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Is wood good?

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IS WOOD GOOD?
Study of U.S. households' upholstered furniture preferences shows that retailers should stress wood construction.

In U.S. households there is currently a very strong belief that "wood is good" in upholstered furniture. In a recent survey of the upholstered furniture buying plans of over 2,000 U.S. households:

- 88.4 percent of the respondents said the material used in frame construction was important, and...
- 85.4 percent said they preferred wood over metals, Fiberglas or other frame materials.

Wood was strongly preferred in all geographic areas of the country, and among all of the age groups, income levels, and occupational categories evaluated in the survey.

Although consumer preferences for wood did not vary much by age, income, occupation, or place of residence, one characteristic — household type — did show a clear difference. In general, single persons without children at home had lower preferences for wood than other single parents or couples. At nearly 83 percent, however, the study found that preferences for wood are still high among single persons.

Although consumer preferences are strong, wood use in the frames of upholstered products is rarely obvious to retail customers. Where appropriate, the study suggests, that discussions on the retail floor should emphasize its use as an attribute of quality.

For further information, write to Dr. S.H. Ballard, Associate Professor, Mississippi State University, c/o FURNITURE WORLD, 530 Fifth Ave., Pelham, NY 10803.