



TENNESSEE HARDWORDS STUDY MISSION IN VIETNAM

POST-MISSION REPORT PREPARED FOR THE TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (TDA)

JULY 2023



ORISSA INTERNATIONAL

TENNESSEE HARDWORDS STUDY MISSION IN VIETNAM

POST-MISSION REPORT PREPARED FOR THE TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURE (TDA)

JULY 2023

Prepared by:

Orissa International Pte Ltd
Address: 1003 Bukit Merah Central #05-06, Singapore 159836
Tel: +65 6225 8667
Email: admin@orissa-international.com
Web: www.orissa-international.com

Offices in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines

DISCLAIMER: All information contained in this publication has been researched and compiled from sources believed to be accurate and reliable at the time of publishing. Orissa International Pte Ltd accepts no liability whatsoever for any loss or damage resulting from errors, inaccuracies, or omissions affecting any part of the publication. All information is provided without warranty, and Orissa International Pte Ltd makes no representation of warranty of any kind as to the accuracy or completeness of any information hereto contained.

Copyright Notice: ©2023 Orissa International. All Rights Reserved. Permission to Reproduce is Required.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	BACKGROUND.....	4
2.0	PROJECT SUMMARY	5
3.0	MEETING OUTCOMES	6
3.1	HCMC DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT HCMC DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE HANDICRAFT AND WOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF HCMC	6
3.2	HKK IMPORT EXPORT WOOD CO., LTD	8
3.3	FOREIGN AGRICULTURE SERVICES (FAS) US CONSULATE GENERAL HO CHI MINH CITY	10
3.4	BINH DUONG FURNITURE ASSOCIATION (BIFA) BINH DUONG DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT	12
3.5	MY DUC WOOD CO., LTD	15
3.6	EASTERN LUMBER CO., LTD.....	18
3.7	TAVICO GROUP	20
3.8	HIEU DUC FORESTRY PROCESSING TRADING CO., LTD.....	23
3.9	LAM LUMBER CO., LTD.....	26
3.10	MINH DUONG FURNITURE CORPORATION	28
4.0	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	31



1.0 BACKGROUND

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) commissioned Orissa International to organize a 4-day study mission to Ho Chi Minh City, the largest commercial market in Vietnam, and Binh Duong province, a key industrial area in the south of Vietnam. TDA would like to access the potential of increasing Tennessee forest products exported to Vietnam and explore market opportunities in one of the most dynamic economies in Southeast Asia.

Orissa International's role in this program was to support the TDA in (1) organizing a study mission to Vietnam, (2) arranging customized business matching meetings for each company, and (3) conducting a survey to gather insightful feedbacks from Vietnamese wood and furniture manufacturers.

This report summarizes the first activity of the TDA in Vietnam, including how the study mission was conducted and the outcomes of the meetings.



2.0 PROJECT SUMMARY

Orissa International kicked off the project by speaking to the TDA team to understand their background, ideal partner profile, including wood processors, importers, furniture manufacturers, trade associations, and government agencies.

Based on the information provided, the Orissa team undertook research and developed an unqualified list and contacted 29 potential partners for TDA. A total of 13 organizations responded to our invitations. Of these, 11 confirmed their interest to attend the meetings with Tennessee trade mission delegation, with a total of ten on-site meetings in Ho Chi Minh City and Binh Duong province.

The 11 organizations included wood importers and furniture manufacturers, trade associations, and government agencies. Meeting attendees were mainly decision makers, at the management level. The categories of registered participants are indicated in the table below.

Table 1: Registered Participants by Category

Category	Number
Furniture manufacturers/ Processors	3
Trading companies	4
Trade associations	2
Government agencies	2

During the trade mission, the TDA had the opportunity to discuss market opportunities and establish business relationships with potential partners. They are wood associations, government agencies, and large furniture manufacturers in the southeastern part of Vietnam, the country's major wood processing area.

Meeting outcomes are described in the next section.



3.0 MEETING OUTCOMES

3.1 HCMC Department of Agriculture and Rural Development HCMC Department of Industry and Trade Handicraft and Wood Industry Association of HCMC

HCMC Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (<https://hawa.vn/?lang=en>)

HCMC Department of Industry and Trade

Handicraft And Wood Industry Association of HCMC

Company Address:

176 Hai Ba Trung, Da Kao, District 1, HCMC

Participants from Vietnam Side

- Mr. Duong Duc Trong, Deputy Director of HCMC's Department of Agriculture
- Mr. Nguyen Chanh Phuong, Vice President of Handicraft And Wood Industry Association Of HCMC
- Mr. Nguyen Khac Hieu, Deputy Manager of Import-Export Division of HCMC Dept of Industry and Trade
- Mr. Pham Ho Hai, Deputy Manager of Tech & Science at HCMC's Department of Agriculture
- Mr. Vu Hoang Chuong, Chief Officer of Administration of Forestry, HCMC's Department of Agriculture
- Mr. Dang Mau Kiet, Deputy Chief of Staff of HCMC's Department of Agriculture

Date & Time of Meeting

Monday, July 17, 9:00 am BKT

Local Company Profile:

1. **The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development** is a specialized agency under the Provincial People's Committee, performing the function of advising and assisting the Provincial People's Committee in state management of agriculture; forestry; career salt; Seafood; irrigation; natural disaster prevention and control; rural development; food quality and safety for agricultural, forestry, aquatic and salt products; public services in agriculture and rural development.
2. **The Department of Industry and Trade** is a specialized agency under the Provincial People's Committee, performing the function of advising and assisting the Provincial People's Committee in state management of industry; trade; energy; mineral resources; consumer protection; market management; e-commerce; industrial parks and export processing zones; public services in industry and trade.
3. **Handicraft And Wood Industry Association Of HCMC (HAWA)** was founded in 1991 as a non-profit volunteer organization. Across the country, HAWA has nearly 600 company members working in the following industries: handicrafts, wood and furniture processing, trade, and service providers. VIFA EXPO, Vietnam Furniture Matching Week, HopeFairs, and other significant projects have been managed and developed by HAWA.



Summary of Discussion

TDA introduced the delegation and the purpose of the trip, which was to understand the Vietnam market and the needs of buyers from this market. The delegation is seeking insights to better prepare Tennessee suppliers to approach Vietnamese .

