

## Why aren't B.C. sawmills cutting wood in the dimensions their Chinese customers prefer?

Nov 25, 2009

Sawmills in British Columbia are shipping lumber to China with North American dimensions.

"If we can have Chinese sizing here, I would conservatively say the volume could increase by five times to 10 times," Ken Cao, deputy manager of one of the country's major wholesale distribution companies, China National Building Materials, said. "By way of comparison, China takes 20 million cubic metres at a minimum of Russian logs every year. And all those logs come in to China at four metres long. So the end users automatically follow that length, four metres. So that's the practice in China, everyone takes that length."

Chinese distributors, sawmillers and lumber remanufacturers say they love Canadian wood and would buy even more of it if they could get it in the lengths they prefer.

The Chinese are accustomed to Russian logs which are cut to metric lengths, usually four metres long. The lumber fits applications specific to China, like the distance between supports in Chinese scaffolding.

B.C. Interior sawmills cut to meet construction demands of the U.S. housing industry. That lumber typically comes in eight-foot and 16-foot lengths, meaning the boards are not long enough or have to be re-cut in China back to 13.1 feet, the equivalent of four metres.

Canadian wood only accounts for 11% of China's lumber imports, while 25% comes from Russia.

**Read more:** [Size matters: B.C. lumber sales to China suffer B.C. not cutting export wood to lengths that the Chinese prefer](#) (The Vancouver Sun)