



# Labeling, Branding & Certification

*Tools for marketing your forest products*

*Alyx Perry  
Southern Forests Network*



**LOCAL AND  
FOREST PRODUCTS  
SUSTAINABLE**



HomeGrown  
**WOOD**



# Why Label?

- Forest products can be produced in very undesirable ways
- Buyers know it
- Consumer preference for “intangible” qualities is growing
- Distinct markets are forming
- YOU HAVE MARKETABLE QUALITIES
- SMALL & INFORMAL is GOOD

# Why Participate in Branding & Certification Programs?

- NOT for “approval”
- Label for market benefit



# Goals of Family Forest Owners

Forestland owners generally seek to manage their forests in sustainable ways.

Top 4 reasons for owning forestland in the South:

- Family legacy
- Aesthetics
- Land investment
- Nature protection
- (Timber production is #6)



# Consumer Demand

Consumers are increasingly seeking products produced in more desirable ways:

- Organics #1 in growth, 20%+ per year for 10 years, Acreage doubling every 5-6 years (USDA)
- A 2002 study found that 91 percent of consumers surveyed said they would consider switching brands because of negative corporate citizenship practices. (2002 Cone Corporate Citizenship Study)
- 62% of home buyers are concerned about the environmental impact of their home (National Association of Home Builders)
- Participation in the US Green Building Council's LEED™ program increased 400% from 2005-2008.

**THE MARKET IS CHANGING**



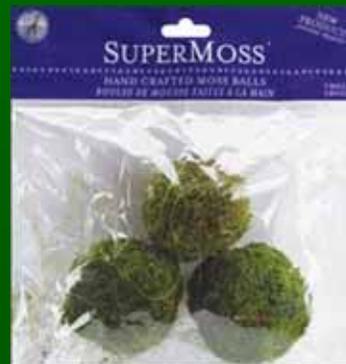
# What Sells?

- “LOCAL” ~ to everyone
- “GREEN” ~ conservation-minded consumers, Green Builders, institutional purchasing
- “SUSTAINABLE” ~ conscious consumers
- “FACE & PLACE” ~ to everyone



# What gets labeled?

- Wood & timber
- Forest foods & medicines
- Ornaments
- Crafts: baskets, wreaths, etc
- Just about anything...



# LABELING

- Simply providing info about your product or production methods on your product
- Unverified



# BRANDING

- Associates more than one product with same BRAND
- Can be used for co-marketing more than one business
- Used to build customer recognition & loyalty
- Based on any number of qualities: maker, location, “green”, etc



# CERTIFICATION

- Verification of specific claims
- Defined criteria or standards
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Verification is strongest form
- Purchasing policies prefer





What can you do?

# LABELING

- DIY
- Anything you think is marketable
- Be aware of what's regulated



# BRANDING

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project

[www.ASAPconnections.org](http://www.ASAPconnections.org)



- “Local” farm products from WNC
- Foods, herbs, ornamentals
- Open to family farms producing products for sale
- Local Food Guide, Branding, Marketing Cost-share



# BRANDING

NC Natural Products Association

[www.ncnaturalproducts.org](http://www.ncnaturalproducts.org)

- Health related products made in NC
- Developing branding program



# BRANDING

Southern Forests Network

[www.SouthernForestsNetwork.org](http://www.SouthernForestsNetwork.org)

- Assistance with branding “Local” & “Sustainable” products

LOCAL AND  
FOREST PRODUCTS  
SUSTAINABLE



# CERTIFICATION

## Forest Certification

Certifies general forest management & harvesting practices as “sustainable”

Required to sell Carbon Offsets

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

Tree Farm/Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI)



# CERTIFICATION

Forest Stewardship Council  
(FSC)

[www.fscus.org](http://www.fscus.org)

- Highest credibility and market preference
- Only certification to earn LEED credits for wood products
- Certify through [Southern Forests Network Group Certification Program](#)



# CERTIFICATION

Forest Stewardship Council  
(FSC)

[www.fscus.org](http://www.fscus.org)

- Growing number of FSC certified companies in WNC
- Growing demand for FSC-certified timber from local forests



# CERTIFICATION

FSC certified companies participating in the  
WNC Forest Products Marketing Project



# CERTIFICATION

Tree Farm/ Sustainable  
Forestry Initiative (SFI)

[www.TreeFarmSystem.org](http://www.TreeFarmSystem.org)

- Oldest forest certification system in U.S.
- Widely know in pine region
- Certify through NC Tree Farm Committee



# CERTIFICATION

## Organic

[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

- For ecologically sustainable production of agricultural products
- Mainstream recognition
- Large & fast growing market



# Quality Certification

## AB Tech Natural Products Lab

<http://abtech.edu/sbc/naturalproductslab.asp>

- help meeting current good manufacturing practices (cGMP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations for dietary supplements
- analyses are performed using High Pressure Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), Gas Chromatography (GC) and/or Mass Spectrometry (MS)



# INTEGRITY

- Don't B.S.
- Increasing expectation of verification
- Know what's regulated, trademarked, etc.





Alyx Perry  
828-277-9008

[www.SouthernForestsNetwork.org](http://www.SouthernForestsNetwork.org)

[Email Alyx](mailto:Alyx@SouthernForestsNetwork.org)