The main discussion between TDA and Vietnam side included HCMC's Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, HCMC's Department of Industry and Trade and Handicraft And Wood Industry Association Of HCMC (HAWA) covered the following topics.

- Vietnam market information in the woodworking sector – shared by HAWA
- Regulation and support from the government for this sector towards both material exporters to Vietnam and local companies – The woodworking sector is among the top industries and has the 6th largest contribution to a trade surplus for Vietnam, and the US is the top trade partner with Vietnam; therefore there are almost no barriers from the government for this industry that US suppliers. The government only issues decrees that align with international cooperation programs.
- Potential cooperation between Vietnam and Tennessee in terms of trade, investment and education for local parties – HCM's Department of Agriculture suggested 02 ways that TDA can try to promote their wood in Vietnam. 1. Join workshops organized by industry associations like HAWA to promote wood species and products from Tennessee, and 2. Provide training courses for universities/ vocational colleges to develop a skilled workforce that is aware of sustainability for wood usage.

During the discussion, Tennessee also had the opportunity to introduce its sustainable forestry industry and TDA's roles in protecting, conserving, and enhancing the forest resources of Tennessee.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- HAWA works with government agencies like the Dept of Agriculture and Foreign Agricultural Services at the Embassies to conduct workshops and training for manufacturers to help them get updated with new regulations and technology. One of the programs is the cooperation between HAWA and USDA Foreign Agricultural Service in September 2023.
- HAWA works with AHEC to promote US hardwood with Vietnam's architects and designers in the construction industry.
- Import & Export Activities related will be managed by the Ministry/ Department of Agriculture.

Next Steps

- HAWA will collect and send TDA the data of wood imported from the U.S. every year for reference.
- Any trader from Tennessee should have a representative office in Vietnam to market research and reach out to the manufacturers and traders in Vietnam.
- University and college students should be facilitated about the wood industry in Vietnam.



3.2 HKK Import Export Wood Co., Ltd

HKK Import Export Wood Co., Ltd (http://hkkwood.com.vn/index.html)
<p>Company Address: 52 Street No. 24A, Quarter 5, An Phu Ward, Thu Duc City, HCMC</p> <p>Participants from HKK Mr. Vo Viet Khoi, Director Mr. Nguyen Quoc Thanh, Deputy Director</p> <p>Date & Time of Meeting Monday, July 17, 1:30 pm BKT</p>
<p>Local Company Profile:</p> <p>HKK Import Export Wood Co., Ltd is a company based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, that specializes in wholesale trade of lumber and other construction materials. The company focuses on importing ash, white oak and poplar.</p>
<p>Summary of Discussion</p> <p>Tennessee to introduce its delegation and the purpose of the trip, which is to understand the potential Vietnam market and expand Tennessee products into this market.</p> <p>HKK introduced the company and its business. The main discussion was on HKK's business and their opinions on working with foreign suppliers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As HKK just joined the market in 2019, the company will only focus on (red and white) oak and ash primarily due to their trading strategy and existing connection before the director founded the company. - HKK has a good list of suppliers, mainly from New York, and they prefer to work with distributors rather than mills. Among those suppliers that HKK is working with, Witches and Bailey are the common names. They also import from Classic American Hardwoods Inc, a company from Tennessee. They may consider importing directly from the mills when their business gets bigger and more stable. - HKK imports about 40 containers of wood annually, which costs around USD 845,000. Their common thickness is 8/4. - HKK's delivery plan depends on the customer's needs and can range from three months to one year. Most of the wood they import for selling is stored in their inventory. Currently, the US supply is very unstable, so HKK prefers to make shorter plans that can be monthly or weekly. - HKK's export-oriented customers demand FSC certification, but their domestic-oriented customers do not. Since HKK focuses on the domestic market, FSC is not a crucial criterion for their purchasing decisions. Besides traditional outreach, HKK visited tradeshow to find new suppliers. These shows are Vietnamwood in September and HAWA Expo in March.



- Mr. Khoi expressed his interest in visiting suppliers in the US, but he was concerned with the visa process and asked if TDA could support the procedure.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- In the next few years, HKK's orientation is just to import red oak and white oak primarily due to their trading strategy.
- The quantity they import is not much, so they are unable to work with many sawmills at once. Due to the segment of clients HKK chose, the company wants wood as quickly as possible to supply their clients, so they find it is more efficient to work with trading companies from the US who have offices or agents in Vietnam.
- HKK prioritizes the clients who produce for the domestic market.

Next Steps

- HKK wanted to know the supporting policy of the US if he has the demand to visit Tennessee to check out facilities.
- TDA will send HKK the list of some suppliers who are ready to ready to export to Vietnam. At the moment, HKK prefers to work with suppliers who have offices or agents in Vietnam. In the long term, he would like to import directly from sawmills.



3.3 Foreign Agriculture Services (FAS)

US Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City

Foreign Agriculture Services (FAS)

U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City

Address:

Office of Agricultural Affairs | U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City: 8th Floor, Diamond Plaza Building, 34 Le Duan Boulevard, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City

Participants from US Consulate

Mr. Stephen Jacques, Principal Commercial Officer

Economic Officer

Political Officer

Mr. Kiet Vo, Agricultural Specialist

Date & Time of Meeting

Monday, 17th July 2023 (Vietnam), 02:30 pm

Local Company Profile:

The Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) is the overseas arm of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). FAS is the lead U.S. agency tasked with promoting exports of U.S. agricultural products. The Agency advances the growth of U.S. agricultural exports through market intelligence, trade policy, trade capacity building, and trade promotion programs.

Summary of Discussion

The purpose of the trip is for TDA to meet and discuss with the representative of the US government in Vietnam about the market overview, the business environment in Vietnam, etc.

Mr. Kiet Vo, Agricultural Specialist, and Mr. Stephen Jacques, Principal Commercial Officer, welcomed the delegation and introduced the function and the mission of the FAS in Vietnam.

Mr. Jacques shares information and demographics of different countries in Asia and how they can be compared to Vietnam. He also talks about the business environment in Vietnam, how the government tries to create favorable business conditions for foreign investors, and how the country has been improving its economy, especially during Covid-19.

However, Mr. Jacques also highlights some disadvantages or problems when doing business in Vietnam, such as lack of transparency, inconsistent regulations, and bureaucracy.

