Hevea Brasiliensis

Farm Grown Timber
Contract furniture industry discovers better material for manufacturing

*Hevea Brasiliensis (HB)*, also known as Environmentally Farmed Timber (EFT), our marketing term for it, is classified as a hardwood. In fact, an independent lab test proved it was actually stronger than red oak. When finished, the wood looks most like natural oak and it is difficult to tell the difference between them. The grain is mostly straight, with few concentric markings, which makes for an attractive appearance.

HB produces a natural form of latex that is tapped from its trunk, and is used in the production of rubber. *Hevea Brasiliensis* adequately produces latex for 20 years, after that time it is harvested for timber use. Since the 1800’s, these trees have been farmed, grown for their rubber and then cut down for timber.

(For more information, see Malaysian Timbers-Rubberwood *published by Rubberwood Research Committee.*)
Hevea Brasiliensis test stronger than Oak in lab.
University Loft Company tested our standard products at a laboratory to determine how they compare to other woods, such as Northern Red Oak. In these tests we discovered Hevea Brasiliensis is stronger. In one such test, the screw pull test, HB broke at 160 lbs. of pressure while Northern Red Oak snapped under 140 lbs. of pressure. As a measure of newtons as force the meter showed lb/ft to demonstrate the force needed to pull a screw from the wood. This test, as well as others, has proven time and again that HB is a superior material for use in furniture manufacturing.

For more complete details of this test, visit our website at: www.universityloft.com/testing

ULC beats national competitor’s Oak in strength test at Federal Testing Laboratories.
At the request of Southern Illinois University to independently determine the quality, University Loft Company tested a complete range of our case goods against a national competitor. In these tests, the product endured repeated cycles of pressure at a certain weight. Pictured right is one of the tests and the results. **
Here, ULC’s 3-drawer chest, constructed with Hevea Brasiliensis, endured 204 cycles at 350 lbs. before structural integrity was compromised; compared to the competitor using Northern Red Oak, which met its demise at 341 cycles of only 250 lbs.

This test proves that not only is HB stronger than Northern Red Oak and ideal for furniture manufacturing, but also that ULC uses superior construction methods to complement Hevea Brasiliensis’ strength.

Complete details of this test, as well as many other University Loft Company products, can be found on our website at: www.universityloft.com/testing

** Please reference that the Federal Test Laboratories conducted this test.
Hevea Brasiliensis is environmentally friendly.

University Loft Company purchases our HB from farms that are certified by The Malaysian Timber Council and from SCS Forest Management Program endorsed by the Forest Stewardship Council, which insures the quality, land management, and work practices of the farms. Our staff in Malaysia visits these farms and also the saw mills as well to guarantee that our strict quality standard is being met.

This is a managed crop that is laid out in sectors and is harvested based on a 20-year plan. HB trees are tapped for latex when they are 3-4 years old. This latex is used in the production of tires, surgical gloves, and other products. In the past, trees that had exhausted their latex supply were burned or left to rot. It was discovered in the late 1800’s that this wood dried to a hardwood and was suitable for furniture production. There is no waste, thus, the tree is used in more than one way.

We import our raw material from Malaysia. We work with Malaysia because they have committed to safe lumber practices. The Malaysian Timber Industry Board has strict guidelines in place concerning safe environmental and labor practices.

Five Hevea Brasiliensis trees can be grown and harvested in the time one oak tree is ready to be milled.

This demonstrates the sustainability of this natural resource. Although many logging companies are using forestry management practices now, which is a good start, it only includes planting 6 oak seedling trees for every one cut down. This provides an argument for those practicing this, that there are more trees than ever. Yet, it will still take at least 60 years for one of these trees to reach a harvestable diameter. In which time, 3 full-sized HB trees could be harvested and ready for production.

This is the best way to sustain a wood supply for continued furniture production without depleting the world’s forests.
Treatment of Hevea Brasiliensis classified safe by EPA.

