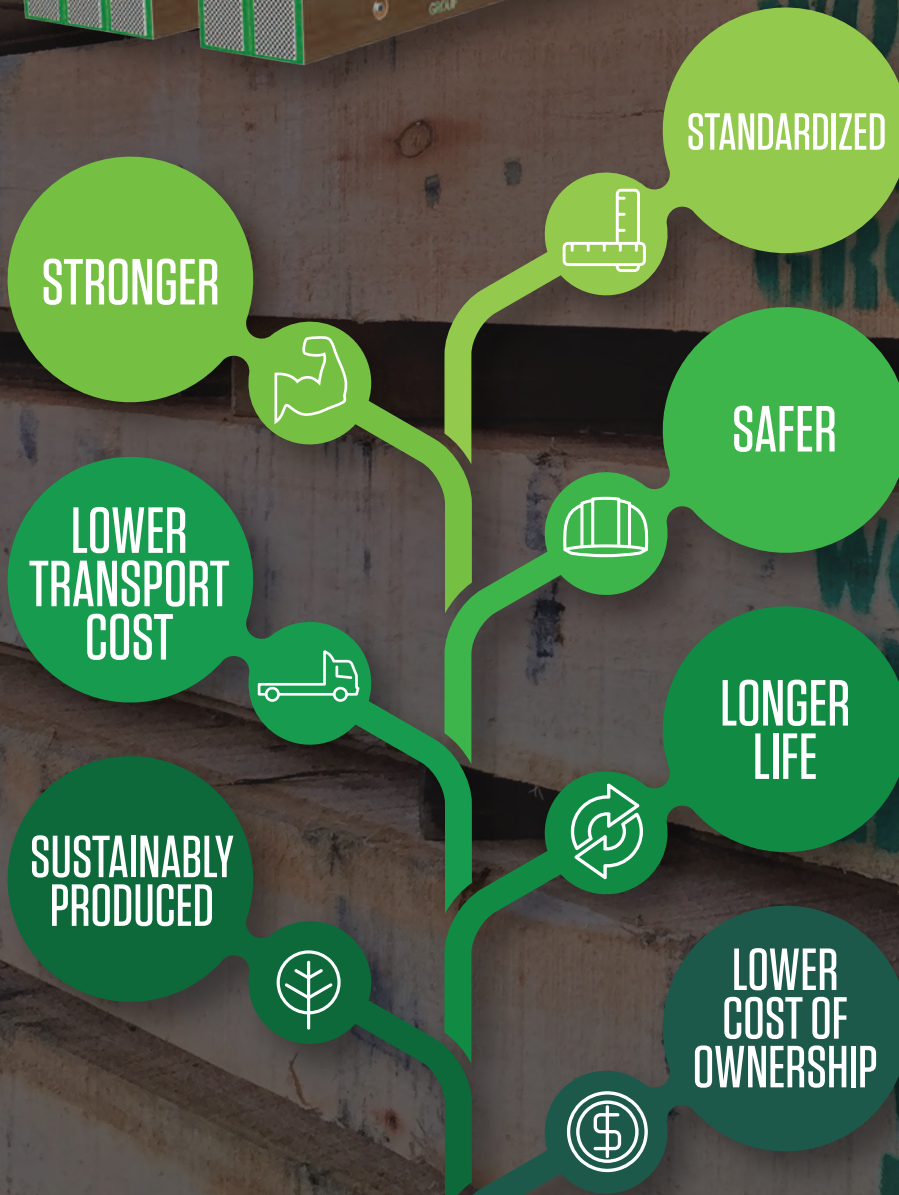




A BETTER TIMBER MAT



CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

1-800-866-0795 x1 • [world-forest.com](http://world-forest.com) • [info@world-forest.com](mailto:info@world-forest.com)



# INTERVIEW WITH

Jeffrey Atkin, CEO of World Forest Group LLC

*Tell us how why you believe you can save your customers money.*

Transport cost. Eucalyptus provides the same strength at a lower weight than mixed hardwoods, therefore more mats fit on a truck. We typically manage 21-22 mats per truckload versus 18 for a truckload of mixed hardwood mats.

Longer life creates an effective discount. To keep the numbers simple, if our mats last twice as long then you save all the money you would have spent buying the mats in the second purchase cycle.

There's reason to believe that these mats should last a long time. The exact same species from the exact area we source from are also used for fenceposts, which have constant exposure to soil. We've heard that the posts last 10-15 years. We wouldn't claim that for our mats, but we think they should last longer than USA mixed hardwoods.

*How are these mats stronger?*

Better raw material. Eucalyptus is stronger than southern red oak. You can look at representative data yourself here and for southern red oak here to see how much stronger.

We also use ASTM F1554 grade 36 steel bolts and use end plates which are industry best practice for large timbers.

We are obsessive about quality and we routinely sample timbers and have an independent third party do ASTM testing for bending strength, compressive strength, etc. We also do more unusual testing like our drop test and beam test.

*Why do you talk about standardization?*

There is no standard in the timber mat business. Many people have made this point. Check out this article by one of the early mat guys.

The reason there is no standard is that everyone uses different raw material. Could be oak, could be elm, could be poplar. Could be a mix of species within each mat.

Consequently, mat users assume the lowest common denominator in terms of performance. You are only as strong as the weakest link and because you don't know the weakest link you have to assume the worst case.

We use only plantation grown Eucalyptus – that's a standardized product. In fact, we've got some really cool numbers on the variability of our actual timbers. It's really interesting to see that the variability of our real life timbers are about the same or lower than the variability in perfect, clear older growth USA hardwood samples tested 50+ years ago. You can't find that kind of hardwood any more in the USA. So, our eucalyptus really shines.

We pride ourselves on no rot, no bark, no wane, which means you are getting a better quality product.

*Why are these mats safer?*

When mats are stronger and have less variability - more standardized - they become safer for the end user.

When a user calculates the properties of our eucalyptus mats s/he will find that 8" eucalyptus mats are stronger than 8" southern red oak mats. Assuming equal applications of a material, stronger materials tend to produce stronger results. In general, greater strength is safer than lesser strength. *Our attorney will want me to disclaim that as mat suppliers, we have no knowledge of the soil conditions or loading to which mats will be subjected. These are calculated and designed by the mat users.*

*Your company has been involved with sustainability since 1995. Why? And how does this affect mat users?*

There are three reasons: First, we wanted to produce products that all our employees and their families could be proud of. Second, we wanted to develop a sustainable business model and sustainable raw material is an important component of that. Normal mat producers struggle with sustainability issues in the southeast, where the forests and biodiversity are under significant threat. Third, customers are now demanding more sustainable products, or at least they want to know they aren't doing any harm. In that respect, our mats sequester about 66% more carbon per mat and probably five times more carbon per acre than USA hardwood mats and forests.

*Tell us about your company:*

We are an American company that has been sawing hardwoods since 1995. Our expertise is in production of industrial strength forest products (e.g. crane mats / timbers / railroad ties, etc.) and sustainable forest management.

We try hard to follow three core principles. **Obey the Golden Rule.** We treat employees, customers, vendors, and our communities with respect. **Speak the Truth.** We only promise what we can deliver. **Make Things Better.** We try hard to consistently improve our product and our environment.

I've had the great good fortune and pleasure of working with my partners for 20+ years. Our lead investor and I have been friends since 1983. That's pretty rewarding. Bottom line is that we trust each other and can focus on making better mats and forging long-term relationships with customers.