Some of the business sectors and priorities for cooperation and development: supply chain, clean energy, agriculture.



The representative from FAS also briefly talked about the history, politics, and relationship between the US and Vietnam and how this relationship has developed so far.

Sharing from TDA and Orissa International

- Mr. Andy Holt from TDA sees Vietnam as a very opportunistic, lucrative market, potentially for the products that TDA wants to bring to the market. TDA aims to promote hardwood species available in Tennessee to Vietnam.
- Many American companies came to Vietnam post-2000. There's a sizable US business community and probably the largest US business community in the region (500 firms). Thanks to the dynamic community, there are a lot of opportunities as well for furniture manufacturers and hardwood exports from the US to Vietnam.
- Workers and labor supply are also a consideration when investing in Vietnam. Though their skills are good, improvements are needed to fulfill the US standards.
- Both sides also discuss the procedures and other concerns when exporting products to Vietnam. Some of the concerns include market saturation and finding wholesale distributors in Vietnam.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- The Division of Forestry in Tennessee is primarily responsible for working with the landowners of the state to encourage them to better manage their woods on a sustainable basis. There are 14 million acres of forest in the state and roughly 200,000 owners of that forest.

Next Steps

Several recommendations are provided to the TDA.

- Partnering with local distributors is the most important strategy. Local partners will help navigate the market and regulations to deal with the government, customs, and language barriers.
- Organizing seminars and workshops and introducing products online are suggested.
- Considering financial costs when doing business in Vietnam: expenses, management fees, and any other informal charges.
- Getting documents translated into Vietnamese and discussing with local partners in their mother language are also a plus.
- Establishing a representative office in Vietnam should be considered as well.
- Explore more about obtaining funds and support from FAS.



3.4 Binh Duong Furniture Association (BIFA)

Binh Duong Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Binh Duong Furniture Association (BIFA) (<http://www.bifa.vn/en-US/Default.aspx>)

Binh Duong Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Company Address:

FL 11, Becamex Tower, 230 Binh Duong Avenue, Phu Hoa Ward, Thu Dau Mot City, Binh Duong Province

Participants from BIFA and BD Department of Agriculture

Mr. Pham Van Bong, Director of BD Department of Agriculture

Mr. Nguyen Liem, President of Bifa

Mr. John Luu, Vice President of Bifa

Mr. Nguyen Long, Secretary of the President

Mr. Hosen Tuan Anh, Chief of Staff

And BIFA Committee Members

Date & Time of Meeting

Tuesday, July 18, 9:30 am VNT

Local Company Profile:

Binh Duong Department of Agriculture and Rural Development acts as a professional agency that counsels and supports the provincial people's committee to perform the State management in the locality in the following fields: agriculture; forestry; aquiculture; irrigation and rural agriculture development; prevention and fight against floods, storms; safety in production of agricultural and forest products, which are provided for the market; the public services under management of the agriculture and rural development sector and performing several duties, rights as authorized by the provincial people's committee and as stipulated by the law.

Binh Duong Furniture Association (BIFA) was formed as a non-profit and volunteer organization in 2009. The association has organized many activities such as trade promotion and market access, cooperating with international organizations and associations to promote the association's activities, connecting members, promoting intra-regional trade, organizing events and volunteer activities, and many others.

Summary of Discussion

Introduction by the delegation from TDA. TDA talked about the purpose of the trip was to meet and discuss with the representative of the US government in Vietnam about the market overview, business environment in Vietnam, and potential form of cooperation between Tennessee and the industry association.

- During the introduction, TDA also talked about the strength of the forest industry in Tennessee. Tennessee produces numerous wood species such as Red Oak, White Oak, Ash, Tulip Poplar, Hickory, Soft, Maple and Cherry. Their top products include Hardwood Lumber, Sawlogs, Barrels, Millwork & Flooring.



Welcome introduction by BIFA and Binh Duong Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The discussion was followed by TDA's questions about the Vietnam market and how TDA, as well as Tennessee suppliers, can prepare to approach the Vietnam market in the most suitable ways.

- BIFA mentioned that joining tradeshow is the key activity TDA and Tennessee suppliers should participate in to promote Tennessee wood. Some key trade shows that Tennessee companies are advised to attend include BIFA Wood Vietnam (August 9-12) and Hawa Expo (March 6 – 9), which will be held annually.
- BIFA and Binh Duong's Department of Agriculture work very closely to support woodworking in the province. They organize programs where Vietnamese wood and wooden furniture enterprises are encouraged to buy timber and wood products from sustainably managed sources, especially from the US.
- TDA shared that most of Tennessee's state forests are now certified to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Forest Management Standard. In addition, there are not many participants in The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).
- BIFA shared their opinions about the potential of the Vietnamese woodworking industry. There are three main reasons why Vietnam is still an attractive market despite a sharp decrease in export turnover.
 - The Government has invested in Vietnam's forestry sector with an implementation plan of Vietnam's forestry development strategy for the period of 2025-2030.
 - Despite the slow growth of the local wood industry in 2022, Vietnam is still an ideal destination for international furniture buyers. In fact, Vietnam still remains a top exporter of wood furniture to the US.
 - Vietnam wood manufacturers are focusing on clean, environmentally friendly production aiming to meet the requirements of the high-demand countries in the EU or the US.

Interesting Organization Insights

- Wood consumed in Vietnam is sometimes imported from high-risk geographic areas such as African countries. The main reason for this is because of the traditional habit. Given these challenges, the Vietnamese government and wood associations are focusing on outreach and education to promote the use of legally sourced and sustainable timber. As a result, a few villages in Hanoi already shifted from using tropical wood to ash.

Next Steps

BIFA suggested the following next steps:

- BIFA is to send a list of importers in Vietnam to TDA, and in return, TDA is to send a list of Tennessee suppliers to BIFA for further study.
- TDA to send samples to BIFA for display and evaluation of the visibility of Tennessee wood products in the Vietnam market.



- BIFA to send more information to TDA about the wood trade show in Vietnam.
- Possibly setting up a follow-up conversation with both teams to discuss the questions or specifics of the future collaboration.



