

PELLET FUELS INSTITUTE

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2014 Issue #4

Newsletter



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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Chairman's Perspective

By: Darryl Rose

This summer one of my two children, and only daughter, got married. As the day approached and we celebrated with family and friends in town from places both far and near, I thought back to my daughter's childhood and my days as a young dad. The decisions she made as she found her way, the lessons learned by each of us, and the peaks and valleys of life that we went through as individuals and a family.



Darryl Rose, PFI Chairman

Recently, I was thinking about the parallels with my time in the pellet industry, watching a young industry grow, not without challenge, picking up some bumps and bruises along the way as it reaches maturation.

We've grown up, yes, but not away from our roots and basic goals: to provide a quality product to consumers, build rural economies, and make pellets a widely used alternative to fossil fuels.

With that significant growth in the pellet industry we're also seeing significant opportunity.

PFI has not simply been monitoring these changes with a watchful eye. The association has formed what we've called the Transition Committee to look at how the industry is changing and how the association can serve your businesses and the diversifying end markets.

We make pellets. Densified biomass. Traditionally we've been focused on one end market—residential heat. But many of you are making pellets for other markets in North America and overseas: industrial power, commercial, absorbents, animal bedding, and more.

What do those markets look like? Who are they serving? What is their size? What opportunities are available for you and other members? These are the questions that the Transition Committee, under the leadership of Rob Davis of Forest Energy Corporation, is researching. The goal is to help better understand the complexities of the markets and

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

February	25-27,	2015

World Sustainable Energy Days Wels, Austria www.wsed.at/en/world-sustainable-energy-days

March 6, 2015 (*Friday*)

PFI's Breakfast & Biomass: A Briefing on the Pellet Market Music City Center | Nashville, TN http://pelletheat.org/events/pfi-membership-breakfast

March 5-7, 2015

HPBExpo 2015 Music City Center | Nashville, TN http://hpbexpo.com



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Chairman's Perspective continued from page 1

opportunities so that PFI can expand its resources for you. And, so that we can be the go-to resource for anyone seeking information on the broader pellet industry.

Additionally, the committee's charge from the Board has been to look at the way we're providing services to you. As I've shared with you previously, we've changed our relationship with HPBA. They no longer provide management services to us and we no longer share member reciprocity.

This is an important and significant step for PFI as it allows us to expand our membership base and operate on an independent basis.

In an email to you this fall I told you that we're now working with an association management company, SBI Management Services, based in Seattle, WA. The staff at SBI is helping us with our administrative functions and will play a major role in the planning and coordination of the PFI Annual Conference. SBI is enhancing our website turning it into a much more functional system for information sharing, event registration and online membership renewals. It contains a password protection function, allowing us to post more information for members only access.

Our home office remains in Arlington, VA, at HPBA headquarters. If you need to speak with someone

at PFI, you have the option to contact Jennifer or staff in Seattle. All of that contact information is found easily on the PFI website and on page two of this newsletter.

I'd like to thank the Transition Committee for its work to help us, well, transition. Their ongoing leadership is ensuring that PFI can serve as a resource for members and anyone seeking information on any of the pellet markets. We are an organization that serves the residential pellet market. That is embedded in our roots. But, we're also much more.

Finally, I'd like to thank each of you for your ongoing commitment to PFI. This association would not run without the work of its volunteers. For those of you who aren't yet participating in PFI activities—attending events or serving on committees—I hope you'll consider doing so in the year ahead. PFI has a lot to offer you and after twenty plus years as part of this association, I can assure you that the benefits and opportunities are plentiful.

As the year comes to an end, I wish each of you a safe and relaxing holiday season filled with love, joy, and, of course, pellets. ●

Image: State of the state

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Protecting our Brand

By: Jennifer Hedrick, Executive Director, Hedrick@pelletheat.org

few days ago we received an email from a consumer who has been buying pellets for a number of years. He knows which pellets work best in his stove, tracking data of various brands in a spreadsheet over the years. He's familiar with standards, the Quality Mark and PFI.

Like many consumers I've talked to, pellets are a hobby for him as well as his main heating source. He talks about them with other members of his community who own pellet stoves and advocates for others to buy pellet appliances.

Recently, he bought a bad batch of pellets. He called the manufacturer and then contacted our office, because the PFI logo was on this manufacturer's' product. Prior to emailing our office he did a bit of homework and discovered that this manufacturer was not a member of PFI.

I gave him a call, and at the outset of our conversation he said to me, "Why do you allow a company to use your logo if they aren't a member?" My response was simple: "We don't."

As the conversation continued he explained the value of the PFI logo and how seeing it on bags of pellets influenced his purchasing decisions.

