

FURNITURE & COMPONENTS

The remanufacturing sector is now a vital part of the industry, with products entering the markets of Asia, North America and Europe.

The availability of New Zealand pine as a sustainable and renewable resource makes it an attractive and acceptable alternative to lumber species from the world's dwindling natural forests.

WOOD PROPERTIES

Comparative tests undertaken by New Zealand's Forest Research Institute (NZFRI), in conjunction with universities in North America and England, have shown conclusively that New Zealand pine machining properties (e.g. planing, sanding, moulding, turning) compare very favourably with those of most internationally traded softwoods.

In addition it performs very well in gluing and finger-jointing because of the even density within growth rings, good permeability and low extractives content.

The full range of interior and exterior stains and oils can be applied to enhance the wood figure, and this can be followed by a clear finish. The absence of high concentrations of extractives prevents any incompatibility with finishes and eliminates the need for special primers.

As with all species, high value New Zealand pine products such as furniture should be manufactured from kiln dried wood with a moisture content appropriate to the particular product and market (see also the Drying section in this guide). Accurate drying is particularly important for furniture manufacture as it will avoid delayed shrinkage, warping and end splitting or opening of glue joints. Protection of raw wood to avoid moisture pick-up during manufacture is also important.

PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT

New Zealand pine's natural surface hardness is comparable with other medium density softwoods, but after treatment with a process recently developed by the NZFRI its overall hardness can be increased to the level of hardwoods such as mahogany and oak.

The process consists of pressure impregnating New Zealand pine (or other woods) with a densifying non toxic chemical which is then cured in a kiln.

The product has extremely good machining and gluing properties, excellent dimensional stability, and accepts stains and clear finishes evenly. It is ideal for high wear uses such as furniture, flooring, and cabinetry.



FURNITURE DESIGN

The performance characteristics and wood properties of New Zealand pine combine to provide a raw material easily adaptable to most furniture styles. Designers and manufacturers accept that its good technical properties and ease of finishing in natural or enhanced colours provide enormous flexibility in creating furniture styles.

Whereas New Zealand pine has been quite acceptable for so called 'low end' furniture for many years, manufacturers are now finding the demand in upper and middle segments of the furniture market is increasing. This has generally resulted from collective industry efforts such as exhibiting at offshore trade fairs and bringing leading northern hemisphere designers to New Zealand.

Opportunities for furniture made from New Zealand pine MDF are also increasing.

COMPONENTS

In addition to manufactured furniture, the demand for components either partly processed or fully processed is increasing. These are all kiln dried in New Zealand and protected against moisture pick-up and in-transit damage.



A very large range of products includes blanks, edge glued panels, clear and finger-jointed cutstock for further remanufacture, and mouldings, stair parts, door and window parts, and furniture components for assembly.

New Zealand pine usage has increased with the rapid growth of the do-it-yourself (DIY) market. The most commonly manufactured items include ready-to-assemble furniture for home and office, interior wall units (shelving, cupboards, etc) entertainment centres, dining room furniture and computer desks. It has become obvious that customers get immense satisfaction from assembling and finishing pine furniture purchased in kitset form.

The increasing availability of

plantation-grown pine has

enabled the New Zealand

forest industry to expand its

production of semi-processed

and fully finished products

for export.