3.5 My Duc Wood Co., Ltd

My Duc Wood Co., Ltd (https://gomyduc.com.vn/)
<p>Company Address: To Vinh Dien Street, Tan Phuoc Khanh, Tan Uyen, Binh Duong Province</p> <p>Participants from My Duc</p> <p>Ms. Le Thi Bich Canh, Director</p> <p>Mr. Do Thanh Viet, Deputy Director</p> <p>Ms. Ngo Huynh Ha, Business Development Manager</p> <p>Date & Time of Meeting</p> <p>Tuesday, 18 July 2023 - 11:00 am VNT</p>
<p>Local Company Profile:</p> <p>My Duc Wood specializes in importing logs and sawn timber from the United States, Europe, Africa, and New Zealand, among other places. White Oak, Red Oak, Ash, Walnut, Cherry, Poplar, Soft Maple, Hard Maple, Alder, Beech, Hornbeam, New Zealand Pine, Sweden Pine, Chilean Pine, Brazil Pine, Wood SPF: Canada, and others are among the wood types offered by the company. Their warehouse covers an area of 5000m2 in Binh Duong Province – the leading furniture manufacturing area in Vietnam.</p>
<p>Summary of Discussion Between Both Companies</p> <p>My Duc introduces the company.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The company was founded in 2012 by Ms. Canh, who has 20 years of experience in the wood industry. It supplies various types of wood from the US and Europe. 80% of their imported wood is from the US. The company takes forest protection seriously and has a high social responsibility, so it always carefully checks the sources of their imported wood. - Mr. Viet, Deputy Director of My Duc, shared about the company revenue and current partners. My Duc imports approximately 70 containers per month with many different SKUs. 50% of the inventory is for sales, while 50% is for stocking. Their monthly revenue is around USD 1 million, in which imported wood from the US, such as walnut, oak, and ash, are best-seller products. - My Duc is going to open a factory to design and manufacture furniture. He hopes that its first order will be from Tennessee. My Duc showed the delegates a special wood to make furniture. <p>Tennessee introduced its delegation and the purpose of the trip, which was to understand the potential Vietnam market and expand Tennessee products into this market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tennessee produces high-quality white oak, red oak, hickory, cherry, ash, and poplar. The delegation shared with My Duc about the resemblance in soil and location between the eastern area of Tennessee and Appalachian mountain area to reassure their commitment to the quality of oaks.



- My Duc shared his experience relating to selling red oak to different types of clients in the Vietnam market:
 - For export orders, customers are very consistent on what kind of wood they want. If they place an order for white oak, they only want white oak. This cannot be changed.
 - For domestic orders, customers can be persuaded to change the kind of wood. Local workshops prefer red oak to white oak as it has a wider board and smaller or no eyes on the surface.
 - Local workshops are not familiar with wood species and depend on My Duc and market trend. My Duc can convince them to use red oak instead of white oak by highlighting its benefits such as lower price, similar quality and wider board.

My Duc shared how the company finds new suppliers. The company is an active member of HAWA, so a lot of its connections result from introduction by HAWA and the association's partners.

- The company is usually invited by HAWA to exhibitions in foreign countries. Interzum is one of the trade shows in Germany where it can meet US suppliers.
- My Duc recommends the delegates join the HAWA trade show, which will take place in March next year. In this event, Tennessee will meet with many furniture makers in Vietnam.

After the meeting, My Duc introduced the factory (6,000-meter square) to the Tennessee delegates. The company built this factory four years ago. Prior to this, it rented space in an industrial zone. The tour showcased a variety of species imported by My Duc.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- My Duc's main group of customers are (1) furniture manufacturers and exporters, (2) designers and construction companies, and (3) carpentry workshops to serve domestic houses. In the past years, 50% of My Duc revenue has been from Group 1, while the remaining 50% is from Groups 2 and 3. However, due to the war in Ukraine and the recession in export markets, this percentage has changed to 20% for group 1 and 80% for the other groups.
- My Duc used to import wood from Tennessee, and they saw that the wood quality was good and had a competitive price.
- My Duc mainly imports kiln-dried lumber in the following grades: 1C, 2C and FAS. My Duc aims at selling premium products, so 70% of lumber imported is common and FAS, while 30% is common.
- My Duc is an agent of some brands and imports logs in CIF terms as well.
- My Duc has joined HAWA and FPA Binh Dinh (Forest Products Association of Binh Dinh).
- Customer service is prioritized at My Duc. The company sells lumber in big stacks, but they do not mind separating it into smaller loads depending on customers' needs.
- The company also has some lumber imported from Africa (e.g., Teak from Congo)



Next Steps

- TDA to send a list of suitable suppliers to My Duc.
- TDA to inform Ms. Canh about the plan going to Tennessee.



3.6 Eastern Lumber Co., Ltd.

Eastern Lumber Co., Ltd. (<https://gophuongdong.com/en/home/?v=e14da64a5617>)

Company Address:

352/2 Binh Loi, Ward 13, Binh Thanh District, HCMC

Participant from Eastern Lumber

Ms. Truong Thi Tuyet Thanh, Director

Date & Time of Meeting

Monday, July 17,

Local Company Profile:

Established in 2007, Eastern Lumber Co., Ltd is a wood distributor specializing in importing and distributing many species of logs and lumber for the domestic market. The company imports logs and lumber directly from the US, Europe, Africa, New Zealand, Chile and Canada. Their main markets in the South of Vietnam are HCM City, Binh Duong, and Dong Nai, while in the North of Vietnam are Hanoi and Hai Phong.

Summary of Discussion Between Both Companies

- Ms. Thanh introduced her company, Eastern Lumber. The company was established in 2007, specializing in trading logs and lumber. The company mainly imports white oak, then walnut, pines and ash.
- TDA introduced members of the delegation, and the purpose of the trip, which was to explore the market and potentially expand Tennessee products to Vietnam. TDA shared about their supply of wood, while Tennessee Forestry Association shared about the quality of Tennessee forest products.
- Eastern Lumber explained its current situation, which is difficult as there has been a decrease in the market since June 2022. At that time, they had to cut down the price by up to 50% from the cost and made a huge loss to clear their inventory. For example, they bought a container of walnut 1com, 4/4, for USD 1900 but have to sell at USD 1400. They bought pines from Chile, New Zealand, and Australia at about USD 350 – 400 and had to sell at below USD 250 – 280. Although they lost money, they still need to maintain relationships with their customers who have bought their lumbers since 2005. They tried to offer suitable prices for specific customers.
- Eastern Lumber asked about Tennessee white oak quality because she thought Tennessee is a southern state, so their wood is not as good compared to products from the northeast area. Tennessee Forestry Association explained that forests in the north of Tennessee belong to the Appalachian mountains, therefore, have the same high quality as white oak in the northeast area.
- Eastern Lumber shared that buyers have changed their buying habits. Furniture makers now tend to buy very small loads that will be used up in a few days, which makes their business busier, and they need to actively look for more suppliers to meet the demand in the market in time. She asked TDA to connect her with suppliers from Tennessee to see if Eastern Lumber can buy from them too. Eastern Lumber does not



mind working with small sawmills, and her average order is five containers per month with a mix of 3/4 and 4/4.

