

PELLET FUELS INSTITUTE

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2013 Issue #2

Newsletter

President's Message

n prior President's Messages, I have written about the importance of a strong association, robust government affairs effort, and even how the data collected by the Energy Information Administration is

key to our industry. This time, I'd like to take a short break from offering my opinion to ask for yours. What is important to you and your business? What can the Pellet Fuels Institute do more of or do better to help you and to promote densified biomass?



Scott Jacobs, PFI President

Over the years, PFI has been blessed with a very diverse membership, including fuel manufacturers,

associate members, and all manner of supplier members. We have been able to maintain a strong focus on densified biomass, which has allowed us to speak authoritatively on behalf of our industry. The association also has had a core of very involved members that serve on committees, as committee chairs, and on the Board of Directors. While it would be great if each of our members could find the time to, say, participate in a committee, I realize that is not realistic. Many of you are members of multiple trade associations and organizations, many times across multiple industries. Not to mention the more than forty hour week that you likely put in at the mill or selling and servicing equipment, for example.

Just as PFI could not function well without its committee structure and Board of Directors, nor could it function well without its members whose contributions, though less visible in some cases, are similarly critical. The simple fact that a company decides to maintain membership in PFI and pay its dues each year demonstrates a commitment to the organization and our industry. Seeing value in having a trade association that advocates on behalf of densified biomass makes membership in PFI a wise investment. These same companies are the ones who may sign up for a booth at the PFI Annual Conference, sponsor an event there, or advertise in this publication, on the PFI website or in the weekly *Pellet Wire*. If you attend the PFI Conference

continued on page 3

DEI

A quarterly newsletter for those wanting to keep abreast of the latest pellet fuels industry news.

The Pellet Fuels Institute (PFI) is a North American trade association promoting energy independence through the efficient use of clean, renewable, densified biomass fuel.

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PFI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Do you have an item for the Calendar of Events? Email it to <u>berthiaume@pelletheat.org</u>

July 28, 2013	PFI Board of Directors Meeting The Grove Park Inn Asheville, NC
July 28-30, 2013	PFI Annual Conference The Grove Park Inn Asheville, NC <u>www.pelletheat.org/events</u>
September 9-11, 2013	RETECH 2013 Marriott Wardman Park Washington, DC <u>www.retech2013.com</u>
September 9-12, 2013	International Training Seminar on Biomass Heating 2013 Linz, Austria <u>http://www.oec.at/en</u>
October 27-29, 2013	Exporting Pellets Conference Fontainebleau Hotel Miami Beach, FL www.theusipa.org/conference

President's Message, continued from page 1

in Asheville, July 28-30, take a moment to stop by the exhibit hall to thank these companies.

Undoubtedly, PFI member companies do positive things for our industry each day that aren't recorded in committee minutes or in the pages of the PFI Newsletter. Whether it is inviting a local official to tour your facility, or penning a letter to the editor in support of biomass to your local paper, there are numerous relatively painless actions that can go a long way. As I've often said, the true strength of our association isn't in the size of our membership or budget. Both of those pale in comparison to other energy trade groups, even most renewables. Our most compelling aspect is the story that we have to tell: clean, renewable, locally-sourced and manufactured energy, available to average citizens, that employs thousands, and supports many more jobs in the areas that need it most. That is a message that's tough to beat.

Normally, this is the part of the article where I would make an impassioned, reasoned and assuredly successful plea for action on your part. Breaking from that, I instead ask you think about a call to action for PFI. How can we help you take our great message to the consumer, the elected official, even the skeptic that can't see the working forest for the trees?

One great thing about PFI is that there is no shortage of opportunities to offer your feedback on what we do and how we can do it better. Whether it is through committee service, responding to a conference or membership survey, or your vote in the Board elections, you help to chart the course. Likewise, you are invited to reach out to me, as President of the Board of Directors, or staff with your thoughts and ideas. Another thing that is wonderful about PFI is that each member company has a say, whether you sell half a million tons of product or are a new member trying to build a market in your area.

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June 2013 MARKET UPDATE

Producer Comments:

"Too many manufacturers and not enough demand." -Northeast

"The late end to winter helped boost YTD sales. It's been an average early buy for us, but we are expecting demand this season due to the overall lack of inventory in the marketplace, as compared to last year." –Midwest

"Early buy went very well. Could sell more if we could produce more." -Southeast

WOOD PELLETS

(average price per ton, medium to large wholesale customer, FOB plant)

United States:

Northeast: \$143-180 range. Manufacturers report being equal or ahead of this time last year, in terms of tons sold. Operating capacities range from 70-100% and most manufacturers anticipate an upward price trend.

