



For years we've heard the common phrase, "I always thought hardwood was better than softwood." It's alright, we won't hold this against you - old habits die hard.

But, boy do we have fantastic news for you – this common phrase is in fact a MYTH! Now, before you feel like you've been lied to, let's get something straight. If you are heating your home with a wood stove using *cordwood (firewood)*, then by all means burn hardwood, as it is typically denser in its natural state than softwood (and therefore burns hotter, longer and cleaner). *However*, if you are heating your home with a *pellet stove, pelletized* softwood is absolutely acceptable (and often better than hardwood), and here's why:

***FACT: Softwood pellets typically have higher heat output (burn hotter) and lower ash (burn cleaner) than hardwood pellets. Indeed, high quality softwood pellets can produce 10-20% more BTUs per pound than hardwood pellets, and a cleaner burn means less maintenance for busy you!***

Don't believe us? Regular third party testing of our EasyBlaze™ Super Premium (softwood) and EasyBlaze™ Blend (hard/softwood) shows that the Super Premium generally has lower ash content (0.26%-0.40%) than the Blend (0.40%-0.70%). Likewise, Super Premium pellets have a higher heating value of 8,980 BTU/lb (dry basis) compared to Blend's heating value of 8,782 BTU/lb (dry basis). Lastly, our Super Premium typically has less moisture (6.33%) than the Blend (less than or equal to 8%).

Mind blown yet?

So, why do people still say hardwood is better than softwood? Because, in its natural state, softwood often oozes sap (or pitch) which, if burned, will create creosote and burn dirty. Nobody wants that. But we can't underestimate the power of manufacturing – it's magical, and here's why:

We make our wood pellets, hardwood and softwood alike, out of locally and responsibly-sourced forestry by-products, i.e., saw mills send us their leftover wood shavings and sawdust that they would otherwise throw away (everyone wins!). Our quality manufacturing process puts this residual sawdust under extreme heat and pressure to compress the wood fiber into pelletized form. By doing so, pelletization completely changes the structure of the wood fiber, stripping it of sap, pitch, fines and moisture, i.e., it eliminates all the yucky stuff that gives softwood a bad name. Additionally, the compression process ensures that both hardwood and softwood pellets achieve the same high density and, thus, will experience equal burn time. (Note that some people have even experienced [5 to 10 hours of more burn time](#) with high quality softwood pellets than with hardwood pellets, lending a higher value per bag.)

With this being said, it is imperative that the manufacturer uses only clean, high quality wood fiber that doesn't contain dirty, sappy bark. Fortunately for us, our production facility is ideally located among the rich Virginia forest, boasting the highest quality of aged Southern Yellow Pine. Additionally, the softwood harvest season lasts longer into the winter months than hardwood, so you're less likely to run out of softwood pellets when you need them the most.

Now that we've confessed our love for softwood, we must make it clear that we are hardwood friendly too. (After all, we make a hard/softwood Blend!) In our experience and as our above testing results show, burning a 100% softwood pellet (like EasyBlaze™ Super Premium) gives you more bang for your buck. However, our hard/softwood pellets (EasyBlaze™ Blend) are lower-priced, which may be attractive to some customers. Since most pellet stoves today are built to burn hardwood and/or softwood, choosing a pellet fuel is really a personal decision based on preference and price. At the end of the day, how a pellet is made is often more important than the species of wood used – clean raw material as well as a quality manufacturing process is the “secret sauce,” for which EasyPellet Products™ has the finest recipe!

Thanks to the following for their intellectual contribution to this blog post:

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