The oft-asked question in the pellet industry is “how do I sell more fuel?” Ours is an industry that is dependent on a number of factors, many of which we have little control over: the weather, the price of other fuels, the overall health of the economy. In the end, it boils down to supply and demand, Economics 101. We, as an industry, have done a much better job on the supply side in recent years. The regional “shortages” (really more of a case of enough fuel, just not located where it was needed) of 5-7 years ago seem like a distant memory. Indeed, a lot of new production has come online to serve the domestic market, as well as the growing export market. Our industry has matured in many ways, including the adoption of more meaningful fuel standards, open to all wood pellet manufacturers, and mobilizing a more robust government affairs effort, leading to such milestones as the Section 25c biomass appliance tax credit and the increased collection of data on wood-use by the Energy Information Administration (EIA). Often, the gears of government turn very slowly and legislative and regulatory victories such as those mentioned above seem rare or are less tangible. This is especially true for those of us who are more concerned with making sure that our plant can move enough product to continue running two shifts, or who wonder where we can find a customer for a hammer mill or dryer as the economic recovery slogs along. I can’t promise that writing your congressman, attending one of PFI’s Washington, DC fly-ins, or inviting your local elected official for a site visit will mean that you sell out of product for the year. What I can tell you is that these, and all of PFI’s government affairs efforts, are an important part of setting the stage for a healthy and growing industry. First off, we must consistently defend the pellet industry’s right to do business free from onerous regulation. There is a small segment out there that assails the burning of biomass as “worse...
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

March 14, 2013  PFI Membership Breakfast
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, FL
www.pelletheat.org

March 14-16, 2013  HPBExpo 2013
Orange County Convention Center
Orlando, FL
www.hpbexpo.com

April 3-5, 2013  Northeast Biomass Heating Expo
Saratoga Springs, NY
www.nebiomassheat.com

April 8-10, 2013  International Biomass Conference
Minneapolis, MN
www.biomassconference.com

April 24-26, 2013  Heating the Midwest Conference and Expo
Carlton, MN
www.heatingthemidwest.org

July 28-30, 2013  PFI Annual Conference
The Grove Park Inn
Asheville, NC
www.pelletheat.org
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January 2013 MARKET UPDATE

Producer Comments:
“Prices need to increase and stronger markets need to develop.” –Northeast
“Busy! We are making up for the slow start to this heating season. Raw material has been sufficient all year, but I fear a slowdown in the wood industry this coming year.” –Midwest
“January is getting colder so maybe it will help things get started again.” -Northwest & Mountain
“Need cold weather to boost sales.” -Southeast
“Need winter to last another couple of months.” –Northwest & Mountain

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

United States:
Northeast: $151-175 range. Manufacturers do not anticipate any price trend changes. Operating capacities range from 60-100%.
Midwest: $130-169 range. Manufacturers report sufficient raw material availability and do not anticipate any price trend changes.
Southwest: $150-169 range. Manufacturers report sufficient raw material availability. Operating capacities range from 30-100%.
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Beyond the DOD, the federal government as a whole has outlined renewable energy and energy efficiency goals, embodied in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 and Executive Order 13423. According to the New York Times, “the [federal] government owns or manages 900,000 buildings...making it the nation’s largest landlord.” Many of these buildings are located in rural areas, without access to natural gas lines. Could you imagine if just 1% of federal buildings were converted over to pellet heat? That would be a lot of pellets sold, and a lot of savings for the government and you, the taxpayer.

These are just a few examples why our dialogue with federal agencies and officials is so important. Equally as important is reaching out to officials at the state and local level. This is an area where PFI and its members must also work together very closely. As our membership is spread throughout the country, it gives us an opportunity to affect policy in many different states. PFI must educate its members not only on the value of grassroots involvement, but also the best practices for doing so. Federal policy is often shaped from successful policy at the state level, so the work done locally can pay off exponentially. I would encourage you to reach out to me or the PFI staff if you are interested in becoming more involved in advocacy for the pellet fuel industry. Perhaps you can join the Government Affairs Committee, or sign up for one of PFI’s Washington, DC fly-ins. If there is enough interest, we might be able to organize a government affairs boot camp of sorts, to train our next generation of advocates.

Thanks for allowing me to stand on my soapbox for a bit. I welcome any feedback that you have and hope that the recent round of cold weather has everyone fired up.

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Image of the Issue

PFI members met with Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) during the PFI Fly-in in December. McMorris Rodgers is a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and was recently elected Chair of the House Republican Conference, the fourth-ranking position in the House Republican leadership.