Midwest: \$110-155 range. Plant operating capacities range from 50-100%. Manufacturers report sufficient access to raw materials and average to good year-to-date sales volumes. Manufacturers anticipate an updward price trend and are ahead of this time last year in terms of tons sold.

Southeast: \$110-175 range. Manufacturers anticipate an upward price trend. Operating capacities range from 98-100%. Manufacturers report being equal to or ahead of this time last year, in terms of tons sold.

News Brief

PFI Standards Program

In mid-June, PFI Executive Director Jennifer Hedrick joined staff and auditors from Timber

Products Inspection and the American Lumber Standard Committee, the oversight body of the PFI Standards Program, in a visit to New England Wood Pellet to tour the facility and learn about their quality control practices initiated through the PFI Standards Program. In March, NEWP became the first company to qualify under the PFI pellet fuel standards program.

The PFI Standards Program is a third party certification program for residential and commercial grade densified biomass fuel. For more information about the program and how your company can enroll please contact PFI staff or visit: <u>http://pelletheat.org/pfi-standards</u>.



Joe Powers of New England Wood Pellet (NEWP) reviews testing procedures during a June walkthrough of NEWP's Jaffrey, NH facility.



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CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Company/Organization:			
Attendee(s):			
Address:			
City:	State:	Zip Code:	_ Phone:
Email:			

REGISTRATION TYPE (Registration includes conference meetings, receptions, lunch, breakfasts, Monday evening dinner, and breaks.

	Number	Fee per person	Subtotal
PFI/HPBA Member	X	\$395	
Spouse/Guest of Member	X	\$325	
Non-Member	X	\$495	
Spouse/Guest of Non-Member	X	\$425	
Golf Registration	X	\$155	
Tour Of Biltmore Estate	X	\$110	
		TOTAL	\$

GOLF TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION (Sunday, July 28th, 9:00am tee-time; spouses and guests invited and encouraged to play) \$155 fee includes green fees and cart. On-site golf registrations cannot be accommodated. Please pre-register. Rental clubs are available (for an additional, on-site payment). Please circle Y (yes) if you plan to rent clubs.

 Name______Handicap (optional): _____Club Rental (Y / N)

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

For hotel reservations, contact The Grove Park directly at **1-800-438-5800** or you may reserve a room online at <u>http://www.groveparkinn.com/</u>, under "Make Reservations".

Return to: Jason Berthiaume, Pellet Fuels Institute, 1901 N. Moore Street, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209 or via Fax @ (703) 522-0548 or email @ <u>berthiaume@pelletheat.org</u>.

Cancellation/Refund Deadline: Refunds for meeting, golf and the tour of the Biltmore Estate will be made only if a request is received by PFI on or before July 12, 2013. After that date, no refunds will be made. Refunds will be issued for 85% of the purchase price of general conference registration, golf and the tour of the Biltmore Estate. Refunds for the exhibitor/sponsorship packages will be issued for 50% of the purchase price.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Conference, Golf, and Biltmore Tour Deadline is Friday, July 19th

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PFI Annual Conference Preview By: Jennifer Hedrick, Executive Director

The PFI Annual Conference is just weeks away and the final details are being hammered out as I write. The Conference Committee, under the leadership of Troy Jamieson of Somerset Wood Pellets and Stephen Faehner, of American Wood Fibers, has assembled an agenda that will look at some of the most timely issues facing the industry. We have a number of exhibitors and sponsors participating in the conference—we've carved out significant time for interaction between exhibitors and attendees—and are grateful for the number of industry leaders who will be participating in the events over the three days.

We're pleased to have Carlton Owen of the U.S. Endowment for Forest & Communities giving our conference keynote. Carlton has had a lengthy and impressive career in the forestry sector and has been an advocate for the efficient harvesting and use of biomass.

I first heard Carlton speak last year at the Northeast Biomass Heating Expo and had the opportunity to sit down with him one-on-one to better understand his views on the future of the industry. Carlton and I spoke at length about the value of commodity checkoff programs, which raise funds within the industry to encourage market development through research and promotions initiatives.

You no doubt remember some very successful marketing campaigns of years past—"Beef: It's What's for Dinner", "The Incredible Edible Egg", and the "Got Milk?" campaign, all of which are run through the USDA.

PFI and BTEC are working with USDA, with some guidance from Mr. Owen, to explore the feasibility of such a program within the pellet industry. I suspect you will hear more on Mr. Owen's views on this issue during his keynote at the conference.

