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ALDER CAB: A SMART ALTERNATIVE TO SOFT MAPLE #1 COMMON



At first glance, Alder CAB and Soft Maple #1 Common appear comparable. Both allow heartwood and sapwood—but the appearance differs significantly. Alder shows minimal contrast, while Soft Maple exhibits much greater variation. Alder CAB is produced for casegoods manufacturing and similar applications, while Soft Maple #1 Common follows traditional production-based grading. Those differences becomes clear in manufacturing.

Similar Grades – Difference in Appearance

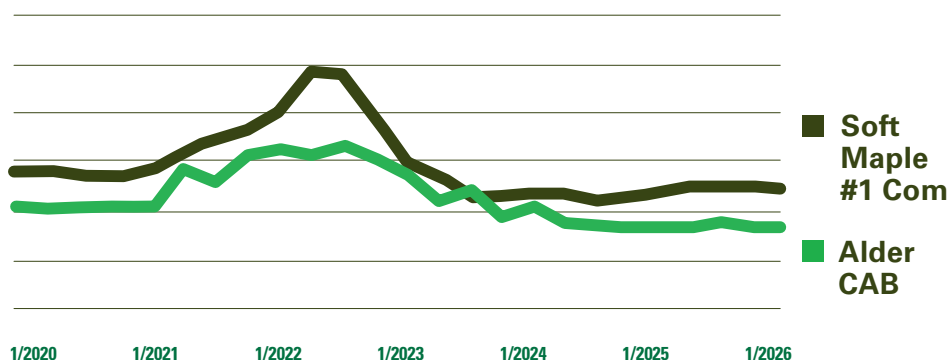
A major difference between the grades is source region and number of producers, which affect the variation in appearance and grade integrity. Alder CAB is sourced from a limited geography and only produced by a handful of suppliers, while Soft Maple can be sourced from the Northern and Eastern U.S. and is produced by hundreds of sawmills. When Soft Maple prices spike, the grade has a tendency to expand.

Grade Intent

	Alder CAB	Soft Maple #1 Com
Purpose	Casegoods and cabinet manufacturing	General manufacturing
Grade Structure	Color-protected with minimal color variation	Allows color variation from sap to heart
Production Focus	Predictable grade and color	More variation based on region, color and price

Price Trends

Soft Maple #1 Common Print vs NWH Alder CAB



© Crystal Cabinets



Alder CAB



Soft Maple #1 Com

Learn More About NWH Alder CAB



nwh.com/alder/cab



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YIELD WHERE IT MATTERS

Alder CAB

- Grade consistency and stability
- Less cutting and sorting required
- Efficient conversion into cabinet parts

Soft Maple #1 Common

- Requires cutting around color and defects
- Additional sorting often required
- Tendency to have more grade fluctuation



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Built for yield, Alder CAB cuts efficiently and keeps costs lower and more stable.

APPEARANCE & COLOR

Alder CAB

- Warm honey-brown color across the heart and sapwood
- Consistent tone across species
- Fine, even grain

Soft Maple #1 Common

- Contrast between sap and heartwood
- Tendency to have more appearance fluctuation
- Fine, even grain, with slightly more grain variation



Soft Maple



Alder

MACHINING & PRODUCTION EFFICIENCY

Characteristic	Alder CAB	Soft Maple #1 Common
Density	Medium-light	Medium
Janka Hardness	~590 lbf	~700–950 lbf
Machining	Excellent	Moderate

Soft Maple's higher density improves dent resistance but can increase machining resistance and tool wear. Alder's lighter density allows it to machine quickly, sand easily, and move efficiently through production lines.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOU

For casegoods manufacturers focused on production efficiency and appearance consistency, Alder CAB offers a smart alternative for Soft Maple #1 Common that you can depend on.

Alder CAB Advantages

- Faster machining and sanding
- Warm, consistent appearance
- Consistent source region and availability
- Efficient conversion into component parts