

SENT TO LSU AGCENTER/LOUISIANA FOREST PRODUCTS DEVELOPMENT CENTER - FOREST SECTOR / FORESTY PRODUCTS INTEREST GROUP



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U.S. plywood producers sue Brazilian certifying agencies

Ten U.S. companies are seeking \$150 million in damages as well as injunctions to revoke certification of imported Brazilian plywood that they allege has structural deficiencies.

The Southern Pine and western Fir plywood manufacturers filed the federal lawsuit against agencies that certify Brazilian plywood for the U.S. market. The suit alleges panels produced in the southern states of Parana and Santa Catarina have failed multiple tests for compliance with PS 1-09, a U.S. structural grade standard.

PFS TECO, Timber Products Inspection, and International Accreditation Service were named as defendants in the suit. The agencies defended their certification of Brazilian plywood and said the allegations are misleading.

“PFS TECO has more than 15 years of data showing that plywood from southern Brazil and produced by manufacturing facilities certified by PFS TECO can meet PS 1 requirements,” the agency said in a statement.

APA-The Engineered Wood Association conducted tests on imported Brazilian plywood in 2017 and 2018, and issued an advisory to consumers last year alleging the panels did not meet stiffness requirements. The group of plywood manufacturers suing the certification agencies commissioned additional tests in 2019.

According to the suit, “the Brazilian plywood panels produced in southern Brazil experience massive failure rates with respect to the stringent strength properties of the PS 1-09 standard, specifically bending stiffness and deflection.”

PFS TECO said in response to the suit that the testing approach by APA and the group of U.S. manufacturers was not consistent with the requirements for the PS 1-09 standard. “PFS TECO uses the methods directed by the standard,” the agency said.

Brazilian plywood shipments to the U.S. have risen substantially in recent years. In 2018, the U.S. imported more than 900 million square feet of plywood from Brazil. Imports this year are nearly on pace with 2018.



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