Our advocacy work in Washington continues and we'll have a report on the June fly-in from our contract lobbyist Pat Rita, as well as developments on policy such as the Farm Bill and the newly introduced Biomass Thermal Utilization (or BTU) Act.

Dan Len from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) will speak about current regional and national initiatives of focus by the agency, including the Farm Bill and access to USFS funding. He will highlight new programs being undertaken by USFS, including developing greater alliances between the agency and industry groups.

More deliberate partnership amongst industry and government is a positive step and will help solidify alliances amongst the various industry trade associations and collaborators. The timing couldn't be more significant, especially as industry detractors bang their drum with greater force and call into question the practices of the entire biomass supply chain. (An entirely separate column could be devoted to this topic, but you should be aware that PFI has been working with allies on Capitol Hill and in other parts of Washington to counter this harmful messaging).

The Conference Committee has assembled an excellent panel to discuss the importance of sustainable practices, looking at harvesting of biomass in a sustainable manner, the impact of the EU's requirements for fuel shipped from North America and how this impacts exporters and the greater biomass supply chain. Pete Madden will share the perspective of Plum Creek, one of the largest landowners in the U.S., and Harold Arnold will give an overview of how his mill is meeting sustainability requirements. Seth Walker of RISI will outline the EU's policies on sustainability and the potential

Annual Conference Preview, continued from page 9

impact these requirements will have on the industry—and not simply those companies exporting pellets.

For a time, it was easier, though I'm sure we can all agree naïve, perhaps, to view the export and domestic markets as separate—an "us and them" if you will. Now as the market grows and the number of mandates issued by the EU increases, the implications for all companies and markets are being hashed out. Domestic policy and sustainable practices, not to mention carbon accounting, are focal points of board room discussions and conference agendas, right along with safety concerns and market development.

Wood Pellet Association of Canada (WPAC) executive director, Gordon Murray, has become a fixture of the PFI Annual Conference and he'll again update us on market and policy developments within Canada as well as research being pursued by the WPAC. He'll be sitting on a panel with Johan Granath from Eckman, who will provide a bird's eye view of the European market and explain the needs of the Italian residential bagged market, which is seeking to expand its level of imports from North America. Amanda Lang from Forisk rounds out this panel and she'll highlight recent developments in the U.S. export market and projections for coming years.

Other highlights of conference program include:

• A panel of fuel and appliance manufacturers discussing ways in which to grow North American domestic markets

• Companies participating in the PFI Standards Program share their perspectives on the program, including developing the QA/QC program required for program enrollment and best practices their companies have implemented in testing • A panel looking at a range of mill operations issues, including fire safety and permitting

Outside of the educational sessions, conference goers will have substantial opportunity to view new products or developments through interaction with exhibitors. The conference welcome reception, which kicks off at 7pm on Sunday, July 29, will feature hors' d' oeuvres and cocktails amongst the backdrop of supplier exhibits-- the first of many opportunities throughout the conference to meet industry suppliers and view new technologies. Exhibit space is still available and I encourage you to reach out to Jason Berthiaume of our staff to learn how your company can participate.

For the competitive crowd, PFI offers its annual golf tournament, with golfers teeing off in a scramble format at 8am on Sunday morning. And, for those looking to experience a bit more of Asheville's history, a guided tour of the Biltmore Estate is being offered. This event coincides with the golf tournament and is a highlight of any trip to Asheville. More information about both of these events can be found on the PFI conference page on our website, as well as information on other activities that you may enjoy while in Asheville.

For those of you who haven't attended the PFI Annual Conference previously, I encourage you to call the office to talk to Jason Berthiaume or me to learn more about how your business can benefit from attending, as well as to hear about other opportunities offered at the conference.

And, as always, you may find out further details on the conference section of the PFI website <u>www.pelletheat.org/pfi-annual-conference</u>

We're excited to see you in Asheville and look forward to welcoming you to the PFI Annual Conference.

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Government Affairs Update *By: Pat Rita, Orion Advocates*

PFI has kept active in the government affairs arena in recent months, tracking important legislation, and advocating on behalf of our industry in the nation's capital. Temperatures may be reaching the 90's in Washington, DC, but biomass is still at the forefront in a number of areas.

Farm Bill

In early June, the Senate voted to pass S. 954, the Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act of 2013, a five year reauthorization of the Farm Bill. The bill passed by a filibuster proof margin of 66-27.

