



Contact: John McIsaac
(503) 481-9621
john@mcisaacpr.com

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SMITH & FONG DEVELOPS SOY-BASED PANEL SOLUTION FOR PLYBOO MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS

San Francisco, Calif. – Smith & Fong Co. today announced it has developed a soy-based panel system for its line of Plyboo® bamboo plywood and flooring.

Trademarked SoyBond™, the new panel system was developed in collaboration with Ashland, Inc. and is based on its Soyad® adhesive technology. The resulting panel system was the result of more than two years of joint research at Smith & Fong's manufacturing facility. The first SoyBond Plyboo panel will be on the ground in North America in November, according to company founder and president Dan Smith.

Smith & Fong expects all Plyboo production to be converted to the SoyBond panel system by the first quarter of 2010.

“We’ve already established PlybooPure® bamboo plywood and flooring as the cleanest products on the market but have wanted to push this mandate to the next level,” Smith said. “A bio-based adhesive system seemed the logical next step for us.”

Smith explained that soy-based adhesives have excellent mechanical properties that compete well with chemical-based alternatives, but offer advantages in indoor air quality, workplace environmental safety and ease of disposal. The United Soybean Board states that soy-hydrolyzate and soy-flour adhesives do not require hazardous waste disposal. “This presents a tremendous advantage for countries that struggle with waste disposal issues,” Smith said. “And we’re looking to be part of the solution.”

Founded in 1989 and headquartered in San Francisco, Smith & Fong Co. was the first U.S. company to manufacture bamboo flooring in China for sale in North America, offering its initial product under the brand name Plyboo in 1993. In 1996 the firm began producing bamboo plywood, followed by coconut palm flooring and plywood products in 2000. In 2009 they introduced a domestically produced flooring line called Sideways that is FSC certified, CARB compliant and passes California section #01350. Smith & Fong is committed to sustainability through innovation. For information call 866-835-9859 or visit <http://plyboo.com>.

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