Hevea Brasiliensis (HB), is kiln dried which subjects the wood to temperatures that kill any insect that might be in the wood, so the amount of chemical treatment needed is a low amount. Most all wood must be treated in some way during the drying process. HB is treated with a boron compound, which is a combination of Boric acid and Borax, to guard against infestation after drying. It is pressure treated instead of dipped, which also insures a cellular absorption instead of just a surface one. This treatment actually makes the wood harder giving it extra strength, greater than oak.

HB has been proven safe and is used in the retail industry for bowls, tables, spoons, and knives.

For more information please visit:
www.epa.gov
www.greenpeace.org

ULC maintains workforce standards and benefits throughout the globe.

Malaysia is an advanced country with a complex economic system. Just as the United States has strict labor laws in effect concerning our work force, so does Malaysia. These laws include a 40 hour work week, Employee Provident Fund (similar to 401K), and Insurance Government Fund (similar to Social Security in the US). Additionally, Malaysian law also governs the use of child labor with similar regulations to the US.

University Loft Company is committed to its employees, whether in Malaysia or the United States. Every employee is entitled to the same benefits and governed by laws to ensure workers’ rights.

We are supporting the world’s economy and doing what we can to help the environment.
ULC salutes customers who have chosen “Green” by using Hevea Brasiliensis.
The Green Plan
A Plan for Environmental Longevity

Why Buy Green?
University Loft Company has made a commitment to help the environment since 1994. At that time, we made a conscious decision to use an environmentally friendly material in the production of our furniture. It makes sense to find alternative methods of manufacturing and not destroy our environment along the way. Like cultured pearls that are grown on a seed farm, Environmentally Farmed Timber is grown using a managed forestry method on a farm. This method compliments our earth without endangering forests.

Deforestation of the world’s forests is happening at an alarming rate. Not only will we lose plant and animal species, but also even more at stake is the earth’s climate. The depletion of the ozone layer is something that has been created in our lifetime and certainly one that will continue to destroy the planet if we persist in using up our resources. Statistical records show that 7 to 14 million acres must be replanted right now in order for our forests to replenish.

It takes 80 to 100 years for an oak tree to fully mature, longer probably than our lifetime. When you cut down one of these trees there is no way to replace it, unless you wait another 100 years. Traditional logging practices will wipe out an entire area by clear cutting. They cut everything but use only the preferred lumber. The other trees are wasted, not to mention there is nothing left standing.

We use Environmentally Farmed Timber in the construction of our furniture. This wood is a renewable resource as it is grown on plantations. Plantation timber is grown with a managed system that insures the age of harvested trees are tapped for latex starting at the age of 4 to 5 years and then when they reach maturity they are harvested. This way the tree is used in all stages of it’s life cycle. This approach has yielded a continuous supply of timber from plantations whose forestry programs date back to the 1800’s. This is called sustainable development. This means that no old growth or tropical forests are sacrificed for furniture production.

What can you do?
Executive order, 13-101 states that government agencies and business must develop a green plan to try and "green" the government through recycling, waste prevention, and federal acquisitions. A green plan is a long-term environmental strategy that will insure a high quality of life for present and future generations. We have taken a very proactive approach to green our company by utilizing Environmentally Farmed Timber.

By making the decision to buy from a green vendor you can be sure that you are doing your part to not add to the environmental crisis. When you think about the amount of wood it takes to furnish your entire project, you can visualize a complete hill being felled for enough wood to do so. It takes roughly 80 tons of wood to furnish an average size dormitory.

We ask that you be informed when making your furniture purchase. Please consider all the factors and find out more about the raw materials your furniture is constructed with. Make a commitment to educate yourself regarding what it is you are buying. Develop your own green plan.

We have struggled to try and educate the market about this material and why it is a better option than wood from a forest. It is a challenge that we are very committed to and will continue to educate the public where we can.