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## **Canada**

### **Solid Wood Products**

# **SLA Provinces Want All Provinces Included in New Lumber Arrangement**

## **2001**

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#### **Report Highlights:**

The four provinces governed by the Softwood Lumber Agreement are urging the Government of Canada to include the other provinces in any new softwood lumber trade agreement. The request is based on soaring production from the Atlantic Canada provinces whose production has increased 62% to 1.2 billion board feet over the last five years. Lumber producers in eastern Canada do not welcome the idea, saying that they are under a separate agreement that reflects similarities in harvesting between Atlantic Canada and the U.S.

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Includes PSD changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Ottawa [CA1], CA

**PROVINCES WANT SAME TREATMENT FOR LUMBER:**

The following was taken from the January 23 edition of *The Globe and Mail*.

Forestry officials from the four Canadian provinces whose lumber shipments to the United States are restricted by a five-year old trade deal are urging the federal government to include the other provinces in any new U.S. agreement.

The request comes just days after forest representatives from British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec formed an alliance that will seek unfettered free trade with the U.S. once the Softwood Lumber Agreement (SLA) expires on March 31.

The newly-formed Canadian Trade Lumber Alliance (CTLA) said one of its goals is to get negotiations started quickly so that domestic producers do not become subject to expensive countervailing duties on lumber shipments after April 1.

However, one of the CTLA's key members said every Canadian province that sells softwood lumber to the U.S. should be included in any new U.S. trade arrangement once the existing agreement expires. The B.C. Lumber Trade Council said its request is based on soaring production from regions like Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, whose lumber exports to the U.S. are governed by a separate trade deal.

When the current agreement was signed in 1996, exempt provinces like Nova Scotia and New Brunswick accounted for about five percent of Canada's lumber production with annual output of 740 million board feet. But in the past five years total production in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick has soared 62% to more than 1.2 billion board feet.

Since Maritime production is just 300 million board feet below that of Ontario's 1.5 billion board feet, producers in western Canada think they too should be brought into any deal with the U.S. "Why should only four jurisdictions have restricted access to the U.S. market," said Bob Plecas, president of the B.C. Lumber Trade Council, which represents about 100 producers with annual exports to the U.S. of approximately C\$8 billion. "We want to be treated the same as everybody else," Mr. Plecas said.

However, lumber producers in eastern Canada are cool to the idea of joining B.C., Alberta, Ontario and Quebec in any new deal with the U.S. "The situation in the Atlantic is very different from the four provinces included in the softwood agreement and that has been acknowledged by the U.S.," said Diana Blenkhorn, chief executive of the Maritime Lumber Bureau, which represents producers in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island. Ms. Blenkhorn said U.S. shipments from these provinces are governed by a separate agreement, which reflects the similarities between Atlantic Canada and the U.S. where 70% of all lumber is harvested from private lands.

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