From a renewable energy perspective, the Senate-passed measure did not change from the version that was reported from the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee earlier this spring. Here is a quick snapshot of funding levels in the Senate bill for programs of interest:

REAP: Provides the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) \$68.2 million in mandatory funding for each of the fiscal years 2014-2018. REAP provides grants and loans to rural businesses to invest in their operations. Projects range from energy efficiency upgrades at commercial facilities to installing, replacing or upgrading biomass boilers and heating systems. The program is designed to be a rural job creation/retention initiative and has been popular. The bill also simplifies the application process to make REAP more accessible to applicants.

BRDI: Provides the Biomass Research and Development Initiative (BRDI) with twenty-six million dollars annually in mandatory funding through 2018. BRDI provides grants for research and development and demonstration projects to promote innovation in biobased product development.

CWEP: The Community Wood Energy Program

was amended to include a grant program for the purchase of biomass heating systems, biomass heating products (such as wood chips, pellets and advanced biofuels) and delivery and storage of biomass heating products. The program is authorized at five million dollars annually, with no mandatory funding.

Biopreferred: Revises the USDA's biobased procurement and labeling program to recognize forest products, with a specific mention of wood pellets.

Advanced Biofuel Producer Payments: The Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels which has provided direct payments to pellet producers—was authorized at a level of twenty million dollars per year through 2018, but not provided any mandatory funding.

Attention now turns to the House of Representatives, which, as we write, is considering the measure. Recall that the house bill, H.R. 1947, contains no mandatory funding for any of the Farm Bill energy programs.

While we are generally pleased with the total funding number in the Senate version, we will continue to press for mandatory funding for the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels, amongst other programs.

BTU Act of 2013

On May 22nd, Senator Angus King (I-ME) introduced the Biomass Thermal Utilization Act of 2013, along with co-sponsor Senator Susan Collins (R-ME). The BTU Act has been referred to the Committee on Finance and has picked up another co-sponsor in Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH). The legislation would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to include biomass heating appliances for tax credits available for energy-efficient building property and energy property. PFI has been working with Senator King's office over the last several months to help craft the bill, which has garnered broad support across varied industries. PFI will continue to monitor the progress of this legislation and update members on how they can help in the effort to see the bill passed.

PFI Fly-In

PFI held a legislative fly-in from June 25-27. The eleven members in attendance held over twenty five meetings with members of Congress and the Administration. In addition to the Farm Bill, and BTU Act of 2013, the attendees and PFI staff, discussed a variety of issues related to the densified



biomass industry. In recent years, these fly-ins have evolved from an effort to inform and educate those in Washington, DC about our industry, to advocating for specific legislation or regulations that benefit it. We have fostered many allies on Capitol Hill and it is important that we remain visible and active on this front. PFI typically holds two flyins per year, one in the summer, and one in the winter, and is always looking for members to attend, particularly those who are interested but have not done so before.

Lastly, while a good portion of PFI's government affairs work happens at the federal level, there is also important work to be done at the state and local level. PFI members have been active in supporting grassroots legislation, hosting plant visits, and even writing letters to the editor of their local newspapers. States and localities are often a testing ground for legislation, so policy that works well there will often spread elsewhere. If you see opportunities for PFI to help in your grassroots efforts, don't hesitate to contact a member of the staff.











BAGGER, PALLETIZER & STRETCH WRAPPER



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How Reporters Miss the Forest and the Trees When Covering Wood Bioenergy Markets

By: Brooks Mendell, Ph.D., President and VP of Research, Forisk

While the general public's understanding of wood bioenergy remains incomplete, recent reporting on the issue fails to meaningfully inform readers on the status of woody biomass supplies and the actual development of wood bioenergy markets in the U.S. In fact, several articles suffered from three common errors we observe in major media coverage:

- 1. Failure to provide context.
- 2. Improperly assigning "causal" relationships.
- 3. Errors of fact.

For example, Roger Harrabin of the BBC, in a March 5, 2013 article "*Biofuels: MPs to Consider Subsidies for Power Stations*" about potential subsidies for using wood at power stations in the UK, reported that power producer Drax plans to convert approximately half of the boilers at its coal-fired power station in Yorkshire to wood pellets. Harrabin notes that this would "burn more wood than the entire output from the UK's timber industry." And how much wood would that be?

This took four minutes to track down and summarize using the online "ForesSTAT" database from the United Nations. The UK produced one-half of one percent of the world's industrial timber in 2011. The U.S. timber industry is 32 times bigger. EU timber production is over 38 times bigger. This failure to provide context for UK's timber industry is like reporting on hamburger sales in India or breweries built by BYU graduates. While these could prove interesting, the numbers may prove trivial.

