



Binational Softwood Lumber Council

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Date:

June 16, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Better Future for Softwood Lumber

Washington D.C. The Binational Softwood Lumber Council (BSLC) today applauded USDA's announcement that a majority of the softwood lumber industry has voted to approve the creation of a check-off system to fund a unified softwood lumber promotion program. Over the last three years the BSLC has provided leadership and funding to support the development of the check-off.

"The Canadian and U.S. governments formed the BSLC in 2006 to fund programs to stop the erosion of market share and to grow the demand for lumber," said Jim Lopez, Canadian co-chair of the BSLC. "I am appreciative that our long term investment in check-off development has been successful. "

"I have seen firsthand the benefits of an early, organized and sustained promotional funding model," said Jon Gartman, U.S. co-chair of the BSLC. Current efforts by the BSLC to expand and regain market share in non-residential and residential multi-family markets as well as to recapture ground in the outdoor living market are paying off with tangible results in market growth.

"Unfortunately the BSLC received a finite amount of funding which will run out before its work is complete," said Cees de Jager, executive director of the BSLC. "The check-off program is designed to remedy the situation by putting in place an industry funding model to support the programs currently funded by the BSLC as well as other programs that industry considers worthy of support."

U.S. and Canadian lumber manufacturers, including major companies and many smaller ones, were involved in the design of the softwood lumber check-off. Efforts were made to inform and consult with other companies as the plan was developed, and extensive efforts were made to reach out to every company participating in the U.S. market.

The program will be set up under authority granted by the 1996 Farm Bill and will be overseen by the United States Department of Agriculture, but it will be run by an industry board consisting of 12 U.S. and 6 Canadian members (and potentially one

overseas member), representing the historic ratio of supply to the U,S. market. All suppliers to the U.S. market will benefit from the program.

The BSLC believes the check-off program has the potential to rebuild lost markets in the U.S. and take advantage of overseas opportunities, in the same way that sustained investment and effort have resulted in significant growth in sales to China in recent years.

“At the end of the day, we believe the check-off will be viewed as an investment that generates returns well in excess of the dollars spent. The BSLC is looking forward to continuing to support efforts build a better future for the industry.” said de Jager

For more information on the proposal for a softwood lumber check-off and the work of the Binational Softwood Lumber Council, please visit www.softwoodlumber.org.

For more information on the results of the Softwood Lumber check off vote, visit www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/news

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