

Foreign Control of U.S. Lumber Mills Sparks Economic and Policy Debate

Canadian Firms Now Operate Majority of Southern Sawmills, Prompting Calls for Greater Domestic Ownership and Strategic Review



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2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Over the past decade, Canadian forestry companies have significantly expanded their footprint in the American lumber industry, particularly across the Southern United States. While foreign investment remains a key component of a dynamic U.S. economy, industry analysts and policymakers are increasingly scrutinizing the long-term implications of international control over critical domestic manufacturing infrastructure.

A Growing Share of American Sawmills

Canadian-owned firms—including West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd., Canfor Corporation, and Interfor Corporation—now operate dozens of sawmills in the U.S., with many holding more assets south of the border than in their home country.

West Fraser operates 16 sawmills across the southern U.S., compared to 13 in Canada.

Canfor runs 11 mills in Georgia, North Carolina, Mississippi, and neighboring states.

Interfor manages 13 sawmills in the U.S., accounting for the majority of its lumber output.

Additional Canadian firms—such as Tolko Industries (via a Louisiana joint venture), Maibec Inc., J.D. Irving, and Kruger Inc.—also maintain active operations and land holdings throughout the country.

Strategic Questions on Supply Chain and Sovereignty

As foreign ownership of U.S. lumber mills grows, several key concerns are emerging:

- Supply Chain Autonomy: With essential building materials under foreign control, the U.S. may face increased vulnerability during geopolitical tensions or trade disputes.

- Economic Retention: While these mills generate jobs locally, a significant portion of profits is repatriated, raising questions about long-term reinvestment in American communities.

- Market Influence: Consolidated foreign ownership could shape production levels and pricing, affecting U.S. builders, consumers, and downstream industries.

Call for Strategic Policy Review

Industry stakeholders are urging a closer examination of the issue. Policy suggestions include incentivizing domestic ownership, increasing sourcing transparency, and evaluating regulatory frameworks around foreign investment in strategic industries.

"The lumber industry is foundational to U.S. housing, infrastructure, and job creation," said Don Buckner, CEO of [MadeInUSA.com](https://www.madeinusa.com). "Understanding who controls the supply—and where the profits are going—is essential if we want to ensure long-term economic resilience."

As discussions around industrial sovereignty continue, advocates are emphasizing the importance of revitalizing American ownership across vital sectors like lumber. For MadeInUSA.com and its partners, the message is clear: it's time to bring the power of domestic production back home.

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