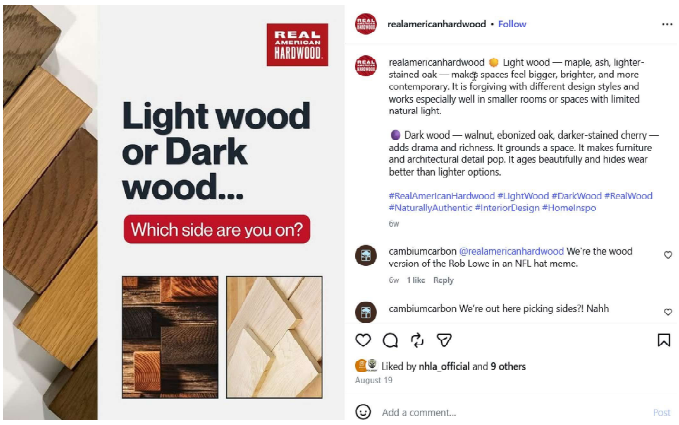
Annual Giving – Others choose to make a single donation each year for the duration of their pledge.

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.

Reach out today to learn more at realamericanhardwood.com/industry. Follow **#realamericanhardwood** today.

Hardwood & Design magazine targets the design sector with key features of American hardwoods

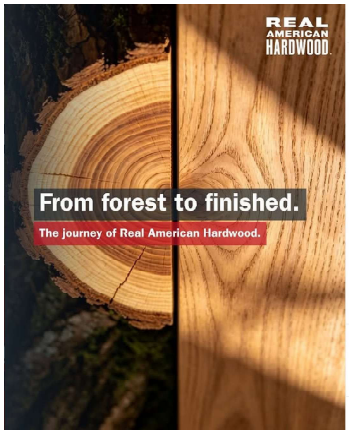


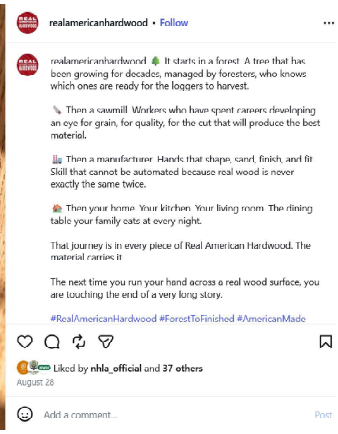


See new videos on Instagram at realamericanhardwood



Ethan Tapper– Forester, storyteller, and best-selling author who educates and advocates on active forest management and its importance for forest health.





Van Wagner – an arborist/educator who uses trees and forests to connect people with American forests and wood products industry.



He plans to climb the tallest tree in every state