We hear from consumers on a regular basis some with an extensive understanding of the industry and its members, such as this gentleman, and others who are less informed. And, these sorts of conversations help put into perspective the importance of the PFI logo, our brand, and quality standards and just how essential it is to communicate accurate information to consumers.

Non-member use of the PFI logo is prohibited and its occurrence is something that PFI staff and leadership take seriously. The association has policies in place to handle unauthorized use of the PFI logo as well as use of inaccurate claims related to PFI that are found on pellet products. Misuse isn't always easy to halt, and can be expensive, but we make every effort to stop these offenders. Last year, PFI created a new member logo (right) and related policies, which called for the phasing out of use of any PFI logo



or insignia outside of the this new logo. The PFI Standards Program Quality Mark (below) is handled separately and only issued and allowed to be used by those companies that are qualified by the PFI Standards Program.

Using the PFI member logo is a benefit of your membership and we want to protect the PFI brand and yours. If you are aware of a non-member using the PFI logo, please contact me or a member of PFI leadership.

PFI Standards Program Quality Mark

Pellet Fuels Institute PFI GRADED FUEL		
Mill Registra		
Bulk Density:	uirements: 40–46 lbs/ft³	
Diameter:	.230285 in/5.84-7.25 mm	
Durability:	≥96.5	
Fines:	≤0.50%	
Ash Content (as received):	≤1%	
Length:	≤1% >1.5 in.	
Moisture:	≤8.0%	
Chlorides:	≤300 ppm	
Manufacturers Gu	uaranteed Analysis:	
Type of Material:	Softwood Fiber	
Additives:	2% Corn Oil by Weight	
Minimum Higher Heating Value	e (as received): 8,000 BTU	
Other Manufacturers Guarante	es:	
Approved Auditing Agency Logo Displayed Here		
For more information, please visit th	e PFI website at www.pelletheat.org.	

November 2014 Market Update

PRODUCER COMMENTS:

"Sales are behind due to having less inventory going into the season. —Midwest, Southeast, Northeast "Could sell more pellets if we could make them." —Midwest

"Same story in the West, too much production and not enough demand." — Northwest and Mountain

"Customer demand is better than I have ever seen." — Midwest

"Sales have been strong." — Southeast

UNITED STATES:

Northeast: \$190 range. Operating capacities range: 85-100%. Manufacturers report excellent sales volume with upward pricing trends. There are some concerns with raw material access.

Midwest: \$142-\$190 range. Respondents all reported to be operating at 100%. Good to excellent sales volume as well as sufficient raw materials reported. No anticipated changes in pricing trends.

Northwest & Mountain: \$142- \$169 range. Operating capacities: 95-100%. Good to excellent sales volumes reported. Mixed reporting on pricing trends. Sufficient raw material reported.

Southeast: \$155-\$160 range. Operating capacities: 75-100%. Upward pricing trends reported as well as good to excellent sales volume. Concerns with raw material access.

Southwest: \$170 range. Operating capcities reported: 100%. Raw material access is sufficient. Upward pricing trends not anticipated.



PFI Standards Program: Raising the Standards for the

Pellet Fuels Industry | By: Carrie Annand

ou will hear a lot about the Standards Program from PFI in the coming year. We at PFI are excited about the growth of our Standards Program—and we look forward to welcoming even more qualified companies in 2015.

Qualifying for the program is no small accomplishment. It takes time and effort, and monetary investment as well. But all of the participants in the program have one thing in common (other than being able to display the Quality Mark on their bags): they learned valuable lessons about their operations during the qualification process. One of the qualified companies estimated that it is reducing its annual operations costs by tens of thousands of dollars as a result of lessons learned during this process.

To meet the criteria of the PFI Standards Program,

- Prospective participants are guided by an independent accredited auditing agency and testing laboratory.
- Random monthly audits are performed at production facilities to ensure qualified companies are following a quality assurance and quality control program.
- Pellets are tested according to the program specifications, also on a monthly basis.

By taking these steps, participants ensure that their pellet quality remains consistent – and they are able to signal this to retailers and customers with the Quality Mark displayed prominently on their product.

In addition to encouraging more pellet producers to join the Standards Program, we also want more retailers to understand the Standards Program, the Quality Mark, and what they mean for customers. We will be hosting a webinar for retailers in early February to answer their questions. We will also be focusing heavily on Standards at the HPBExpo in March. We will be sending you information soon on both of these activities.

In the meantime, we are also keeping a close eye on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) actions that may affect the Standards Program. EPA's proposed New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for residential wood heaters includes the PFI standard as the standard of reference within the regulation. It is anticipated that the regulation will be promulgated this spring. By qualifying now, companies already enrolled in the program will save time and money on compliance.

