

# Energy From The Forest To You.™



**Question:**

Which is better ... Hardwood or Softwood Pellets?

**Answer:**

Both or neither ... It really depends on the quality.

For wood stoves and fireplaces, it is true hardwood is the preferred fuel because it is denser, it has a lower moisture content, burns longer and has hotter coals. As softwood tends to burn hotter initially and is easier to light it will not burn as long. **However, when it comes to pellet stoves**, it is the quality of the wood pellet rather than the species that truly makes a difference. A premium quality wood pellet will have approximately 8000 BTUs per pound with up to 8% moisture and a minimum bulk density of 40 lbs per cubic foot.

The pelletizing process removes many of the differences between hardwood and softwood. In the pelletizing process wood chips are ground into sawdust and dried to a consistent moisture level. The sawdust is then compressed into a pellet. The compression equalizes the density of the wood pellets whether the fiber is softwood or hardwood. The pellets are compressed to the same density, approximately 40 lbs per cubic foot.

A premium quality wood pellet will have less than 1% ash content. Although with all wood pellets you will have some ash, the characteristics of the ash and amount of ash content will vary depending on quality. With some wood pellets you may have a light fly ash that will collect in your heat exchanger or settle in your vent, or a heavy ash that collects in the ash pan. Some ash is high in minerals that it can melt and harden into what is known as a clinker. It is highly suggested to regularly maintain you appliance for it to perform at its optimal level.

A premium quality wood pellet will range between .25 – 1.5 inches in length. The shorter the pellets the faster they feed. Increasing / decreasing your feed rate on your appliance will help you adjust for the length of the pellet. For shorter wood pellets you may have to decrease your feed rate. Despite the slight change in feed rate the burn characteristics and BTUs will be the same.

Curran Renewable purchases 100% of the necessary wood chips from their sister company Seaway Timber Harvesting. Seaway Timber Harvesting has been in the forestry management business for decades. Because of this relationship we control the supply of wood, the species of the trees, the balance of hardwood and softwood as well as what parts of the trees end up in our products. This results in a higher quality wood pellet being produced to meets the demands of our customers. To ensure our wood pellets meet the requirements of the PFI's super premium and premium grades we have our pellets tested on a regular basis by a third party testing lab.

For more information about our wood pellets, please visit : [www.curranpellets.com](http://www.curranpellets.com)



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