

Through research and advances in technology, we have learned to convert tree fibers and paper-pulping residues into a wealth of products. In fact, there are more than 5,000 wood and paper products that we use and enjoy each day — everything from baby food and ice cream, to rayon and paint, to toothpaste, cosmetics, medicine and household cleaners. But what makes all of these products special is that they come from a renewable resource — trees.



Unlike fossil fuels, metals and plastics, wood can be harvested, used, regrown and harvested again and again in a never-ending cycle. With proper forest management, we can enjoy thousands of products and still have plenty of trees for wildlife habitat, clean air and water, recreation and aesthetic beauty today and in the future.

Read on to learn more about Goods From the Woods!

Toothpaste: Toothpaste contains cellulose gum, a natural product derived from wood. The gum acts as a binder and provides a creamy texture. Toothpaste may also contain terpenes, a chemical derived from wood that is used to sweeten the spearmint or peppermint flavor of many toothpastes and mouthwashes.

Soft drinks: Many citrus flavored soft drinks contain chemicals from trees called esters. Esters, which are derivatives of wood rosin, act as a weighting agent and assure a uniform distribution of the citrus flavor throughout the drink.

Lotion: Many beauty products, including lotions, contain Vitamins A and E, which come from wood extracts. Many skin lotions also contain stearic acids that are derivatives of fatty acids produced during the papermaking process.

Glue: Glues and adhesives can be made from hard resins, a natural substance that comes from trees.

Dishwashing liquid: Detergents, soaps and shampoos, are made from crude fatty acids derived from wood. The lemon scent of some dishwashing liquids and furniture polishes comes from trees during pine turpentine processing.

Chewing gum: Chewing gum is made by using the rosin or storax of trees such as spruce. Chewing gum may also contain terpenes, a group of pine derivatives used to sweeten peppermint and spearmint oils used as flavoring.

Cinnamon: Many spices used in cooking — such as nutmeg, bay leaves and cinnamon — come from trees. Cinnamon is made from the bark of the laurel tree which grows in India and Sri Lanka. Sticks of cinnamon are produced by cutting bark off of young saplings. When left to dry, the bark curls up.

Crayons: Carnauba wax, a resin produced by the leaves of the carnauba tree, is the waxy component of crayons. Carnauba wax is also used in car wax, and as a finish coating on furniture, produce (such as apples and pears) and a wide variety of other products. The pharmaceutical industry uses it to coat pills, and it is a major ingredient in lipstick and other cosmetics.

Instant hot chocolate: Instant hot chocolate contains cellulose or methylcellulose, the main building block of wood. This form of cellulose acts as a thickening and binding agent.

Cellophane tape: Cellophanes are derived from the sugar components of wood during the pulping process and are used in making such products as wrap and tape.

Cookies: Many baked goods contain cocoa from the seeds of the cacao tree, and vanillin, an artificial flavoring made from wood.

Facial tissue: Papers — including facial tissues, toilet paper, paper towels, newspapers, and writing papers — are made from cellulose, the main building block of wood.

Medicine: Aspirin tablets and other medicines in tablet form are held together with lignin, which is the natural glue in wood. The essential elements of aspirin come from the bark of willow trees. Many other medicines used in treating diseases such as high blood pressure and Parkinson's disease also contain various wood derivatives.

Coffee: The nuts and seeds of many trees provide food for both humans and animals. Most of the world's coffee is obtained from the berries of the Arabica coffee tree. Other edible nuts and seeds include pine kernels, walnuts and pecans.