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Japan

Solid Wood Products

European Softwood Offensives Continues – Imports from Europe Up 10%

2004

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Report Highlights:

Continuing a 5-year trend, that was fueled, until late last year, by the weak Euro, Japanese softwood product imports from Europe, excluding Russia, reached a record 2,722,780 cubic meters (m3) in 2003, up 10% from the previous year.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Tokyo [JA1]
[JA]

With Euro's recent appreciation over U.S. currency values, European exporters may struggle to stay competitive in the Japanese market in 2004, but 2003 was a bumper crop. In 2003, Finland provided Japan over a million cubic meters (m3) of softwood.

Until late last year, the weak Euro provided a comparative advantage and fueled the explosion of European softwood lumber into the Japanese market, which continued a 5-year trend. Japanese softwood product imports from Europe, excluding Russia, was a record 2,722,780 cubic meters (m3) in 2003, up 10% from the previous year.

Finland, Sweden and Austria were Japan's top 3 European suppliers, accounting, for 89.8% of imports from Europe. New players are Estonia, Latvia and Poland, which have seen exports to Japan increase 44.6%, 27.3% and 1,468.1% respectively. Rumania, not in the top ten, also increase softwood exports to Japan 62.7%.

Japan's Softwood Product Imports from Europe in 2003		
Imports From:	Volume (m3)	% Change (03/02)
Finland	1,028,582	+ 15.1%
Sweden	909,986	+ 10.8%
Austria	506,703	+ 5.5%
Latvia	73,570	+ 27.3%
Germany	63,755	- 10.2%
Czechoslovakia	47,281	- 27.8%
Norway	32,051	- 0.4%
Estonia	20,189	+ 44.6%
France	8,429	+ 4.9%
Poland	8,358	+ 1,468.1%
Lithuania	7,672	- 10.0%
Netherlands	5,455	- 28.8%
Switzerland	3,078	- 36.5%
Rumania	2,594	+ 62.7%
Slovakia	2,033	- 21.2%
Others	3,044	-
Total	2,722,780	+ 10.1%

(Source: Ministry of Treasury / Customs Data)

Europeans are supplying principally kiln-dried sawn lumber, and cants and flitches as laminating stock for structural glulam production in Japan.

End of Report