

美國闊葉木外銷委員會－東南亞及大中華區
American Hardwood Export Council - Southeast Asia & Greater China

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Edited from Article written by Mr Michael Buckley for SEA Region

AHEC - HK@20

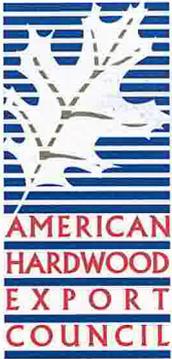
The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), as it is now known, was originally set up to represent the interests of a very fragmented industry comprised mainly of small hardwood companies. Its members are all committed to export; and the organization, which is headquartered near Washington DC, is mandated to operate only outside the USA. It is funded by the US Department of Agricultural with matching funds from the hardwood industry.

Now well known globally, AHEC had actually been around as simply the Hardwood Export Trade Council (HETC) only in Japan and UK since the start of the 1980s. AHEC was not renamed and expanded until the end of that decade, and its original marketing campaigns had been highly targeted to specific markets. Today AHEC has offices and staff in Japan, Hong Kong, London, Mexico together with consultants contracted all over the world.

In 1992 - twenty years ago - AHEC employed two staff in a newly opened Hong Kong office in Kowloon with John Chan as Regional Director and Winnie Leung as Program Manager. A major event for AHEC was when in 1998 a US designer used American Black Walnut to decorate the interior of the Grand Hyatt Hotel in the Shanghai Jing Mao Tower. Since then, the US hardwood industry has captured a considerable share of the temperate hardwood market in China which has become its largest export market.

AHEC held its first Convention in Hong Kong in June 1996 to allow networking and interaction of its exporting members with Chinese and other Asian buyers. With its success there followed annual AHEC Conventions in Kuala Lumpur, Shanghai, Beijing, Bangkok, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Saigon (HCMC), Beijing, Qingdao, Shenzhen, Hangzhou, Saigon again, Shenyang, Chengdu, Nanjing and Singapore in 2012, which was the 17th. During this period it has worked very closely with many trade, industry and professional organizations and associations.

In 2002 AHEC opened its Shanghai office with one member of staff, Mabel Zhuang who was from Shanghai. In 2010, Shanghai Office was temporary closed and Hong Kong office moved to Harcourt Road, Hong Kong. By 2012 AHEC Hong Kong office has grown to a staff establishment of four including John Chan (Regional Director), Sharon Shek (Assistant Director of Compliance and Operation), Jean Lai (Marketing Manager) and Rita Mak



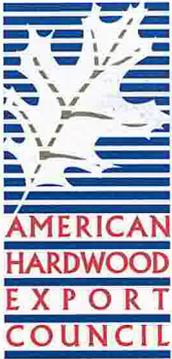
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(Marketing Coordinator). In the past 20 years its programs have included participation at trade shows all over the region, many technical and design seminars, regular trade servicing tours by its staff and members, architectural and press missions to the USA, roundtable meetings everywhere, the annual conventions as outlined above and a strong Public Relations programme working with the B2B and professional media.

In the last five years, AHEC has also conducted a new programme of Furniture Design Competitions and has sponsored them in Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore as well as hosting its own in Indonesia from 2009 to 2011 and in China in 2011. With most American hardwoods used in furniture and interiors for doors, joinery and flooring, the emphasis has been on decorative, sustainable hardwoods.

Looking back over those twenty years John Chan, still at the helm, says “*I conclude that with the past 20 years of AHEC in Hong Kong we have made many valuable friends in the timber, design industries and communities in addition to the media and press which have been supporting AHEC programmes. What is important is that the promotional goals started 20 years ago are still being maintained in the same way now. The AHEC Hong Kong staff joins hands together with high spirits to continuously promote US hardwoods in our region.*”



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American Hardwood Export Council

The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) is the leading international trade association for the US hardwood industry, representing the committed exporters among US hardwood companies and all the major US hardwood product trade associations. AHEC's member companies service the growing global demand for US hardwood and represent the full range of US hardwood products.

Established in 1992, AHEC Southeast Asia & Greater China (SEA & GRCH) office is responsible for the marketing activities in the nine Asian markets including China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. For details, please visit AHEC SEA & GRCH website at www.ahec-sea.org.

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