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FOREST PRODUCTS & NATURAL FEATURE GRADE TIMBERS

Where do our non-recycled timbers come from?

Our kiln-dried timbers are sourced from State Forests in NSW and Queensland. The oldest stands of hardwood in these state forests are regrowth from natural regeneration after log harvesting, not plantations. Most plantations are of pulplog - currently harvested for the paper and fibreboard industries and they have no useful role as hardwood sawlogs milled for high-value uses such as flooring. There is an expectation that plantations may supply high-value sawlog sometime in the future. Our own participation in native hardwood sawmilling is to support both sustainable forestry and waste minimization. We have teamed with several mills in the state over the years to develop a Waste Minimization Agenda, diverting kiln-dried hardwoods from low-value crate, pallet and F17 structural timber destinies to higher-value appearance grade use as furniture board and flooring. Today these lines are well established in the market and NFG has become a legitimate and credible grade.

Certification of Native Forests

Since late 2007, Forests NSW has been certified as compliant with the Australian Forestry Standard (AFS) AS 4708 by independent audit against this internationally recognized forest management standard. The native hardwood mills which supply our NFG and Rustic grade timbers have gained chain-of-custody accreditation stemming from this initiative. Stamped and certified packs of flooring are currently available from our Spotswood showroom.

By modern forest management standards, State Forests are a good idea. They started out as a great idea. In an earlier era, they replaced logged old-growth forests on difficult north coast terrain close to rivers, roads, settlements and mills. They were an attempt to make log supply sustainable in days when these indicators were not diligently mapped. If they were a good idea then, they still are. Nothing in the meantime has changed to make State Forests a bad idea as a source of timber. No alternative supply of native species has become available. Had the land use following primary logging been grazing or agricultural, we would have been denied a valuable present timber resource. Our methodology and rate of harvest are, on the other hand, aspects of sustainability which require reform and improvement.

Terms Used in Appearance Grading of KD Flooring

SELECT GRADE: Low or minimal natural features. Once upon a time, the docked waste and rejected boards were woodchipped. Even now this grade represents both a resource-wasteful process and an outcome that does not typify the species it claims to represent. We call it grading to blandness.

STANDARD GRADE: medium-level natural feature.

NATURAL FEATURE GRADE: (NFG) Moderate to high natural features. A grade that uses far more of the available timber resources without waste. NFG represents good value in the marketplace for buyers and is a choice that minimizes waste and promotes a more efficient sawmilling industry.

What Are Natural Features?

They are the typical markings of a unique group of hardwoods - the eucalypts. The types of feature associated with native species also include knot, kino - often called fire streak, limited penetration features on gum lines, burls, hobnails, minor check splits and black speck. The extent and limits of natural features are defined by the grade but a firsthand perspective can, and should be gained by inspection of our packs and displays.