➡ continues on next page

Join PFI for wood pellet discussions and more this March!

Join PFI and PFI members for world-class networking and education panels at the Small Log Conference, set for March 24-26, 2015 at the luxurious Coeur d'Alene Resort in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. PFI is a sponsor and exhibitor at the event. Multiple education tracks include panels on wood pellets, exports, forest management, and much more.

A limited-seat industry tour includes a visit to North Idaho Energy Logs' very well-run pellet mill. Special early bird rates are available right now for 10% off attendee passes and exhibit spaces!

http://www.logconference.com



PFI Standards Program continued from page 6

We encourage all PFI members who would like to learn more to contact Carrie Annand at annand@pelletheat.org. We can put you in touch with accredited auditing agencies, or with gualified companies who have already undergone the process. As always, you can learn more about the program on the standards page of the PFI website: http://pelletheat.org/pfi-standards-program.



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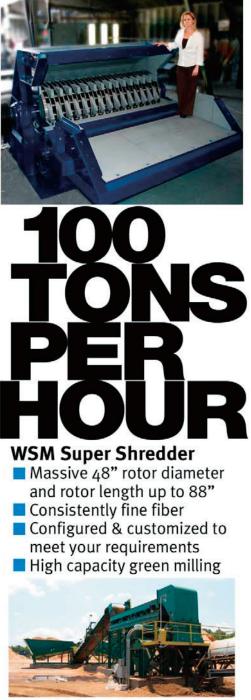
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Conference Committee Update

Submitted by: Stephen Faehner and Troy Jamieson, co-chairs

A nother successful PFI Annual Conference was held at the Omni Orlando Champions-Gate July 27-29. The committee compiled a solid program with several notable speakers including Bill Strauss of FutureMetrics (4.1 Rating on a scale of 5) and Carlton Owen of the U.S. Endowment for Forestry & Communities (4.6 Rating). The Export Pellet panel was also rated highly at 4.5. The survey results from this year's conference were again positive and contained good feedback and suggestions. We also got very positive feedback from our survey of exhibitors. We ended up with 212 Attendees, 37 exhibitors, and 32 Speakers and 49 golfers.

The Conference Committee is wrapping up the planning of the 2015 Breakfast and Biomass event that will be held during the HPBA expo in Nashville. Unlike past years, the meeting will occur the second day of the expo, Friday March 6, 2015, instead of the first day. This will avoid a conflict with the Canadian HPBA event that has occurred at the same time. We are anticipating a crowd concerned with pellet supply given early season buying patterns and reportedly high stove shipments. Our program is still being finalized but will focus on how retailers and manufacturers can cooperate to grow together. It will also include the annual stove shipment report presented by HPBA, the Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration's survey, and the government affairs update.

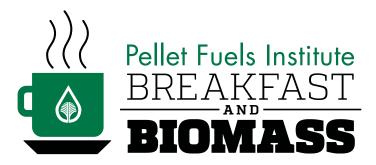
> 2015 Annual Conference: July 17–19

We're pleased to announce that the association will be heading to Williamsburg Lodge, Williamsburg, Virginia for the 2015 Annual Conference, a new site for the PFI conference and one that the committee believes will be a good fit for our event. The history of this area and the breadth of activities available make it a great place for a conference—and for families. A call for topics and speakers will be issued soon and the committee will be seeking your input on topics and issues that you'd like to see covered during the event.

The committee is also focusing on the site location for the 2016 conference and hopes to have a location in place by the spring. You are encouraged to email PFI staff with your thoughts on location for the 2016 event. We welcome your feedback!

Breakfast & Biomass: A Briefing on the Pellet Market

PFI will be hosting its third Breakfast & Biomass at HPBExpo in March. We enjoy this annual opportunity to mingle with pellet appliance and fuel manufacturers as well as retailers. If you'll be in Nashville for the expo, we encourage you to attend this event. Note that this year's breakfast will be held on Friday. As always, we'll wrap up by 9 a.m. so you can head to the expo show floor.



Event details, including an agenda, will be published on the PFI website and circulated via Pellet Wire.











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PFI Government Affairs Committee Report

Submitted By: Pat Rita and Jennifer Hedrick

Along with the Biomass Thermal Energy Council, PFI held a Washington, DC fly-in on Wednesday, December 3, visiting with Members of Congress and their staffs. Members of PFI and BTEC had 24 meetings with leaders in both the House and Senate, including Senator Ron Wyden, Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, and Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Chair of the House Republican Conference.