- Eastern Lumber requires suppliers to be honest with them about the grades and quality that they supply for each container so that they can find suitable clients. As many of their shipments will go directly to the customers, customers might decline the whole containers if they find any damage, which will, in turn, damage their business.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- Currently, Eastern Lumber buys approximately 100 containers of lumber per month. Their main species are white oak, walnut, Radiata pines and ash, and some red oak from various US states such as West Virginia, Virginia, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Missouri, Georgia, and Mississippi.
- A common problem that Eastern Lumber faces is the blue stain issue, which affects 20% of US lumber in stock.
- Eastern Lumber operates as an agent/broker (70%) and trader (30%), importing 100 containers per month.
- The company attends tradeshow in Ho Chi Minh City and Binh Duong (BIFA) every year, so they usually meet suppliers from Tennessee suppliers.

Next Steps

- Eastern Lumber asked for FSC certification support, pictures of wood, and an introduction to mills in Tennessee.
- Eastern Lumber is concerned about the quality, color, and density of the wood from different regions of the US.
- Eastern Lumber plans to visit the US when the market improves and expects reasonable prices for the lumbers.



3.7 TAVICO Group

TAVICO Group (https://www.tavicowood.com/)
<p>Company Address: Tan Cang - Long Binh Service Area, Quarter 7, Long Binh Ward, Bien Hoa City, Dong Nai Province</p> <p>Participants from TAVICO Mr. Vo Quang Ha, CEO Ms. Nguyen Thi Viet Hoa, Manager Director of TAVICO HOME Mr. Nguyen Xuan Duong, Marketing Director Mr. Tran Khanh Du, Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>Date & Time of Meeting Wednesday, 19th July 2023 (Vietnam), 10:00 am</p>
<p>Local Company Profile:</p> <p>Established in 2005, Tavico Group is a distributor of wood materials. In 2019, Tavico opened a distribution center in Vietnam at Tan Cang Long Binh ICD Industrial Park (Bien Hoa, Dong Nai) with an area of nearly 40 hectares, including a log and lumber wholesale market, warehouse and customer service area. The company supplies materials to furniture manufacturers with wood imported from the US, Europe, Japan, Australia, Russia, Canada, and New Zealand.</p>
<p>Summary of Discussion</p> <p>The purpose of the trip was for TDA to understand the Vietnam market and the needs of buyers from this market. The delegation was seeking insights to better prepare Tennessee suppliers to approach Vietnamese buyers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Tennessee representatives explained their focus on forestry and agriculture, with a significant portion of their state covered in forest material. They emphasized the importance of branding and marketing to promote their wood products in Vietnam. - The discussion covered topics including challenges of introducing Red Oak to the Vietnamese market, the role of certification systems in lumber acquisition, and the types of logs TAVICO purchases. The delegation also mentioned the quality of their wood and their ability to meet Vietnamese buyers' needs. <p>TAVICO's CEO, Mr. Ha, welcomed the delegation and expressed his interest in establishing a partnership to support furniture makers in Vietnam.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr. Ha shared his journey of being influenced by American agriculture, leading to the establishment of TAVICO, with the aim of supporting the furniture industry in Vietnam with legal wood sources. He expresses enthusiasm for cooperation between Tennessee and TAVICO.



- Mr. Ha expressed interest in receiving samples from Tennessee suppliers to showcase in Vietnam, particularly popular wood types. They discussed the importance of providing samples for buyers to evaluate the wood quality and consider different applications.
- The potential for a joint generic promotion campaign between Tennessee suppliers and TAVICO was discussed to increase awareness and acceptance of Tennessee wood in the Vietnamese market. The idea is to organize workshops, presentations, and exhibitions to showcase the benefits of Tennessee wood. TDA expressed interest in providing samples of Tennessee wood to TAVICO to showcase the variety of available products and their applications. TAVICO suggested displaying furniture pieces made from Tennessee wood in their showroom for potential buyers to experience.
- The discussion highlighted the importance of building strong, long-term partnerships with TAVICO and other Vietnamese buyers. Mr. Ha mentioned his partnership with Classic, a US company, and that he values reliable suppliers for sustainable cooperation.
- TAVICO shared information about its wood inventory, typical projects and partners that TAVICO is working with, as well as tips for operating in the market:
- TAVICO purchases logs from the US and other countries for their furniture production. It buys a variety of hardwoods, including White Oak, Walnut, Ash, and sometimes Red Oak. Mr. Ha explained that it mainly buys oak from regions known for good forest management, such as the US, Europe, and Japan. Common wood thicknesses for their furniture include 4/4 (1-inch thickness), 6/4 (1.5-inch thickness), and 8/4 (2-inch thickness). The choice of thickness depends on the type of furniture they are making and customer preferences.
- Mr. Ha explained the challenges in introducing new wood species to Vietnamese buyers and the importance of gradual market acceptance. Cultural factors and historical preferences play a role, and it takes time for buyers to trust and embrace new types of wood.
- Market insights were shared about the soil types and their impact on wood quality, such as the difference between northern white oak and red oak from Tennessee. The soil type affects the color and texture of the wood.
- Environmental certifications like FSC and PEFC were mentioned as a means to appeal to environmentally conscious buyers in Vietnam. Certifications assure buyers of responsible and sustainable sourcing.
- The importance of follow-up meetings to assess progress and adapt strategies was emphasized. Both parties acknowledged the value of continuous communication and collaboration to achieve mutual goals.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- TAVICO currently buys around one container of logs per month from the US, but the volume may vary depending on demand. For domestic market purchases, TAVICO prefers to buy step by step and gradually increase volumes over time.



