

## CANADIAN WOOD PACKAGING CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

### Information Sheet for End Users of Wood Packaging Material

#### Why does wood packaging material need to be certified?

Canada was an early signatory of the International Plant Protection Convention. In 2002, the IPPC adopted a standard for the Regulation of Wood Packaging Material in International Trade, International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) No. 15. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has legal authority to ensure this international protocol is respected in Canada. In order to do this, it created the Canadian Wood Packaging Certification Program (CWPCP) in 2006.

CWPCP is a quality management program designed to allow certified producers to construct wood packaging materials to meet a phytosanitary standard.

Phytosanitary refers to the health of plants and trees; especially the freedom from pests requiring quarantine. The basic purpose of our program is to prevent the spread of pests travelling in or on wood packaging material (WPM) by heat treating the wood. Note that another acceptable form of treatment under IPPC is fumigation using methyl bromide, which is not allowed in Canada. However, WPM treated this way (indicated by the code "MB" on the IPPC stamp) is allowed entry into Canada.



Emerald Ash Borer larvae



Emerald Ash Borer



Asian Long horned Beetle larvae

The other aspect of certification is the process to become recognized as credible. Heat treated material needs to be identified and associated with a certified facility. Each certified facility is assigned a five digit number, and stamps their WPM with this number and the country code, in an approved format. The stamp serves as a passport and is considered legal proof that the wood packaging material is certified, heat treated, and free of forestry pests.

#### As an end user of wood packaging, why should I care about certification?

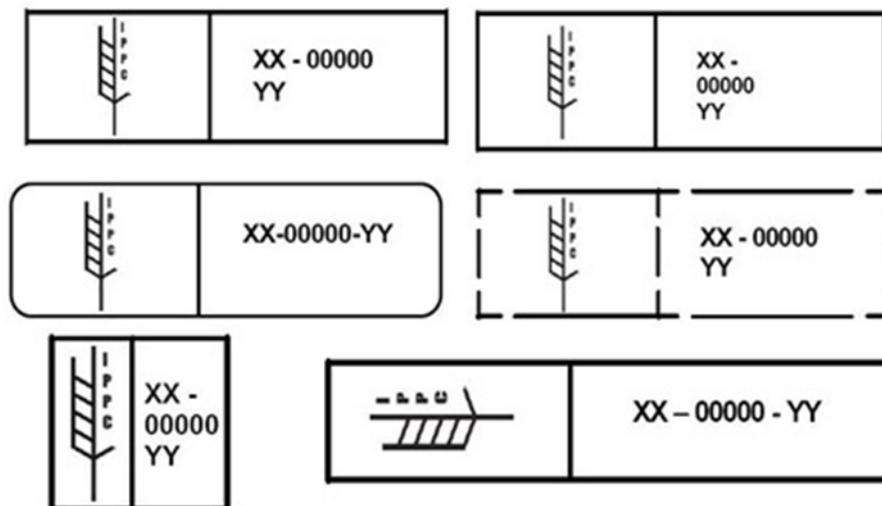
Most companies would not export goods to a foreign country without first checking that they're allowed entry; that is part of the planning to ensure that your shipment reaches its destination. Following that same logic, every exporter needs to make sure that what you send your goods on or in, is good to go.

The IPPC stamp acts as a passport for your shipment. It is considered a legal document and proof that the pallet, crate, box, drum, skid, container, basket, barrel, etc meets the international ISPM 15 standards. Without this mark (or a phytosanitary certificate), your shipment likely will be denied at the port of entry.

## What do I need to do?

When purchasing WPM, ensure that the stamp is both visible AND legible. The stamp acts as a passport for your shipment; if a customs official cannot read the stamp, the shipment may be denied entry.

The stamp must look like one of these IPPC-accepted formats:



The stamp must contain the trademark IPPC wheat sheaf logo, the country code (indicated as "XX" in the above figure, CA in Canada), the facility number, as well as the treatment code (indicated as "YY" in the figure, for HT or MB).

As mentioned, the stamp is considered proof that the WPM conforms to the international ISPM 15 standard and no additional documentation should be required. The CFIA discourages both the use of heat treatment certificates for export as well as letters of compliance. In the event that your importer requests additional proof, send a copy of your WPM supplier's certificate of registration into the CWPCP and the link to the list of registered participants on the CFIA website (<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/plaveg/for/cwpc/appe.shtml>).

NOTE: If the importing customs officials are demanding the documentation, the CFIA should be informed as the request could constitute a violation of the international agreement.

## Does WPM need to be certified if being shipped to the US?

As of 2012, the US and Canada have a bilateral agreement to allow non-HT WPM to cross the border (under some conditions). At the beginning of 2014, the United States is expected to terminate this exemption. Pallets and wooden containers from non-certified facilities will be rejected, which will create problems for exporters and shipping companies.

The US government is currently conducting a review of this issue, which has caused a delay in its implementation. The review will be followed by 12-14 months of informed compliance. (Until the exemption ends, you do not legally need to use certified heat treated WPM, but increased vigilance at the border may cause delays for shipments on uncertified wood packaging material before full compliance starts).

## What is this going to cost me?

Purchasing certified heat treated wood packaging material will be more expensive than WPM without the HT marking. Because there is a cost to being certified, these added costs will be factored into your purchase price.

That said, whatever extra cost you pay is arguably cheaper than having your shipment held at customs or being denied entry into another country altogether.