Pictured (from l-r): John Utter, Kenny Lisle, McMorris Rodgers, and Dan Henry

If you have an image for an upcoming issue, share it with the PFI staff.
As we enter our 29th year as an organization it is important to pause and reflect on the past year while pressing forward with the association’s agenda and goals for 2013.

I wrote previously of PFI’s plan in 2012 to increase the reach of the association while growing awareness of the industry and the benefits of utilizing densified biomass. This has been an underlying goal of your leadership throughout the past year and will continue to be in 2013.

We received invitations to participate in conferences throughout North America, and sat on panels at the Pacific West Biomass Conference, Washington State University’s Wood Composite Symposium, the Small Wood Conference, the International Biomass Conference, ACORE’s renewable energy technology conference, RETECH, and the Pennsylvania Biomass Energy Association’s inaugural conference. For the first time we had a speaking opportunity at the Italian Pellet Forum, where there was much interest in the U.S. pellet market and the activities of PFI. We attended a host of other events including the Northeast Biomass Heating Expo, and the U.S. Industrial Pellet Association’s annual conference.

The point is not simply to attend these conferences—as you well know there is no shortage of conferences—rather, to glean information about new technologies, interact with PFI members and potential members and look for opportunities to grow businesses through expanding markets or public policy.

We have a full conference plate in 2013, beginning with a trip to the World Sustainable Energy Days in Wels, Austria, where I will be representing the U.S. on a panel discussion on the world pellet market. I look forward to seeing so many of you there.

Our own conference continues to be a significant deliverable for the association and the main occasion to draw industry together during the year. In 2012 we returned to the northeast after an eight-year absence and held the conference at Foxwoods Resort & Casino for the first time. The Conference Committee assembled a strong program, with sessions focusing on mill safety, developing markets, state and local advocacy, the export market and standards.

We were honored to have Christiane Egger of Austria’s O.O. Energiesparverband provide the keynote during which she highlighted the innovation in Austria’s pellet market and the country’s commitment to a stronger renewable energy portfolio, of which pellets are a significant contributor.

One of our goals as an association in the year ahead is to build a stronger conference encompassing broader industry involvement and pursue opportunities to expand and attract broader industry representation, branch out to new markets, and provide a richer networking experience for all attendees.

Development of the 2013 conference has been in the works for several months. As you’ll note in the committee report found on page 14 of this newsletter, the committee is seeking speakers to fill our 1.5 day conference program. Consider speaking, inviting a colleague to speak or suggesting speakers that the committee may want to consider. Please email or call staff with your recommendations. More information on conference registration, exhibiting and sponsorship opportunities will be available this spring.

I hope you read Scott Jacobs’ thoughtful article...
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Year in Review, continued from page 9

about PFI’s government affairs initiatives in 2012. The association continues to prioritize the protection and growth of your businesses. Though the political climate is contentious and will remain so in 2013, we capitalized on opportunities to reinstate the biomass appliance tax credit that expired in 2011 and worked with others—HPBA, BTEC, the Alliance for Green Heat, Hearth & Home Technologies—to secure more emphasis on residential wood heating in the Energy Information Administration’s (EIA) Short-Term Energy Outlook.

The PFI Standards Program remains a significant focus of the association, industry and the U.S. EPA. In 2012, three companies announced formally that they were preparing their mills for enrollment in the PFI Standards Program and are expected to enroll in the program in the months ahead. Other mills are following suit. As expected, election year politics has delayed the release of the draft New Source Performance Standard for Residential Wood Heaters (NSPS), in which the PFI standard is expected to be referenced. We have been told by the EPA to expect a mid-2014 release of the draft, which we will share with you as soon as it becomes public and available for comment.

We encourage you to read more about the standards program and how to enroll. Currently, it remains a voluntary program; however, with the implementation of the NSPS it is expected to require that stove owners burn only pellets that are accredited through the PFI Standards Program. More information on standards can be found on the PFI website: www.pelletheat.org/pfi-standards/.

Finally, we will continue our push to collect data on the pellet market through our monthly industry survey conducted with RISI. Thanks to many of you who are responding to this survey regularly. For those of you who aren’t, please make participation a goal for 2013. You will not only receive the survey summary from RISI but help us build a representative data set that we can use to gain more support from policy makers.

As we look to the year ahead, we seek to build on the accomplishments of 2012 and further advance this industry. The development of new markets and the pursuit of a level playing field in the policy arena is key to this growth. We encourage you to make the most of your membership and get involved in the variety of opportunities available—through volunteering, attending events or providing comment to staff or volunteer leadership on areas of potential improvement or collaboration. We look forward to working with you in 2013!

