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Press Release

Trump's 10 percent tariff on New Zealand timber and lumber exported to the United States will financially impact the industry

A new tariff of 10 percent on most New Zealand timber and lumber exported to the United States will have a direct financial impact on the New Zealand wood processing industry, with finer details to be worked through once more information is known. Though the tariff won't stop companies exporting to the U.S., where 30 percent growth has been achieved in the last five years.

The 10 percent tariff was announced by President Trump yesterday following the Section 232 investigation aimed at determining the effects imports of timber, lumber and their derivative products have on the United States supply chain. The tariff will be placed on all imported softwood products into the U.S. from the 14 October, with the President saying that the tariff will shore up America's local industries and support national security.

"We currently export around \$370 million of radiata pine products from New Zealand to the United States, making the U.S. our third largest export market for value-added forest products behind China and Australia", said Chief Executive of the Wood Processors and Manufacturers Association (WPMA) Mark Ross, "The 10 percent tariff, which is a relief after a 50 percent tariff was touted, will mean additional costs being added to our exporters bottom line that can either be taken on board, shared or paid for by their U.S. based customers".

On top of the effects on the New Zealand industry, the American consumer will also be directly impacted through domestic supply chain disruptions and price increases on home building materials such as clear appearance grade mouldings, solid wood sidings and primed product. As one customer in the United States commented "a lot of what we buy from New Zealand we can't get elsewhere easily, so expect we may have to pay extra, resulting in higher prices for the consumer".

"As we absorb this tariff information and move forward WPMA will continue to work closely with our members, the wider forestry supply chain, and government as to developing options for navigating the impact on our wood industry, and developing ways that we can retain and grow our high-value New Zealand Radiata Pine timber export market within the United States," said Ross.

We thank all our members, the wider forestry industry, Minister Todd McClay, our trade officials and kindred U.S. based Associations for supporting our advocacy drive over the last six months to push a case for a low tariff or exemption on our timber and lumber products.

Working as a team we have achieved a lot in gaining a feasible tariff outcome, plus bringing affected parties together. Without this effort the outcome could have been a lot worse based on other section

232 investigations, such as steel, aluminium and copper, where a 50 percent tariff or higher has now been placed on these products.

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Footnote

- New Zealand timber and lumber exporters are known for providing high value wood products into the United States, most of which is sold into 1500 stores in the DIY end user's market, such as Home Depot, Lowes and Menards.
- Our Radiata Pine exports are mostly covered by five tariff lines making up 90 percent of U.S. Chapter 44 wood imports from New Zealand, which we advocated to have classified with a low tariff or exempt from tariffs due to no equivalent competition within the United States. The remaining 10 percent of imported wood products into the U.S. will be set at New Zealand's reciprocal tariff rate of 15 percent.

WPMA – who we are:

WPMA is an industry membership association representing companies involved in the wider wood processing and manufacturing industries, including sawn timber, pulp and paper, manufactured and engineered wood products, along with bio-forest products. Our vision champions wood processing and manufacturing as the core to New Zealand's economic growth, regional development, and sustainable environment. www.wpma.org.nz: