

Japan Lumber Reports

Published by Japan Forest Products Journal (since 1945)



Market Analysis / Researches for Forest Products

September 21, 2001 No. 353

European lumber and glulam import increased Competitive prices with KD size accuracy stimulate demand

Import of kiln dried European softwood lumber and structural glulam has been consistently increasing. The total demand for wood in Japan is in slump due to depressed housing starts but to improve housing quality, shift to use higher performance building materials from usual lumber continues.

For the first half of this year, total import of European softwood products was 1,236 M cbms, which was 12.2% higher than the same period of last year.

Meanwhile lumber import from North America dropped by 14.1% to 1,960 M cbms so the difference narrowed between those two. However, Euro turned stronger recently after long weak trend, which restrains import somewhat so explosive growth of European lumber import for last several years seems to slow down. With slow demand in Europe, the suppliers continue to push sales for Japan as Japan prices are better than depressed European prices.

Glulam import is particularly growing higher. Many local and franchised builders now use more glulam to cope with the new Housing Quality Assurance law and Housing Performance Labeling System.

Total import of glulam in the first half of the year was record high of 271,675 cbms, 31.2% increase over the same period of last year. By source, Germany, which products are primarily marketed by Kullick and Rullmann took the top from Austria. Its volume for Japan almost tripled. The second was Finland, where FLT and Novalam are aggressively expanding export volume. Canada, which is ranked fifth now surpassed U.S.A. China was seventh, whose volume increased more than three times after large mills for Japan started operating such as Dulien Global Group.

Glulam import (Jan-Jun '01)

Source	Volume (cbm)	'01/'00 (%)
Germany	82,718	192.7
Finland	43,142	29.1
Austria	39,931	-7.5
Sweden	35,715	-0.8
Canada	21,410	38.7
U.S.A.	17,057	-17.2
China	13,813	208.8
Russia	13,801	-3.7
New Zealand	9,893	25.7
Denmark	7,282	73.4
Norway	3,970	23.8
Others	2,972	—
Total	271,675	31.2

European Lumber Import (Jan-Jun, 2001)

Source	Volume	'01/'00 (%)
Finland	462,114	117.3
Sweden	368,094	104.9
Austria	295,369	115.4
Czech	35,854	107.0
Germany	22,978	91.1
Latvia	17,051	295.1
Holland	14,528	118.3
Norway	8,838	73.6
Estonia	2,907	89.3
France	2,836	54.2
Total	1,236,606	112.2

Unit: cubic meter

Total includes other countries