

## The “Is It Made in America” Question

### Building a Made in America Home – a Blueprint for Marketing Success and Creating More Jobs.



You may have seen the recent ABC News report on “How to Build a Made in America Home”. It spotlighted Montana HBA member and past president, Anders Lewendal, an economist turned builder, who is building a house made entirely from American-made products.

Everything from the nails, screws and bolts, to the steel, staples and bathtub is made in the United States.

In all, there are more than 120 products from more than 33 states, which gives you an idea of how complicated and exhausting it would be for the average builder or remodeler to use 100% *made in America* building materials.

Yet, Lewendal is convinced that if every builder bought just 5 percent more American materials, we would create 220,000 more new jobs. So *Connecticut Builder* did a little of our own research, and a lumber yard seemed like the best place to start. Here’s what Frank Sanford of Sanford & Hawley had to say:

*“About 2% of what we sell is made in Connecticut. This includes Gordon hatchway doors, Southington; Dow Styrofoam, Gales Ferry; and Taylor doors and MSG trim assembled in our Avon shop.*

*About 6% of what we sell is made in MA. This includes, Kleer PVC trim, moulding and decking, Westfield; FastenMaster screws, Agawam; and roof trusses, Indian Orchard or Belchertown.*

*Another 80% or so is made in the US or Canada. This includes most lumber, plywood, OSB, roofing, drywall, windows.”*

- Frank Sanford, Sanford & Hawley

Frank Sanford noted some trends worth noting:

1. Highly computerized manufacturing is coming back to the U.S.
2. China has significant quality control issues and their worker wage is rising..
3. Imported building materials have a 4 month lead time so they require a large inventory.

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One trend Frank didn’t mention is huge for builders who are looking for a marketing edge in the current tough sales environment. The average U.S. citizen’s # 1 & 2 concerns today are jobs and improving the U.S. economy. As a result, more and more builders are being questioned about where their kitchen cabinets and other building materials are made, and specifically –

*“Is this made in China or is it made in America?”*

If a builder can say that he or she has made a concerted effort to increase the ‘*made in America*’ materials in his home, he can also say that he is creating more American jobs.

And that is bound to have a positive impact on the *value* of his home in the mind of today’s consumer.

***It doesn’t have to be more expensive to be better quality.***

Although American products can be more expensive, that is not always true.

A box of nails is \$5 more than those made in China and steel is \$146 more a bundle. However, even though certain goods are more expensive, in total, the cost of the *Made in America* house is nearly identical. Currently, the Lewendal all-American home, which is not yet finished, is running only 1 to 2 percent more than a foreign-sourced house.

You can get the list of 120 products and website links to the supplier/manufacturer and learn a lot more about the home at [www.theallamericanhome.com](http://www.theallamericanhome.com).



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