

The benefits of wood: the natural, sustainable choice



**Wood is a natural resource.
It is endlessly renewable.**

**As wood grows, it absorbs
CO₂ from the atmosphere and
replaces it with oxygen. It stores
the carbon until the end
of its life.**

**Wood is grown in sustainably
managed forests, which, in
Europe are growing faster
than they are being harvested.**

**Between 2000 and 2021, forest
coverage in the European Union
area grew by 5.3% (eight million
hectares – an area approximately
the size of Brazil).**

**The more wood we use, the more
trees are planted.**

**Every year approximately 25
million cubic metres of timber
are used to make pallets and
packaging.**

Wooden pallets – absorbing and storing CO₂

Every cubic metre of wood absorbs approximately one tonne of the greenhouse gas CO₂ – there is around 27kg of carbon stored in an average wooden pallet.

In Europe, there are around 3.2 billion pallets in circulation: that's 86.4 million tonnes of carbon absorbed and stored.

Reusable, repairable and recyclable

Pallets and packaging made from wood are also easy to repair – with a material that is widely available and endlessly renewable.

European wood-based industries make use of every part of a harvested tree, from the main trunk, to thinnings, and smaller offcuts. Timber pallets and packaging use smaller logs and falling boards removed from larger pieces as part of this highly efficient and sustainable “cascade model”.

When they get to the end of their useful life, pallets and packaging are used in a variety of ways, including energy recovery (biomass fuel), landscape mulch, animal bedding, soil enhancements, wood particle board, and pressed wood pallets.

Pallets and packaging made from plastics simply cannot be repaired or recycled in the same way.

A timber pallet is significantly lower in price than its plastic equivalent.



Natural protection for food transport

Wood products are used in domestic and professional kitchens all over the world: in chopping boards; worktops; kitchen utensils; kebab skewers; toothpicks; lolly sticks and wine barrels to name a few.

With natural strength, flexibility and antibacterial properties, wood has a long history as the material of choice for the crates, boxes and pallets used in the transport and distribution of food.



Did you know?

- Wood is a solid, strong, and reliable material. It is easily and endlessly renewable.
- Rather than contribute to deforestation, European wood-based industries such as pallets and packaging use sustainable sources of timber that plant more trees for every one that is harvested (see figures, above).
- European wood-based industries make use of every part of a harvested tree, from the main trunk, to thinnings, and smaller offcuts. Timber pallets and packaging use smaller logs and falling boards removed from larger pieces as part of this highly efficient and sustainable “cascade model”. This ensures every part of a sustainably harvested tree is used.
- Wooden pallets are easily repaired and reused, which helps reduce total carbon emissions in supply chains.
- The pallet and packaging sector is a major employer, particularly in rural areas.
- Bacteria survive in far greater number on plastic surfaces than on wood.

Contact FEFPEB

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