PFI's messages focused on the extension of the tax credits for biomass burning appliances, which offer credits of \$300 for the purchase of an appliance. These provisions expired in 2013 and as of this writing, are being considered by the House and Senate for reinstatement in 2014. Of note, it is anticipated that the credit will be reinstated retroactively for 2014, with an expiration date of December 31, 2014.

Additionally, members discussed the Biomass Thermal Utilization Act of 2013 (the BTU Act) which corrects an oversight made by Congress and adds thermal energy from biomass to sections 48 and 25 of the tax code. PFI's efforts to secure additional support and sponsors for this bill will continue in 2015 when the next Congress convenes.

Fly-In participants also alerted congressional offices regarding the need to recognize thermal energy as a suitable pathway for federal agencies to meet their renewable energy goals. Currently federal agencies and departments may only count renewable electricity toward these goals.

Finally, members alerted congressional staffers about EPA's recently released framework on biogenic emissions which provides an accounting for emissions that treats sustainably managed biomass, such as forest residuals, as carbon neutral. This is of significant importance to all within the wood to energy realm. PFI issued a statement following the release of the framework applauding EPA for its accurate classification of biomass. PFI's Government Affairs Committee will reconvene in 2015 and outline the policy priorities for the association in the year ahead. If you're a member of PFI and would like to become more engaged with PFI's government affairs activities, please contact PFI staff at office@pelletheat.org.

PFI Welcomes Trevor Gionet



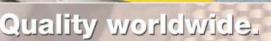
Note: Note:

Trevor has a passion for biomass, having previously served as a fellow at the Alliance for Green Heat, working as key staff on the Next Generation Wood Stove Design Challenge. He holds a BS degree in Mathematics from Hobart And William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY, and in his free time enjoys problem solving, woodworking and a range of outdoor activities.

Welcome Trevor!

KAHL Wood Pelleting Plants









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Promotions & Communications Committee Update

Submitted by: Tammy Hippchen & Jase Locke, Co-chairs

The Promotions & Communications Committee has completed the revisions for the general pellet brochure. The brochure can be found on the PFI website under the Pellets tab/drop down— "What are Pellets." The brochures are ready for distribution and the committee is looking at the best way to reach the targeted audience.

Working with the new management team at SBI, the committee has also been focused on new initiatives for PFI. This includes transitioning the current PFI website to a new format and reviewing content. This will be complete and operational by the beginning of 2015. Another new initiative is reviewing sponsorship packages for PFI members. The purpose of creating sponsorship packages is to combine many of PFI's revenue generating options into one package which would offer a savings for members. It is anticipated that the sponsorship packages will be finalized and offered to members as early as late December so the sponsorships may be utilized for the full year.

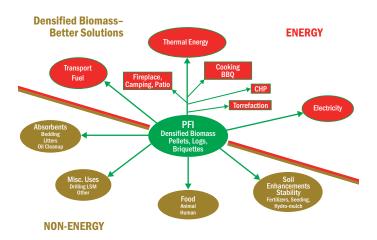
The committee has also been discussing options for member communication. It was agreed through committee calls that PFI will no longer distribute the quarterly PFI Newsletter. PFI will continue to send the weekly Pellet Wire. In addition, six times a year, a different version of the Pellet Wire will be distributed via email. This will take the place of the quarterly PFI Newsletter and will contain more excessive content including articles from the chairman, the executive director and guest articles/ member spotlights. The committee will help oversee the content and are continuing to brainstorm new ideas. If you have an idea for new content, or an article of interest, please contact the committee co-chairs. Your input is always welcome.

As we work on these exciting new initiatives we would encourage any member who would be interested in joining the Promotion and Communications Committee to contact the committee co-chairs or the executive director. We are looking to expand our committee to include all aspects of the supply chain.

Transition Committee Update

s of the last meeting of the PFI Board, the Transition Committee has been given the go ahead to flesh out the graph that was presented (see below) that shows all of the potential markets our technology can serve. PFI's primary focus will remain fuel, but we also want to find additional market opportunities for our members. We now plan to analyze the various applications, markets and benefits of densified biomass. PFI has retained a research assistant, Trevor Gionet, to begin this process. We also are soliciting and welcome input from any members on areas they are currently involved in our want to get more involved in. We welcome your feedback and ask that you contact PFI Executive Director Jennifer Hedrick at hedrick@pelletheat.org.

With your feedback as well as our analysis, we can then select appropriate segments to focus on, arrive at a strategy for bringing those opportunities to our members, provide technical expertise and some economics, methods, and the like of how our members can take advantage of additional markets for densified biomass.



By selecting this focus, which in intended to reduce overlap with other renewable or biomass organizations activities, we add unique value for our members. We are more than just fuel, we have a great potential to provide solutions to many industries.

PFI Fuel Manufacturer Members

COMPANY

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