

# Pallet Manufacturing is an “Essential Service” and “Critical Infrastructure” for Supply Chain Continuity and COVID-19 Recovery Efforts

March 25, 2020

## Statement by the Global Wood Packaging Forum (GWPF) in response to the COVID-19 outbreak

As our global leaders across the world put in place emergency measures to protect the world’s population from the spread of COVID-19, we respectfully urge that policies being developed and implemented safeguard the ability of essential businesses to continue operations. We need to avoid an inadvertent mistake that has a global negative impact.

Wooden pallets and containers are essential services and critical infrastructure. We are the ‘blood cells’ of the body of the world; moving food, medical supplies, pharmaceuticals, chemistry, beverages, and essential paper products. There are 2 billion pallets in circulation in the United States alone and over 4 billion in Europe. Businesses that manufacture, repair wooden pallets, offer pallet pooling services, and provide wood containers and wood packaging that are essential to maintaining critical operations and the flow of commerce. Community members providing critical care, and services should be assured they will receive their shipments in a timely manner and in good condition. This will be crucial beyond the current crisis, when we turn to recovering from this pandemic.

We are appealing to all Governments to support pallet and packaging manufacturers, pallet pools, reconditioned pallet businesses, and the logistics industry; and also ensure that global sawmilling and material support operations are able to continue providing timber and essential equipment and supplies to our operations. Many pallet manufacturing businesses affected are family owned and support their local economy. The industry does this through purchases of lumber, nails, machinery, and related goods. Most importantly, wooden pallets and containers are a critical piece of global supply chain logistics, as no other ‘essential’ goods make it through the supply chain without pallets.

This is an unprecedented situation and we will be working with the industry and with the Government to ensure these businesses can carry on operating to ensure continuity of supply of these essential products.

### **About:**

The Global Wood Packaging Forum is a collaboration of associated wood packaging organizations and representatives from around the world that meets to discuss global issues that affect the industry. For more information, visit: [globalwoodpackagingforum.org](http://globalwoodpackagingforum.org)