

## **NATURAL CORK® Cork Underlayment Information**

Natural Cork® Underlayment's combine the best characteristics:

- Green Build sustainable product
- Fire Inhibitor
- Acoustic Insulator
- Comfort Underfoot
- Warmth
- Insect Resistant
- Durable
- Easy to install
- Resilient
- Mold/Mildew resistant

Available in both rolls and sheets, underlayment installs beneath other surface flooring to decrease noise transmission and impact sound. With ceramic tile, cork underlayment can also reduce stress-related cracking.

The basis for Natural Cork® underlayment is agglomerated sheet material produced mainly in Portugal and Spain. This material has the appearance of compressed granules, which is exactly what it is. A member of the beech family, Quercus Suber or the cork oak tree grows in coastal regions of the Mediterranean. Seven countries comprise the bulk of the area where cork oak will grow. These countries are Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia with the majority of the production occurring in Portugal and Spain. Relatively slow growing, cork trees survive harsh conditions in depleted soil that will often support little else of value. There are examples of cork oak trees that are 400 to 500 years old, though the average life expectancy would be 120 to 200 years.

Unlike most trees where primary value derives from the lumber of the trunk, Natural Cork® comes from the bark of the tree. This unusually thick bark made up of millions of tiny prism-shaped air pockets; create a resilient cushiony surface that offers several distinct advantages to the tree. Natural Cork® is a natural fire inhibitor so the bark provides protection from wildfires common to the region. An inherent waxy substance, suberin, serves as an insect repellent eliminating threat from many usual agricultural pests. In addition, the bark is regenerative, so its protective properties will grow back if damaged in any way.