A more recent May 28, 2013 report by Mr. Harrabin, *"Renewable Energy: Burning US Trees in UK Power Stations"*, further addresses the growing trade of wood pellets from the U.S. to the UK. While the story gives ink to all sides, it lacks the context to illuminate the scale or likelihood of operational impacts on U.S. forests from UK pellet demand. In fact, bioenergy is a relatively small business in the U.S. and will remain that way for the foreseeable future. Readily available research and studies conducted by private firms and conservation groups, while sometimes diverging on potential implications, generally align with the facts on the current state of affairs. One study is "Biomass Supply and Carbon Accounting for Southeastern Forests" conducted for the National Wildlife Federation and the Southern Environmental Law Center (with whom Mr. Harrabin produced an interview). The study incorporates academic and private studies, and provides necessary context relative to potential policy outcomes.

In "Limits to Growth: Wood Pellet Production in the U.S.", Forisk addresses the issue by quantifying how the actual growth of bioenergy relative to available resources in the U.S. can be understood. In "Three Realities of Wood Bioenergy and Forest Owners", Forisk specifies areas of direct relevance to timberland owners and legislators that forest analysts understand well and can address with authority and data: bioenergy project failure rates, forest landowner behaviors that increase long-term supplies, and wood supplier adaptability. New wood markets do not create a frenzy of forest harvesting. Forest owners and wood suppliers adapt through improved forest management, incremental growth of logging operations and utilization of previously underutilized wood raw materials.

On Tuesday May 28, 2013, the Wall Street Journal published a front page story related to wood bioenergy markets that managed to score the trifecta and feature all three common errors appearing in media reports related to wood and timber industries. Posted online on May 27th, the article, "Europe's Green-Fuel Search Turns to American's Forests" by Justin Scheck and Ianthe Jeanne Dugan contains factual errors, fails to provide context or

Government Affairs Update, continued from page 15

measures of scale, and improperly implies causal relationships. Ugh. A few examples include:

• The article does not scale UK demand to the U.S. forest industry. During normal economic conditions, the U.S. forest industry consumes ~500 million tons of wood per year. Currently, the U.S. is exporting on the order of 2 million tons of pellets per year.

• "....Europe doesn't have enough forest to chop for fuel..." Not true. Europe has 25% of the world's forests. While the article notes that "many restrictions apply" to Europe's forests, it does not question the quality, usefulness or soundness of these restrictions. The bottom line is that Europe may actually have enough wood, but chooses not to use it.

• "Many of the pellet-making plants springing up in the U.S....are near pine plantations established long ago partly to serve the nowslumping wood-pulp market." The reference to the "slumping" pulp market is factually incorrect and easily knowable. This is a critical miss because the U.S. pulp and paper mills dominate the market for the low valued wood raw materials of interest to wood pellet producers.

The *Wall Street Journal* also dwells on the topic of swamp logging in North Carolina. Few people would look to swamp logging as inherently desirable or preferable for a host of reasons. However, it represents between 1% and 4% of related forestry activities, and the article skirts the primary economic drivers and realities for U.S. forest management. Regardless wood pellet demand in the UK, forest owners in the U.S. will not overhaul their long-term forest management strategies or harvest practices for pellet markets. The economics don't make sense. The U.S. remains a "sawtimber" market where landowners grow trees for lumber production.

In forestry, a natural tension exists between the unfettered exercise of private property rights

and the biodiversity preferences of third-party conservation groups. This "tension" is important. Market incentives help ensure that private forests remain productive and forested, while spotlights on best management practices that protect soil integrity, water quality and wildlife habitat support long-term forest health. This tension, like a tug of war, puts someone in the mud once in a while. Sometimes a landowner cuts trees you might not cut, and sometimes states or groups seek a rule that restricts private property owners in an unreasonable way. That is part of the back-andforth.

Wood bioenergy in the U.S. faces limits to growth. No one will be vacuuming U.S. forests to feed UK power plants. The economics, logistics and sustainability of such strategies fail on multiple levels. This is why markets in other regions such as South America, Russia and Canada continue to scale up capacity. The facts, context and market relationships highlight a stuttered, evolving wood bioenergy market in the U.S. that continues to feel its way forward as part of the large, established woodusing forest industry.

Young Guns Mentor Program By: HPBA staff

The Young Guns have officially launched a mentor program which they hope will pair together professionals in the industry. Everyone needs to learn, so why not reach out to HPBA and PFI "pros in the know"?! Sign up to be a mentor and feel free to pass an invitation to those who you think should be a part of this program. A sign up form is available by emailing youngguns@hpba.org.

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