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Breakfast & Biomass: A Briefing on the Pellet Market
Thursday, March 14, 2013  ●  7:30am- 9:00am
Room N330 A-C  ●  Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, FL

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PFI/HPBA Member Registration: $25.00/person  Non Member Registration $35.00/ person

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Conference Committee Update

Have you made plans to attend Breakfast and Biomass: A Briefing on the Pellet Market? For the first time, PFI will hold a breakfast at HPBExpo. The breakfast will highlight the information you’ve received in past years at the PFI Membership Luncheon—policy updates from Washington, DC and the latest numbers on the stove market from HPBA’s Director of Market Research, Don Johnson, along with an appliance manufacturer’s perspective from John Shimek of Hearth & Home Technologies. PFI President, Scott Jacobs, will kick off the breakfast with a report on PFI and upcoming activities.

You may register by using the form found on page 13 or through the HPBExpo website: HPBExpo.com/register. Sponsorship opportunities are still available! Contact PFI staff for more information or visit the event page on the PFI website: http://pelletheat.org/events/. The event is open to anyone attending the expo, taking place March 14-16 in Orlando, FL. We hope to see you there!

We’re counting down to the opening of registration for the PFI Annual Conference. If you’ve never attended a PFI Annual Conference before, I’d encourage you to try us out this year. We will be returning to The Grove Park Inn in Asheville, NC, an outstanding conference venue and host of our very successful 2010 Annual Conference. More information on the conference, as well as activities for you and your family in Asheville, can be found on the PFI website: http://pelletheat.org/events/pfi-annual-conference/.

The Conference Committee is at work on the conference program and has put out a broad call for topics and will soon be issuing a call for speakers. Thanks to each of you for your recommendations for conference topics. If you have an interest in participating in the conference program or would like to recommend a speaker, please be in touch with PFI staff at pfimail@pelletheat.org.

Stephen Faehner and Troy Jamieson, Conference Committee Co-chairs

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HPBExpo 2013 Preview
By: HPBA Expo Department

HPBExpo Registration Brochure and Program

The complete HPBExpo registration brochure was mailed in mid-December and is now available at:

If you have already registered, please be reminded that you can make changes or additions to your current registration, including signing up for Education and NFI Certification, using your email confirmation log in. The Education program is generously sponsored by long-time Expo supporter and exhibitor, ICC-RSF. The complete course schedule is available at:

For registration questions and information, please contact Rachel Pratt, pratt@hpba.org.

HPBExpo Hotel Accommodations

HPBExpo hotel reservations, airline flights and car rentals can be completed quickly and easily on line at:
http://www.hpbexpo.com/housing-reservations/.

HPBA's partner, onPeak, is the official housing partner – don’t be fooled by other travel companies claiming to be HPBA's official housing service. Through onPeak, HPBA is able to secure the lowest rates, best hotels and the most (complimentary) amenities during your stay in Orlando, exclusively to HPBExpo travelers. Exhibitors booking through onPeak are even eligible for additional priority points for the 2014 Priority Booth Selection.

Entertainment and Fun at HPBExpo 2013

The second annual Outdoor Burn Tailgate & Big Green Egg Cook-off Competition will be held on Thursday, March 14th. Be sure to wear your team jersey, enjoy a beer at the sports bar and sample the savory offerings from participating exhibitors. The sports bar, a new feature in the outdoor burn area, will broadcast the college basketball championship games throughout the three-day show. Local celebrity chefs will vie for the top honors in the EGGstravaganza cook-off sponsored by Big Green Egg. And, you can check out the latest tailgating gear in the Tailgate Pavilion sponsored by Tailgater Monthly. During this outdoor event, the second Donna H. Meyers Barbecue Leadership Award, sponsored by HPBA and Casual Living magazine, will also be presented.

The All-Industry Party

Don't miss the all-industry party being held at the House of Blues on Friday, March 15th, beginning at 7:30pm, following the Vesta Awards (transportation will be provided after Vesta from the convention center and from the hotels). The party will have musical entertainment by the Blues Brothers and Stir Crazy, as well as dueling piano performers. The entire venue will be ours for the evening! This event is an opportunity to let your hair down and have some fun with old and new friends while enjoying great food and spirits. Food stations will be set up throughout the venue that include barbecue ribs, pulled pork sandwiches, shrimp and grits, barbecue chicken and more (food tickets will be sold in advance on www.hpbexpo.com/show-info/parties-events/). The party is generously sponsored by Kozy Heat, M&G DuraVent, Napoleon Fireplaces & Grills, SBI, Travis Industries, Weber and the Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau.
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