

New Hampshire

Business Programs • Rural Energy for America Program

DCI Furniture: Champion of Sustainability

A philosophy graduate student at NYU, Henry Kober moved his family to the White Mountains of New Hampshire in 1975 to write his PhD thesis. But he had mouths to feed, so Henry set up shop at home and sold handmade furniture out of the barn to make ends meet. Soon enough, his little side business began to look like a full-time job, and before he knew it, Henry had signed his first big government contract (to make beds for the military).

45 years later, [DCI Sustainable Hardwood Furniture](#) still reflects the philosophical, thoughtful approach of its founder, practicing chain-of-custody certification to ensure that public lands are responsibly harvested for timber. In an effort to further his commitment to environmental stewardship, Kober set his sights on reducing energy costs. That's when he and partners, sons David and Amos, asked the USDA to help DCI purchase a biomass boiler for the company's Lisbon, NH headquarters.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grants help farmers, producers and rural small businesses improve energy efficiency, and integrate renewable energy systems into their operations. With \$250,000 from USDA Rural Development, Kober and sons will streamline and save by using wood waste from their sawmill to feed the boiler, thereby reducing fuel costs by roughly \$390,000!

Doing business the 'right' way means different things to different people. To Henry Kober and his family, it means making high-quality products, using and reusing resources responsibly and ethically, maximizing options, and asking for help along the way. With a variety of innovative business program funds available from USDA Rural Development, that help is never far away. For small businesses in need of an economic boost, the Rural Energy for America Program is an opportunity to overcome the challenges at hand.



Above: Henry Kober, center, and the Kober family, including sons and partners Amos, L, and David, R. Below: Henry and Amos Kober on the Pepperdine campus, site of a transformational DCI project.

Obligation Amount: \$250,000 REAP grant

Date of Obligation: July 23, 2020

Congressional District: Representative Kuster, District 2 NH; Senators Shaheen and Hassan

Impact: This \$250,000 Rural Energy for America Program grant will help DCI Sustainable Hardwood Furniture heat its headquarters with wood waster from its sawmill. The fuel energy savings are estimated to be roughly \$390,000.