LUMIN
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# Customer Bulletin

ISSUE 4: INNOVATION

# "THERE'S A WAY TO DO IT BETTER – FIND IT."

Thomas A Edison


In our first Bulletin in May, we outlined details of our major investment in a new production line to produce thin peeled Eucalyptus tropical replacement panels. In this Bulletin, we discuss with Daniel Bidault, the Lumin Plant Manager, some of the other exciting innovations taking place in our current mill to enhance our product range – including a close look at the new automated repair line.

## What inspired the investment in the automated repair line?

This is a project that we had been studying for a while. With the approval and confidence of new owners, we were able to install the automated repair line during 2019 and had start up during early 2020. We always believed that it was necessary because our timberlands are managed with the highest standards of quality. All our Eucalyptus and Pine forests are pruned and thinned to obtain the maximum level of clear wood to maximise future premium products such as AC, BC, TRP, and BB/CC, and to compete in the most demanding markets in the world.

## Where was this machinery sourced and manufactured?

This line was manufactured by Biele, a Spanish company. Biele has an agreement with the Norwegian company ARGOS, to supply and install the scanner prior to repairing, which is essential for achieving optimal patching/repairing of the panels.

## What are its key parameters?

Fundamentally this line delivers optimal panel repair quality in both Eucalyptus and Pine. The objective is to have more than 95% of the defects (knots and splits) properly repaired according to a predefined specification.

As the line has been designed to repair one panel face at a time (Pine or Eucalyptus), the machine makes a grading segregation prior to the scanner.

After the ARGOS camera-based scanner, this equipment ensures perfect positioning that stabilizes the panels (by means of a vacuum system transport belt) – this optimizes the quality of the repaired panels and minimises the uses of repair materials including polyurethane.

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## Does it improve quality and output of repaired panels?

Yes, this type of high-technology allows us to standardize processes, be more consistent, improve quality and decrease down-grade.

## Were there any challenges?

It is the first machine in the world manufactured to repair both species, and the first time with Eucalyptus. To minimise the learning curve we shared information and experiences with other companies, capitalizing on the good experiences and avoiding the pitfalls.

It was also a challenge to reduce the consumption of chemical products used to repair the panels, specifically putty and polyurethane.

Finally, we needed to achieve productivity targets as quickly as possible to make the investment worthwhile.

## Are there any other investments planned, or innovations taking place at the mill?

We always strive to innovate and improve. Some recent and ongoing examples include:

- Progressively upgrading our forklift fleet to electric, to reduce pollution and cost.
- Installing a new green veneer scanner which allows sheet stacking before drying according to quality grading. The advantage is to dry faces and interior sheets with specific drying settings, improving quality, yield and productivity.
- Installing an automatic control system in our dryers (we have the system already successfully running in one). This allows an improvement in air humidity inside the chambers and dryer speed control, resulting in a better panel quality, wood yield and productivity.

**Our next Bulletin will focus on our Timberlands and what makes us unique globally in terms of our plantations and strategy.**