



Important Update regarding Cover Materials – Buckram and Alternatives

February 13, 2020

Dear Library Binding Customer,

Our industry and company have been using F Grade buckram as our primary cover material for decades. In fact, the product has been continually improved over the years in order to maximize its durability and strength.

Unfortunately, during the last 30 plus years of cover material advancement, the volume of Library Binding has declined nearly 90% nationally. These trends led to two realities. First, we've seen dramatic price increases in buckram, more than doubling in price since 2000. Second, one company became the sole manufacturer 20 years ago and as volume continued to decline, the manufacturing priority and importance of buckram diminished.

For these and other reasons, our supplier, LBS, and the library market have experienced shortages of the material, and long lead times in production runs of all colors. The current situation has the industry unable to obtain most buckram colors between now and late March.

As the issues with our F Grade buckram supply have intensified, LBS began to research alternatives. They have worked closely with one manufacturer to create a line of material called Library Summit™. It is a cover material that looks like buckram in order to minimize the change in appearance. We have successfully tested this material for its suitability and durability.

Attached you will find test results for Library Summit™ and a few other alternative cover material options. In the list of woven and non-woven cover material options, Library Summit™, manufactured by Neenah Corp, is the most durable.

Moving forward, LBS will be providing Library Summit™ in 8 colors that match 8 of the current buckram colors (list attached). Once bound and on the shelves, we believe you will be very pleased with the look and color match and notice almost no difference in the final appearance. We anticipate a 2 to 3 month period where you may see both products in use while the inventories of buckram diminish, and Library Summit™ expand.

Attached is a "FAQ" sheet that anticipates and, we hope, will answer many questions.

Please feel free to contact customer service any time. Additionally, if you would like to speak with any of us directly, we would be happy to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Owners, Management and Staff

HF Group, LLC

Attachments:

- FAQ & cover material test data
- Color Number Key
- LBS letter to customers

COVER MATERIAL COMPARISON

The following table shows test results for different cover materials.

COVER MATERIAL COMPARISON	Breaking Strength (lbs)		Tear Resistance		Abrasion Resistance
	Warp (pounds)	Fill (pounds)	Warp (grams)	Fill (grams)	Cycles
F-Grade Buckram (poly-cotton)	186	93	2400	1960	417
Library Summit™	70	40	550	600	450
Arrestox B	69	40	290	208	148
Advantage 9	43	34	200	248	342

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

F Grade buckram – Library Summit™

1. Why change cover material now?

Due to the manufacturer's recent production limitations, we have been forced to find an alternative cover material in order to continue the production of library binding. Given the reality of library binding in 2020, it was imperative that the industry develop a plan and new cover options. There have been discussions in the library community and binder groups for several years now about possible changes. LBS took that challenge and in 2018-2019, began to intensify its search for alternatives. Library Summit™ is the result of that effort.

2. Will buckram continue to be manufactured in the future?

It is possible that some buckram will continue to be manufactured. It is also possible that buckram as a product will end entirely. This has been a possibility for some time as the demand for buckram has experienced a meaningful decline. LBS and HF Group felt that it was our responsibility to have a back-up plan.

3. Will Library Summit™ look the same as buckram?

Neenah and LBS have produced 8 colors that look nearly identical to buckram in both color and finish.

4. Are the color numbers changing?

We do not anticipate any color number changes.

5. Does Library Summit™ meet the ANSI/NISO standard?

It does not. Library Summit™ does exceed the durability of all other currently available cover material options. There will need to be an update and amendment to the Standard in the coming months and that effort is already underway.

6. Is Library Summit™ less expensive than buckram? Will binding prices be adjusted?

Library Summit™ is slightly less expensive than F Grade buckram. However, we do not anticipate any binding price adjustments currently. Cover material cost is a minor cost component as labor is the costliest part of the manufacturing process. This change will bring more cost control and reliability of supply, both very much needed in 2020.

7. What must the library do differently with their binding orders?

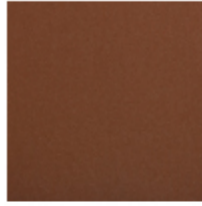
No changes to your bindery preparations will be necessary. The bindery will gradually make the change to Library Summit™ as our distributor, LBS exhausts its supply of buckram.

COLOR NUMBER KEY

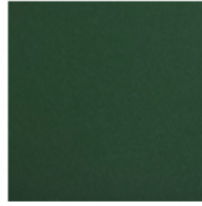
990/75
Black



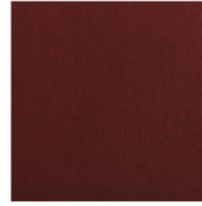
860/67
Brown



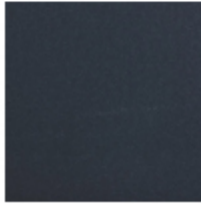
490/35
Dark Green



192/08
Maroon



598/48
Navy



182/02
Red



588/47
Royal Blue



798/63
Tan





February 13, 2020

Mr. Jay Fairfield
HF Group
8844 Mayfield Road
Chesterland, OH 44026

Dear Jay,

This is to inform you LBS is transitioning away from F-Grade Buckram to service the library binding market. Due to the changing needs of library bound volumes and the recent unpredictable supply of library buckram, along with its increasing cost, we explored the market and discovered a material that has the performance and appearance to meet today's needs for library binding. That material is Library Summit™. Summit is produced by Neenah, Inc.

Library Summit™ is a nylon-reinforced material with great strength characteristics and an appearance that matches traditional buckram to the point it is indistinguishable on the shelf.

We will be stocking 8 colors of Library Summit™ for immediate delivery. Traditional Summit is available in a wide variety of colors and embossing patterns. A yet to be determined number of F-Grade Buckram colors will continue to be stocked with other colors still available.

Best regards,

Joe Dunham

Senior Vice President & General Manager

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