HEALTHY NEWS

Fire Resistant Coconut Husks Can Replace Wood And Save Millions Of Trees

By bestfolkmedicine · 17/05/2020 · 3 min read

Unfortunately, according to a study published in the Journal Nature, 15.3 billion trees are cut on a yearly basis and 46 percent of the trees in the world have been removed in the past 12,000 years. But, coconut husks may hold the key to ceasing tree cutting.

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Even though for most manufacturing wood isn't needed, humans have been slow in the development of suitable alternatives. But, there is progress- a company from the Netherlands called CocoPallet is working towards a change by making pallets from coconuts, rather than from wood.

Coconut Husk Makes Great Wood Alternative

CocoPallet is a company which makes transportation pallets from coconut husks and this is a 100 percent organic material which is also recyclable.

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This process is cheaper than wood and the design is more durable and practical. According to estimates, the company saves around 200 million trees from being cut on a yearly basis.

This innovative technology was primarily developed by researchers from the Wageningen University and later commercialized by Michiel Vos, the founder of CocoPallet.

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Making objects from coconuts never came into mind to Jan Van Dam, a plant scientist at Wageningen University, but more than 20 years ago, a man from Indonesia came to his office and showed him something during the time when Van Dam was specializing in material development from fiber of

plants.

He explains that what this man showed him seemed like regular hardboard; however, the man noted that this wasn't made from logged trees, but from coconut bark.

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Rock-hard and wood-like board material made from the husk of coconut was completely new to Van Dam. He further adds that a recyclable product such as this one is crucial, particularly in areas like Asia where coconut waste is high.

After being familiarized with this amazing technique involving coconut husks, Van Dam tried to launch the making of pallets from coconut shells in the Philippines, however, this was a short-lived program.

Because of the local situation, the effort failed and the lack of power supply was an obstacle.

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The Efforts for Alternative Development Continued

Years later, the idea resurfaced and it was picked up by Michiel Vos who talked with Van Dam about advice for wood alternatives. He mentioned coconut husk because it contains the glue and the materials to glue together.

Anywhere in Asia, you can find it almost for free on the side of roads. Asia is known to produce more than billion pallets on a yearly basis.

They need softwood which doesn't grow in the tropics and is imported from New Zealand, Eastern Europe, and Canada.

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Full forests are shipped to Asia for pallet making and are mainly used for shipping products back to Europe and America. Clearly, it's more efficient to produce them in Asia with local materials.

These pallets from coconut husks by the company have numerous benefits, including more strength and less weight than regular pallets, fire retardancy, and easy stacking because of the new design and less space taken.

Plus, they’re less expensive and this is an excellent sales argument for a sustainable product. And, most importantly, the company plays a major role in the prevention of tree cutting and also supports recycling.

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Sources:

THE COCONET

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