

CERTIFICATES AND TRADEMARKS CONFIRMING THE HIGH QUALITY OF WOODEN PRODUCTS

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SUMMARY

High quality wood products is derived from not only the production process according to customer's order, but also the recommendations of independent bodies of experts confer specific characters for specific products and certifying organization in the strict application of the recommendations dictated by industry standards. Quality marks obtaining is one of the newest way of the product sale increase. Some of quality marks are obligatory, some of the them are not obligatory, use only for promotion of the products group sale increase. Authors show some examples of quality marks and certified organization that exist in the woodworking industry.

Keywords: quality, certificate, quality marks

1. INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the all companies is forcing consumers to buy its products in different ways. Those ways depend on the specificity of the product. The most popular are: presenting product with marketing aspects by using for example advertisement or selling by special price.

Owners of companies also tries to point the high quality of their products by taking several activities such as: continuous technology improvement, services and products quality improvement, and also adapting to the more rigorous norms that are presented very often by several institutions giving: certificates, certificates of acknowledgment, trademarks, control markings and Q-marks. The last ones appear in quite a diverse form, have a different source of origin, and its acquaintance and assessment in the eyes of consumers is also differentiated. A number of Q-marks are granted by certifying institutions holding less or more significant position on the market of systems and quality research. Certificates issued by them have their basis in the guidelines on norms and definitions of the quality law. Whereas holding a sign of safety (CE) is indispensable, a Q-mark is not obligatory. The company itself decides whether it wants to hold it and brand its products with it. Certifying is connected with taking activity such as: testing product and its components, checking of process documentation, technical documentation and organizational conditions which support manufacturing [1,2].

Quality signs means the next effective way of product promotion.

2. THE MEANING OF THE PRODUCT QUALITY

The quality of the product is defined as a degree of satisfying the receiver's requirements [3]. In the case of industrial products, the quality is perceived as a result of the quality design, what means that producer should focused on projecting proper quality (pattern of product, type, construction, recipe). Production processes must be projected in accordance with requirements of clients and requirements noted in several standards and norms. The company that ignores the requirements of high quality will lose with those competitors who can meet the clients expectations. Although the high quality does not guarantee the success of the product, the low quality certainly guarantees its failure. Some advantages that can be gained by enterprises due to high quality are: better reputation, greater competitiveness, reduced marketing effort, sale improvement, higher productivity, long-term profitability, smaller risk of complaint due to defective products and lower costs [5].

The ideas of the concept of quality assume that the area creating the greatest possibilities for affecting quality is the organization understood as the enterprise management system. A group of companies, which implemented the quality assurance system, is systematically enlarged by those which by trying to find permanent and serious foreign partners do not meet the requirements of possessing a modern quality system. There is also problem of fulfilling of the European Union requirements, what constitutes a basis of giving several trademarks and certificates.

3. QUALITY MARKS IN THE FORESTRY

The quality mark is a special marking of high quality goods. Such marking also used in industrialized countries and it was introduced in Poland by virtue of the Cabinet's resolution of 8 November 1958. The resolution establishes two kinds of quality signs: Q sign (Q - quality) - for marking articles satisfying the highest world level of the quality and '1' sign - for marking articles of the high world level of the quality. These marks are granted by the Office of the Quality Mark institutions [1,2].

The mark is not another award or kind of honorable distinction. The statuette distinctly says, what features must characterize a product, what qualifications must distinguish a producer, to entitle them to use a Trade Mark. Building up a strong mark of one's firm is less hard and labor-consuming than building up a mark for the OIGPM Trade Mark, but by getting involved in the idea of the mark we can do it faster, and more easily [1].

Development and Implementation Centre of State Forests (DICSF) awards The Forest Quality Mark promoting the products offered on the forest market. It is possible to obtain a branch certificate on the basis of tests including: verification of practical application values and safety of use, economical and ergonomic parameters.



Figure 1. Statuette of the Forest Quality Mark in Food Industry.

Source: <http://www.lp.gov.pl/>

The Forest Quality Mark (FQM) is awarded to products, services and processes useful in forest economy, which are characterized by a very high manufacturing quality. Awarding the FQM means, that product fulfills requirements of the law and internal regulation of State Forests, with a particular regard to the environmental protection requirements and safety regulations. The Statuette presents ellipse with an inscribed circle, inside which, in vertical position, there is stylized spruce (Fig. 1). It is possible to contest for FQM for products, services, processes, solutions, and ventures that have a valid Certificate of Assessment.

