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## TECHNICAL BULLITEN

### **Black Label™ brand hardwoods vs competitive brands or generic hardwoods.**

Tropical Forest Products is committed to the protection of our customers from an unregulated market where misrepresentations of product quality, common names, generalization of trade names and species have become common practice.

To protect our customers from species confusion, all products sold under the BLACK LABEL trademark are independently inspected, graded, selected, certified, and warranted to the specific grade specified and defined under our Tropical Forest Products Grading Rules. These certificates of compliance are available upon request.

Taking Black Label™ Ipe as an example...

The U.S. Forest Products Laboratory and U.S. Naval Research Laboratory specifically identifies the Lapacho group of Tabebuia as having high resistance to deterioration from rot, termites, and marine borers. The Lapacho group of subspecies can be visually identified by the presence of Lapachols (a yellowish powder) contained in the wood cells which can be seen when cross cutting the timber. As for any of the particular subspecies which make up the Lapacho Group, the U.S. Forest Products Laboratory has concluded that these subspecies can only be identified microscopically, not visually. As such any claims related to specific subspecies selection for color or any other qualities within the lapacho group of Tabebuia would be misrepresentation.

Generic “Ipe” is generally imported under the loose grade term of FAS (first and seconds), or various trademarks which represent no specific species or grading rules. These products may include mixed species, non-durable sapwood, borer holes, knots, shake, and other milling defects.

Tropical Forest Products produces two grades of hardwood decking and cladding. Black Label Premium Select Clear Mixed Grain Architectural Grade on four faces and 4 edges, the highest in the industry. or FEQ First Export Quality Clear Mixed Grain on one face and two edges.

A lack of specifically defined grading rules allows the mills to produce lumber with defects that can directly affect the performance and appearance of these materials supplied. This has led to the experience of inconsistency within the Ipe market.

We support the efforts of consumers to protect themselves by requesting specific species, grade, and quality standards for the wood products they purchase. Failure by any supplier to provide such information is a strong indicator that the consumer might not be receiving the product they believe they have paid for.

Clarity creates accountability. The more you know the better we look.

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