Architect Survey of Biobased Building Materials in the Non-Residential Sector

OBIC was engaged by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) to quantify current usage rates of biobased products within the state and to project substitution potential of these biobased products for their petroleum counterparts. One such area of interest is in the non-residential building materials cluster.

The primary objective of the Architect Survey was to understand Ohio architect attitudes toward and usage of “sustainable” building products and practices in non-residential construction projects. The interactive survey, which was developed by OBIC, was conducted in October 2009. This survey was executed in conjunction with the Ohio American Institute of Architects (AIA), in which an email invitation was sent to the 2,100 members. This process resulted in 167 respondents starting the survey; however, the actual number of respondents varies for each survey question due to survey logic and respondent drop-off.

Currently, 98% of the respondents are incorporating the use of sustainable building products and practices into their projects at least some of the time. Also, 88% of clients are requesting the use of sustainable building products and practices at least some of the time. In selecting building products for a project, respondents indicated that product performance, maintenance requirements, and cost were the top 3 issues. The study also showed that although there is a lot of information available, that 74% of respondents would be interested in an independently developed database on information of sustainable building products would be extremely valuable.

This was done in conjunction with the 2009 Soy Technology program, sponsored by the Ohio Soybean Council, and Ashland Performance Materials which offers a line of biobased resins called Envirez®. For more information contact the author at hollis.69@osu.edu or visit the website at bioproducts.osu.edu.