Application for the Forest Mark of Quality includes subsequent stage, which consists in testing products/goods. The tests have practical character and they check the usefulness of the product for use in the forest economy. Each product connected with forest economy can be subject to. The tests are carried out with regard to [1,2]:

- methodologies developed by the Forestry Research Institute or company's own methods,
- Technical - Forest requirements,
- developed patterns,
- provisions of internal regulations and legal regulations generally in force with regard to the forest economy,
- procedures in force in the Development and Implementation Centre in Bedon.

In the case of negative product assessment, it can be undergo tests again after the introduction of changes eliminating the indicated defects. The mark FSQ (forestry trademark) is awarded on the basis of analysis of test results product included in the Certificate of Assessment. Introduction of changes in the product equals expiry of the right to use FSQ. The Certificate of Assessment is valid for at least one year, however no longer than 5 years. The Forest Quality Mark was awarded to such products as [<http://www.bedon.lasy.gov.pl>]:

1. STIHL FS 350 2 Mower (Andreas Stihl Co. Ltd.).
2. Roller for punctual preparation of the soil (OTL in Jarocin).
3. Husqvarna 346 XP4 Saw (Electrolux Poland Co. Ltd.)
4. Husqvarna 357 XP 8 (Electrolux Poland Co. Ltd.).
5. Milling cutter for preparation of the soil FV 4088 5 (FAO-FAR Cieszyn).
6. Biodegradable Green Oil Eco 6 forailing chain saws (Tex-Star Kalisz).

4. QUALITY MARKS IN THE FURNITURE INDUSTRY

The furniture industry activity proofed that quality marks play the great role in the sale creating. The Polish Chamber of the Commerce of the Furniture Producers (APCCFP) has established a Branch Mark such as the Polish Furniture – Certified Quality. This mark has been put on market in consistent and planned manner. The qualifications needed for getting this mark must be shown by the product as well as its producer, which is very important from the point of building up a strong mark [2].

The enterprise applying for the right to use this mark must confirm, that submitted products satisfy the following requirements [1]:

- qualitative and technical parameters and functional values of manufactured products are consistent with compulsory norms and regulations (in the scope of: stability strength and durability, hygiene, safety of products use, ergonomics);
- declared quality of used materials must be guaranteed by applicant;
- products functionality is certified by positive clients opinions and independent consultative units;
- products are covered by warranty and post-warranty services.

The awarded mark can be used by the applicant only with reference to the products that are of Polish origin (made in Poland) and whose participation in production of materials and raw materials (in value) manufactured in Poland exceeds 50%. The enterprise applying for the right to use the mark must meet the following requirements [1,2]:

- have a stable financial status (at least in the period of 3 years make a balance - sheet profit),
- hold distinctions or awards for achievements within the confines of run economic activity,
- carry on its own development research on products with supplied documentary evidence,
- have its own implemented system of ISO management.

The aim of the Polish Furniture – Quality Mark – Certified Quality is:

- distinction of the Polish furniture branch for the purpose of its promotion in the country and abroad,
- promotion of high quality product and management by economic activity in furniture branch in Poland,
- integration of Polish enterprises and persons in relation to the mark,
- creation of the image of Polish firms which open to innovations and development of the product.

5. CERTIFICATES OF WOODWORKING PRODUCTION

High quality of wooden products is connected with constant improvement supporting, what can be also provided by realization certifying process. Certificates obtaining refers to obligatory forestry requirements too.

Certification conducted by SGS QUALIFOR ensures that wood or wooden product comes from the forest that has been assessed and certified as management, as social standards, environmental and economic international organization as defined by the FSC - Forest Stewardship Council.

Procedure for obtaining certificate Chain-of-Custody (CoC) includes following steps [2]:

1. Submitting of application (in SGS QUALIFOR) expressing the desire to obtain Chain-of-Custody (CoC) certification .
2. The SGS representative sent a special form to a company that allow for preparing the financial offer of the certification process.
3. Certification body SGS fixed the amount of recruitment, to be paid by the company to begin the certification process.
4. An internal audit is carried out in company by the certification body SGS representative to review the organizational structure and functioning of documents held in the context of the requirements for certification. Results are presented to company owners in the report.
5. Implementation of the basic requirements for the certification program QUALIFOR in:
 - Identification,
 - Segregation,
 - Documentation.

Certification Chain of Custody "(CoC) obtaining allows certified products marking by international trademark FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) as a proof of product origin from raw material derived from certified forests.

