

Building Products Digest

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Hardwoods: Expanding the Resource Base • Upselling Stair Systems

THE **MERCHANT** MAGAZINE

Serving building products retailers and wholesale distributors in 13 Western states—Since 1922

German Mills Target U.S. Markets

Fourteen German mills have joined together to break into the U.S. lumber market.

Operating as Kullik & Rullmann German Timber Export Co., the alliance currently is securing U.S. distributors to sell to dealers across the country.

"Germany has never been a (lumber) export country," says Carsten Kullik. "But by bringing together these family-owned mills in Germany, they can compete with companies like Stora and Finn Forest. Our mills are all specialists; one produces pine, one spruce, one laminated beams, one edge-glued boards, and so on."

United, the mills have been successfully selling into Japan. The addition of new surfacing and laminated beam production lines as well as other increases in capacity at some of their mills have now allowed Kullik & Rullman to expand into the U.S.

"The fear of the American," Kullik says, "is where's my lumber? Using the Internet, our customer can see right where his order is—where in the mill, on the surfer, in the container, etc."

Kullik & Rullmann's online purchasing system features an optimizer that allows buyers to customize their own containers. Buyers enter what products they want, and the optimizer creates a sample order to fill a container.

Products for the U.S. include solid #2 & Btr. boards and dimension in German spruce and pine, from 1x4 to 1x12, 2x4 to 2x12, and 5/4x4 to 5/4x12, all in 8 to 16' lengths (5/4 is also available 18' long). Edge-glued boards come 1x4 to 1x24 in primed and unprimed spruce. Spruce glulams with Fb2400 come in various dimensions.

Kullik, who also serves as manager and partner of the centuries-old Herbert Kullik Holzagentur GmbH and v.p. of the Gesamtverband Deutscher Holzhandel timber trade association, co-founded Kullik & Rullman in 1996 with Manfred Rullmann, timber producer, importer and exporter since 1964 and chairman of the Bavarian sawmill association, Verband der Bayerischen Sägeindustrie.