- TAVICO has a strong consciousness of cultural nuances that impact preference for wood, and they are willing to work with US suppliers to find suitable wood options. TAVICO's CEO, Mr. Ha, emphasized the importance of understanding cultural preferences when introducing new wood types to the Vietnamese market. He highlighted how Vietnamese consumers have specific habits and tendencies when it comes to wood choices, and it takes time for them to accept new wood species. He also shared the stories of how it took him six months to convince his customers when he first imported red oak.
- TAVICO's approach involves building strong relationships with suppliers from the US, particularly sawmills in specific states like Pennsylvania and Virginia. It values trusted partners and emphasized the importance of stable supply and consistency in meeting customer demands.
- The company has a customer-centric approach, and they understand Vietnamese consumer behavior, focusing on tangible experiences to drive sales.
- TDA places a strong emphasis on quality control and sustainability practices in the state's forestry industry. The Tennessee representatives highlighted the quality of their wood and their commitment to responsible forest management.
- Tennessee boasts a diverse landscape and soil types, leading to unique wood characteristics across the state. The representatives mention specific areas like Appalachian regions and West Tennessee that produce distinct types of wood.

Next Steps

- Sending samples of Tennessee wood to TAVICO for display and evaluation by potential buyers.
- Exploring the possibility of creating a joint generic promotion campaign to raise awareness of Tennessee wood among Vietnamese buyers.
- Organizing joint workshops, presentations, or exhibitions to promote Tennessee wood in the Vietnamese market.
- Identifying potential partners or specialists from Tennessee to participate in events organized by TAVICO in Vietnam.
- Assessing the demand for specific wood species and sizes in the Vietnamese market to tailor the supply accordingly.
- Scheduling follow-up meetings to review progress, evaluate outcomes, and make necessary adjustments to the marketing strategy.



3.8 Hieu Duc Forestry Processing Trading Co., Ltd

Hieu Duc Forestry Processing Trading Co., Ltd
<p>Company Address: Venue: 5th Fl., 52 Dong Du, Ben Nghe Ward, Dist. 1, HCMC</p> <p>Participants from Hieu Duc Ms. Huynh Thi Giang Thanh, CEO Ms. Le Thi Anh Nguyet, Import Export Manager Mr. Hong Chinh Khoa, Manager</p> <p>Date & Time of Meeting Wednesday, 19 July 2023 - 02:30 pm</p>
<p>Local Company Profile:</p> <p>Hieu Duc Forestry Processing Trading Co., Ltd has been a furniture manufacturer since 1998. They have a wide range of materials from local woods, such as Rubber and Melaleuca, to imported ones, including Ash, Oak, Walnut, Pine, Beech, and MDF. When they started, the company worked on small details of cabinets. At the moment, they produce all types of indoor furniture for the dining room and bedroom.</p>
<p>Summary of Discussion</p> <p>Introduction about TDA, the Tennessee forestry industry and the purpose of the trip to Vietnam.</p> <p>Introduction from Ms. Giang Thanh, CEO of Hieu Duc. The company introduced the history of the company, its products and its main markets. The main topics discussed were the wood species, quality, and supply from the US, especially ash and oak.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hieu Duc shared that they mainly use alder (US), white oak (US), walnut (US) and beech (France). She asked about the supply of wood in Tennessee, which is mainly red oak, high-quality white oak, poplar and ash. - Hieu Duc is concerned with the supply of ash. She finds it difficult to find ash supplies from sawmills and distributors, both in Vietnam and US. Thus the company has to decline many orders from Japan because the clients require ash. Dr. Muhammand shared that Tennessee still has a standing inventory in the forest that could last for 10-15 years. He shared that ash is the 3rd most harvested wood in their state. However, in the long run, it will become challenging to find ash. TDA suggested if their clients like the pattern of ash and can tolerate darker colors, they can switch to red oak. - Some problems that Hieu Duc find from US suppliers: 1. Inconsistency in supply that meets their requirement (which they find important because Hieu Duc serves demanding markets). Hieu Duc cannot compromise with lower quality because it adds more cost to their company, and 2. Wood cost from the US fluctuates a lot, so Hieu Duc does not stock for too long. They will clear the inventory in 1-2 months. - Hieu Duc shared that by 2024-2025, Japan and the EU required furniture exported to their market to be certified as originating from a sustainable source. Hieu Duc understood that most US suppliers do not follow



FSC because of high cost, but in their main export market – Japan, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification is the most recognized certificate. Hieu Duc wanted TDA to help find a solution, whether they can introduce suppliers certified with FSC or a promotion program to market other sustainable certification that is equivalent to FSC. TDA introduced the Sustainable Forestry Initiative – SFI (US) and PEFC - Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (EU) as alternatives to FSC. TDA – Forestry Division manages 15 state forests to demonstrate forestry sustainability, so all wood products from state forests are also certified with SFI.

- Tradeshows: Hieu Duc joins tradeshows but do not find it helpful to connect directly with suppliers in the tradeshows. The company finds that the leads introduced by foreign chambers of commerce are much stronger. Hieu Duc gets introductions from the Chamber of Commerce rather than approaching them when they need suppliers. TDA asked what Hieu Duc thinks about joining a trade mission to visit suppliers in the US. Hieu Duc is interested but thinks that TDA might want to invite large buyers who are usually trading companies. TDA shared that the sawmills accept small and medium requests.
- Hieu Duc suggested that TDA should educate suppliers to understand logistics procedures. She shared that sometimes they are connected with sawmills with very good quality products, but they cannot sell because the sawmill cannot ship the products to Vietnam or because the logistic cost is too high, while Hieu Duc relied entirely on the suppliers to handle logistics. Due to this challenge, the two major US suppliers that Hieu Duc is working with are the ones that have representatives in Vietnam. TDA shared that there are existing program to help sawmills offsets the logistic cost (the program fund 50% up to 300,000 USD), but sawmills need buyers to take on the initiatives. Via this trip and promotion program to connect buyers and suppliers, TDA hopes to bring this information to encourage suppliers to participate in this supportive program.
- TDA also introduced some suppliers from Tennessee who are established that can export directly to Vietnam. Hieu Duc values long-term relationships, so they are very selective in choosing partners. The suppliers should guarantee consistency in price and quality.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- 90% of production is for export. Japan is the biggest market (up to 80-90% of production)
- The company has invested in automation and has been able to reduce the number of workers from 700 to 450 since 2018. Their machines are from Europe.
- Hieu Duc only imports directly from sawmills
- Import quantity: 16-18 containers/ month. 4/4, 5/4, 6/4. Depending on the order, but on average, 50% is alder; the rest are white oak, a little bit of walnut and ash.
- Hieu Duc has two types of business: selling their designs for premium markets and OEM for furniture retailers in Japan that are similar to IKEA. For OEM, she is willing to switch to new wood species if her retail partners have a long-term commitment.



