technology transfer *fact sheet*

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Taxus brevifolia Nutt.
Family: Taxaceae
Pacific Yew

The genus Taxus is composed of 10 species native to North America [3], Central America [1] and Eurasia [6]. The word *taxus* is the classical Latin name, from the Greek *taxos*. The word *brevifolia* means short leaf, referring to the size of its needles, relative to the English yew (*Taxus baccata* L.). Recently, taxol, an anti-cancer agent, has been isolated from the bark of *Taxus brevifolia*.

Other Common Names: Canadese taxus, Canadian yew, if a feuilles courtes, if du Canada, if occidental, kanadensisk idegran, mountain mahogany, Oregon yew, Pacific yew, pazifische eibe, tassi d'america, tasso americano, taxo americano, tejo americano, western yew, westerse taxus, yew.

Distribution: Pacific yew is native to the Pacific Coast region from southeast Alaska, south in western British Columbia, western Washington, western Oregon and northern and central California (including the Sierra Nevada). It is also grows in the Rocky Mountain region from southeast British Columbia south to northwest Montana, northern Idaho, eastern Washington and northeast Oregon.

The Tree: Pacific yew trees reach heights of 50 feet, with diameters of 2 feet. The largest tree on record was 60 feet tall, with a diameter of 6 feet.

General Wood Characteristics: The wood from Pacific yew has a thin light tan sapwood, while the heartwood is brown to bright orange. It is dense, very hard and strong, heavy and has a very fine, straight and close grain with a fine texture. It has a high luster and has no characteristic odor or taste.

Mechanical Properties (2-inch standard)

	Specific gravity	MOE $x10^6$ lbf/in^2	MOR lbf/in^2	Compression Parallel lbf/in^2	Compression Perpendicular lbf/in^2	WML[a] in-lbf/in^3	Hardness lbf	Shear lbf/in^2
Green	0.60	0.99	10100	4650	1040	20.2	1150	1620
Dry	0.67	1.35	15200	8100	2100	18.7	1600	2230

[a]WML = Work to maximum load.
Reference (153).

Drying and Shrinkage

	Percentage of shrinkage (green to final moisture content)		
Type of shrinkage	0% MC	6% MC	20% MC
Tangential	5.4	4.3	1.8
Radial	4.0	3.2	1.3
Volumetric	9.7	7.8	3.2

References: (153, 192).

Kiln Drying Schedules[a]

Conventional temperature/moisture content-controlled schedules[a]

Condition	4/4, 5/4 stock	6/4 stock	8/4 stock	10/4 stock	12/4 stock	British schedule 4/4 stock
Standard	T8-B3	NA	T5-B2	NA	NA	G

[a]Reference (74, 185).

Working Properties: Pacific yew wood works well with tools. It splits during nailing but hold screws well. It bends easily, is excellent for turnery and finishes smoothly.

Durability: Pacific yew is rated as exceptionally high in resistance to heartwood decay (10). It may be used for outdoor purposes without preservative treatment.

Preservation: No information available at this time.

Uses: Archery bows, turnery, cabinetry, canoe paddles, veneer, marquetry, panelling, carvings, furniture, joinery, fences, door, tables, rustic furniture.

Toxicity: May cause irritation and /or dermatitis (3,7&11). The word toxic is based on *Taxus*.

Additional Reading and References Cited (in parentheses)

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