The basic condition to be fulfilled by the company applying for CoC certificate to use for the production of certified material from sources certified (certified forest areas certified sawmills, certified producers and certified brokerage firms).

During certifying process carried out in the track of internal audit product control is realized in the frame of:

- developed and implemented procedures,
- enterprise's organization,
- purchase, register and storage of certified raw material,
- system of raw materials identification throughout the production process,
- documentation,
- system sales of certified products,
- use of international trade mark.

Basic requirements include three main aspects such as: identification, segregation and documentation.

A. Identifying of products produced from raw materials coming from certified forest sources (forests and sawmill).

Requirements for the identification of raw material throughout production process:

- where it is possible, certified raw materials, semi-finished and finished products should have a unique identification number or mark by which it will be possible to trace their path through production process until the source of certified raw material,
- production processes of certified and not certified products should be separated physically or in time, unless the rule was introduced the percentage of raw material,
- effectiveness indicators should be calculated for each process and/or product,
- semi-finished products are certified and should be stored separately from non-certified on clearly marked storage area,
- conducted documentation must be certified storage of finished products.

B. Segregation - all products originating from certified sources are kept separate from other products. Certified raw material should be available and used during an audit principal, certified raw material during storage is separated from the non-certified raw material storage areas clearly marked.

C. Documentation - there are procedures and work instructions and documentation related to: purchasing and storing raw materials, production and storage of final products.

Documentation requirements:

- conducted documentation should allow for control over the flow of raw starting with the final product to the source,
- company must have an (appropriate to the scale of production) system for the identification, collection, storage and data protection,
- all data (files) must be legible and credible,
- purchasing documents - should include relevant information clearly specifying the ordered raw material / products, including: product code/raw material, the name and other information, such as amount of purchased raw material/product,
- it should be kept of certified raw material storage,
- sales invoices and other documents relating to the sale of certified products must contain a CoC certificate number in the appropriate form.

If the product is the percentage of certified raw material, there presented information about the percentage of certified raw material composition should be on an invoice for certified products.

- documents should clearly define product sales, its amount and the recipient,
- number of certified raw material purchased should be recorded and totaled a minimum of every 6 months according to source provider,
- number of certified finished products sold should be recorded and totaled a minimum of every 6 months according to list of customers.

COC system allows you to trace the origin of raw materials ranging from forest area and ending on the shelves. The main element of this system is the possibility of linking the sale of certified products through the purchase invoice. Therefore, it is important to the transparency of invoices, to specify clearly which products are certified and which not.

6. Re-run of the internal audit - preparation of the Company's System-of-Custody (ZSKPP).

The Company's System-of-Custody (ZSKPP) includes nine elements:

1. Purpose of the system: meeting the requirements of FSC standards for the certification of traceability (ie, the ability to control the origin of the raw material from certified sources) in the final product.
2. Certified products.

3. Source of certified raw material: write which sources are planned to purchase (forests, sawmills).
4. Organizational units (or key personnel) of the company covered by the system, for example, replace all entities, e.g. purchasing department in the raw material, raw material composition, individual production units, the composition of lumber, finished goods warehouse, sales department, accounting department at room (take the factual situations). In the case of external entities (wiping) must be replaced with the name and address of the entity.
5. The basic responsibilities of key personnel: the appointment of the person responsible for the functioning of the capital control system origin and the responsibilities of key personnel of organizational units covered by the system of traceability, such as the management / owner shall be responsible: for the purchase of raw materials, acceptance and storage of raw materials for production, the finished goods warehouse.
6. Documentation: write all documents (the movement of raw materials and sell finished products) according to organizational units (or key persons) Establishment of a system of traceability. In the case of external entities (wiping) should be done with them a contract agreement obliges them to comply with the requirements of the certificate chain of custody (documentation, segregation and identification), and provide business records for the purpose of conducting periodic audits and certification.
7. Identification-marking: storage space, raw materials, and finished products certified - documentation of: raw materials, production, stockpiling and sale of certified products (especially important for segregation of certified raw material and not certified).
8. Packet labeling of certified products: describe (the label must be in accordance with the requirements of the FSC model, the FSC logo must be approved by the certification body).
9. Storage rules: certified raw materials, intermediates and finished products.

Described system should ensure segregation of the raw material and the identification of the movement of products across company. Conducted documentation should allow for easy tracing the movement of certified raw material during periodic audits.

The last step of certification process is assessment of implementing changes in result of mark obtaining.

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