Next Steps

- TDA shared a list of suppliers from Tennessee who are ready to export to Vietnam.



3.9 Lam Lumber Co., Ltd.

Lam Lumber Co., Ltd. (https://www.lamlumber.com/)
<p>Company Address: Binh Chuan 41, Thuan An, Binh Duong</p> <p>Participants from Lam Lumber Ms. Phung Hieu Giao, Manager</p> <p>Date & Time of Meeting Thursday, 21 July 2023, 11:00 am</p>
<p>Local Company Profile:</p> <p>LAM Lumber is an importer and distributor of lumber. The company sources its products from sawmills in the US, Chile, Brazil, Europe, New Zealand, and Spain. Its office is headquartered in HCM City, and its warehouse is in Binh Duong province.</p>
<p>Summary of Discussion</p> <p>Tennessee introduced its delegation and the purpose of the trip, which was to understand the potential Vietnam market and expand Tennessee products into this market.</p> <p>Lam Lumber introduced the company and its business. The main discussion was on Lam Lumber's business and their opinions about working with foreign suppliers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lam Lumber imports mainly white oak, some red oak, hickory and pines (mostly 1C and 2C, 4-8/8, 4inches or wider boards). The preferred payment term is CIF, and the standard shipping time from the US is five weeks. - Lam Lumber also shared about the tough situation of the local market. The company has to buy up to 3C to sell to furniture makers who produce for the local market. But this is also an opportunity to market red oak as red oak is cheaper but has similar grains as white oak. - Lam Lumber is interested in hickory products from Tennessee for floor makers, but it requires FSC certification and local agent support. - Lam Lumber is interested in connecting with new sawmills who are not familiar with the Vietnam market and who are open to partnering with them as their agent in Vietnam. Its current suppliers have become familiar with the Vietnam market and sell directly to customers; therefore, Lam Lumber needs to find new suppliers. The company needs introductions to the products first (via email). It might not be a very large first order, but it will try to keep a long-term relationship.



Interesting Organizational Insights

- 50% of Lam Lumber's inventory is hardwood (white oak, red oak, hickory, ash, beech and poplar), and 50% is softwood (including Taeda Pine and Veranda Pine from various countries)
- Due to the change in customers' buying habits and the difficult situation with the furniture market, Lam Lumber prefers agency business.
- Lam Lumber offers a variety of lumbers in terms of specification. They supply FAS, 1-3C and logs for veneer and flooring.

Next Steps

- Lam Lumber is looking for new suppliers who need long-term relationship agents in the local market.
- Tennessee to share if there are any Tennessee companies looking for an agent in the Vietnam market.
- Tennessee delegation shared that it could provide a list of its exporters, and there is an inbound trade mission to bring the Vietnamese importers to Tennessee to learn more about its products.



3.10 Minh Duong Furniture Corporation

Minh Duong Furniture Corporation
<p>Company Address: 1B Quarter, An Phu Ward, Thuan An Town, Binh Duong</p> <p>Participant from Minh Duong Ms. Linh Chi, Purchasing Manager</p> <p>Date & Time of Meeting Thursday, July 20, 2023 – 02:00 pm</p>
<p>Local Company Profile:</p> <p>Founded in 2002, the company is an indoor furniture manufacturer based in Binh Duong province. The company's main products are living room, bedroom, dining tables and chairs, TV cabinets, coffee tables, etc., made of rubber wood, pine, oak, ash, etc. It has over 2,000 employees and has received many awards and certifications for its achievements and quality standards.</p>
<p>Summary of Discussion Between Both Companies</p> <p>The Tennessee delegation introduced TDA, Tennessee forestry and the purpose of the trip, which was to learn about opportunities for Tennessee suppliers and useful information to share with sawmills in Tennessee.</p> <p>Minh Duong shared information about the company, particularly their purchasing process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The company has more than 20 years of experience working in the indoor furniture industry. Currently, it owns six workshops in Binh Duong province. - For white oak and walnut, the company is using 2com, 4/4 and 5/4. 5/4 is just a small amount. - Currently, the company imports about 20-25 containers per month (1-3 of which is ash), and the quantity does not fluctuate much. Most of the wood is imported from the US. The company also uses local tropical wood, such as rubber wood, in case the company does not have the imported source available. - The company only requires FSC for some specific orders based on its customers' requirements, and Minh Duong itself is already certified with FSC. The company also follows the PEFC certificate. But in fact, the company has not had any FSC orders requested from its customers. - The preferred quotation term for Minh Duong is CIF, Cat Lai port. <p>Minh Duong and TDA discussed the wood supply in Tennessee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minh Duong inquired as to the distinctions between Tennessee wood and wood from other regions - Tennessee's geographical location is one of its advantages. Tennessee has a wide range of latitudes but a narrow range of longitudes. Because Tennessee is in the northeast and is a mountainous area, it has a wide



variety of high-quality hardwoods. The Appalachian Mountains dominate the northeast of Tennessee, and the quality of Tennessee's wood is comparable to that of other Appalachian regions.

- Minh Duong asked about the color of the wood in Tennessee - Tennessee's white oak region now produces as much and of comparable quality as Appalachian Hardwood. Several other US states came to Tennessee to buy hardwood. Red oak is also very popular in Tennessee, and it comes in a variety of species and colors ranging from darker to lighter. Minh Duong uses the natural color of wood for the majority of their products, and she believes that red oak has a dark color that does not appeal to her customers. She prefers lighter-colored wood, particularly white oak, and her company imports a lot of white oak.
- TDA also shared with Minh Duong about the sustainable supply of white oak in Tennessee to answer Minh Duong's concern that the company is facing a shortage of supply of oak and black walnut from the US. Tennessee is developing many sustainable forestation programs to ensure a steady supply of wood. The reason for the shortage of supply to the Vietnam market might result from the fact that European buyers are purchasing a large amount of white oak for wine barrels. Tennessee suppliers also focus more on China importers because China has a large demand for walnut, and Tennessee has seen a decrease in demand from other markets.
- The company asked for the price in Tennessee, but the delegation is only a representative of the department, so they are not sure about the price, but they believe that the price also depends on the supplier as well as each business relationship between the two parties as well as each time to have a specific price.

