

GREEN *Supreme* PREMIUM PELLET FUEL

Wood Pellets – Hardwood or Softwood?

We are frequently asked if hardwood pellets are superior to softwood pellets. Most people's perception is that hardwoods are superior; after all, hardwood logs do burn better than softwood logs in a conventional woodstove. However, this is not necessarily the case when raw material is processed to form wood pellets.

Hardwood logs are generally drier than softwood logs and the low moisture content results in a hotter, cleaner burn. However, in the process of manufacturing pellets – whether softwood or hardwood – the moisture content of the wood is brought down into a narrow range of about 3 to 4%.

Once the moisture has been removed, the remaining components of any pellet are cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin (the wood fiber itself) and resin (or the sap in the wood, which is essentially a natural oil). Cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin has the same heating value, whether originating in softwood or hardwood form. Resin has a higher heating value than cellulose and the resin content of softwoods is higher than that of hardwoods. As a result, softwood pellets generally burn slightly hotter – but faster – than hardwood pellets, yielding a slightly higher heating value (BTU's per pound).

Heating values are close across almost all pellets; as a result, what really matters most to consumers is ash content. The main factors that impact ash content are the cleanliness of the raw material (that is, the absence of bark and other impurities) and the quality of the manufacturing process, and not the species of wood used – although there are slight variations from one species to another.

Top quality pellets can be made from either hardwood or softwood. New England Wood Pellet manufactures pellets with an approximately 90:10 hardwood/softwood blend.

Green Supreme Premium Pellet Fuel is manufactured by New England Wood Pellet LLC

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