

## CONSUMER TRENDS

# How to Tell if You're Truly Buying American

NewsUSA

(NU) - Three million jobs.

That's the number supporters of the "Buy America" movement calculate could be created here at home if every U.S. household simply reallocated just 5 percent of its annual spending to products made on our soil.

This begs the question: Given all the horror stories about shoddy foreign goods – including Chinese drywall that so sickened homeowners across the nation that Congress just banned its importation – why aren't more companies trumpeting their "Made in the U.S.A." bona fides following a new study that would seem to show the movement's potential appeal at or above Lady Gaga levels?

"Patriotism is a strong consideration among U.S. consumers," the Boston Consulting Group found, with 93 percent of those surveyed saying they'd pay more for U.S.-made goods "in order to keep jobs" here.

(Heck, based on "quality" concerns alone, even some 60 percent of Chinese consumers in that same study said they'd shell out more yuan for our stuff.)

The problem is, outsourcing is now so prevalent in U.S. supply chains that consumers almost need forensic analysts to tell which companies offer American-made products. Among the names that have passed what we'll call The C.S.I. Test:

- GAF, North America's largest roofing manufacturer, based in Wayne, N.J. ([www.gaf.com](http://www.gaf.com))
- Nashville's Gibson Guitar Co.
- Wilson Footballs, based in Ada, Ohio
- Victory Motorcycles, based in Spirit Lake, Iowa



**If you want American-made goods, do some research.**

"Not only is it a point of pride for us to manufacture in the U.S., it ensures that our Lifetime Roofing System meets the absolute highest quality standards," says Bob Tafaro, president and CEO of GAF, which has more than 3,300 employees in 25 plants across the nation.

On the other hand, in what has to rank as one of the more infuriating moments in U.S. history, Ralph Lauren – as "iconic" an American brand as it gets – was threatened with boycotts last year when it turned out the uniforms it provided for our Olympic team were actually made in ... you guessed it: China.

All of that has led to a proliferation of web sites devoted to identifying true-blue American firms. One of the latest, [theAllAmericanHome.com](http://theAllAmericanHome.com), which was started by a father-and-son building team in Bozeman, Mont., urges building industry professionals to "Take the Five Percent Pledge" – that is, use 5 percent more made-in-America products – and includes a (to-date) short list of companies, including GAF, committed to manufacturing building products right here at home.