Minh Duong shared their experience with US suppliers

- The company shared that it's based on the price and the quality of the products to look for a new supplier. After-sales service is also important for the company.
- Inconsistency with the supply of wood is the most common problem. Usually, if the product is defective or the product is not as requested, the company will ask for a discount. In case the number of defects is too much, the company will ask to return it. Another problem with the company's order is that the wrong grade of wood is delivered.
- Minh Duong finds new suppliers mostly from online searches or trade shows. There are also some suppliers contacting the company directly to introduce their products.

Interesting Organizational Insights

- Minh Duong exports its products to the international market only, the US (40%) and the UK (60%).
- Minh Duong only used wood imported from the US.
- 60% of their material inventory is solid wood furniture, and 40% is veneer furniture.



Next Steps

- Tennessee suggested sharing a list of suppliers with the company.
- She shared that sending pictures or videos of the samples via email is fine. If the wood meets her requirements, she will import 1 or 2 trial containers. After the first order, the wood still meets her requirements, and she will establish a long-term relationship.



4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Trade Mission was the opportunity for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) to learn from local government agencies, industry associations and local companies their needs and feedback on the market about US forest products. Through the program, TDA was able to learn about market trends and requirement for import forest products from foreign market, key channels to promote Tennessee wood and establish new trade relationship with business partner in Vietnam. TDA also had the opportunity to address concerns regarding the quality of oak from Tennessee with leading players in the industry.

Orissa International introduced TDA to 3 out of the 5 largest Wood and Furniture Associations in Vietnam, namely:

- Handicraft And Wood Industry Association Of HCMC (<https://hawa.vn/?lang=en>)
- Binh Duong Furniture Association (BIFA) and Binh Duong Department of Agriculture (<http://www.bifa.vn/en-US/Default.aspx>)
- Dong Nai Wood and Handicraft Industry Association (DOWA) (<https://dowa.vn/>)

Potential Trade Partners

We recommend close follow up with the following companies, which have the potential to become trade partners with Tennessee suppliers:

- **HKK Import Export Wood Co., Ltd** (<http://hkkwood.com.vn/index.html>)

HKK Import Export Wood Co., Ltd is a company based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam that specializes in wholesale trade of lumber and other construction materials. The company focuses on importing ash, white oak and poplar. This company focuses only on oak and ash, the 2 typical species in Tennessee. As they target the domestic market which is likely to accept darker wood, they could become a potential long term buyers for Tennessee suppliers.

- **My Duc Wood Co., Ltd** (<https://gomyduc.com.vn/>)

This company specializes in importing logs and sawn timber from the United States, Europe, Africa, and New Zealand, among other places. White Oak, Red Oak, Ash, Walnut, Cherry, Poplar, Soft Maple, Hard Maple, Alder, Beech, Hornbeam, New Zealand Pine, Sweden Pine, Chilean Pine, Brazil Pine, Wood SPF: Canada, and others are among the wood types offered by the company. Their warehouse covers an area of 5000m² in Binh Duong Province – the leading furniture manufacturing area in Vietnam.

My Duc is experienced in consulting manufacturers on new wood species. Currently, 80% of their business is with manufacturers who make furniture for domestic use. This group of clients does not have much



knowledge about US hardwood and is more likely to accept red oak due to the competitive prices to white oak with similar quality.

- Eastern Lumber Co., Ltd (<https://gophuongdong.com/en/home/?v=e14da64a5617>)

Established in 2007, Eastern Lumber Co., Ltd is a wood distributor specializing in importing and distributing many species of logs and lumber for the domestic market. The company imports logs and lumber directly from US, Europe, Africa, New Zealand, Chile and Canada. Their main markets in the South of Vietnam are HCM City, Binh Duong, Dong Nai, while in the North of Vietnam are Ha Noi, Hai Phong.

Eastern Lumber could become a potential trade partners with Tennessee suppliers as the company currently faces the problem in supply of high quality white oak from the US, and Tennessee has a good inventory of white oak that is similar to the oak Eastern Lumber gets from Northeast states (Appalachian mountains). This is also among the biggest traders in wood market with nearly 20 years in the business and import 100 containers of hardwood on a monthly basis.

- Tavico Group (<https://www.tavicowood.com/>)

Established in 2005, Tavico Group is a distributor of wood materials. In 2019, Tavico opened a distribution center in Vietnam at Tan Cang Long Binh ICD Industrial Park (Bien Hoa, Dong Nai) with an area of nearly 40 hectares, including log and lumber wholesale market, warehouse and customer service area. The company supplies materials to furniture manufacturers with wood imported from US, Europe, Japan, Australia, Russia, Canada, New Zealand.

This company focuses on logs and is comfortable with working with US suppliers to promote new species to VN market. The company also seems to have a strong influence on furniture industry in Dong Nai province, which is known for their strength in furniture for domestic market. TAVICO could become a potential trade partners for logs suppliers from Tennessee and a partner with TDA to promote Tennessee wood in Vietnam, via their activities with DOWA.

- LAM Lumber Co., Ltd (<https://www.lamlumber.com/>)

LAM Lumber is an importer and distributor of lumber. The company sources their products from sawmills in US, Chile, Brazil, Europe, New Zealand, Spain. Their office is headquartered in HCM City and their warehouse is in Binh Duong province.

This company can potentially become a potential agent for Tennessee suppliers. The company is eager to find new sawmills who who are not familiar with the market and partner with them as their agent in Vietnam.



Next Steps

We suggest that TDA sends a letter of appreciation from the Department of Agriculture to each organization for their time with the delegation. Since most of the organizations are keen on follow-up action, TDA should appoint a contact person to maintain communication with the local organization.

TDA should share a list of suppliers that are ready to export to Vietnam with the companies they met during the trade mission.

To effectively promote red oak, TDA should focus on companies that have knowledge of the species and a solid relationship with the domestic furniture market.

