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Cork: The Latest Renewable Resource Under Siege

Abandoning cork threatens Jobs and the Environment:

London, Ontario – A Canadian cork distributing company is developing new uses for cork, one of nature’s fastest growing renewable resources.

ACB Cork, an international leader in the cork industry, has designed a new environmentally friendly and biodegradable mouse pad. Made of 100% natural cork, this dexterous mouse pad is durable and features a smooth surface that ensures precise mouse movement and cursor accuracy. “The hypo-allergenic material is ideal for home and office and provides optimal comfort for the user and is suitable for all mouse sensitivities” says Dani Cardoso, President of ABC Cork. Catering to the unique needs of their customers, ABC Cork is able to customize the pad to suit individual requirements and taste.

Cork is a renewable material made from the fiber stripped from cork trees. Its most familiar use is the closure of wine bottles. Recently a few concerns have been raised regarding the current trend in the wine industry toward the use of alternatives like plastic corks and screw caps. The “World Wildlife Foundation estimated that if winemakers continue to move away from cork, three-quarters of the western Mediterranean’s cork oak forests could be lost within the decade, threatening ecosystems and jobs,” claims Cardoso. “That is why we must develop innovative uses for this sustainable and renewable resource.”

Pioneers in North American cork distribution, ABC Cork is well versed in the industry. They chose to invest in cork because cork is a natural, renewable resource that is biodegradable and environmentally friendly. During the harvesting process cork trees are relieved of their outer bark every nine years with no harm done to the tree. Cork is harvested in a steady cycle that promotes healthy growth for the tree over its expected 200 year lifespan. Typically, virgin cork is not removed from saplings until the 25th year, and the reproduction of cork following the first cycle may not be extracted for another 9 – 13 years.

As the tree grows and regenerates its layers of cork, the tree plays a vital role in balancing an ecosystem of up to 135 plant species and 42 bird species. Furthermore, cork forests are essential to preventing soil erosion, maintaining water resources and storing CO2. Besides its capacity to produce oxygen, cork oak has a unique cell structure that enables it to retain carbon dioxide, the principle cause of global warming. Carbon uptake is greatest while the trees are growing. Harvested trees absorb three to five times more CO2 than unharvested trees.

ABC Cork has established relationships with the best cork farmers in Portugal and know that their products and services not only provide the best quality, but also help sustain an essential part of the Portuguese and Mediterranean economy. Cork oak forests cover about 6.7 million acres and are unique to the Mediterranean region, which is one of the world’s top 25 biodiversity hotspots providing income for more than 100,000 people (WWF). Cork forests are predominantly privately owned, which puts them at greater risk for neglect or sale for development if the popularity of cork continues to decline. Economic pressures could force farmers to convert their forests to other uses like timber farms or development. This would not only disrupt the natural ecosystem, but would also put pressure upon other resources.

About ABC Cork

ABC Cork is family owned and operated and has been offering an extensive and innovative line of products since 1972.

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