

## CONNECTICUT FOOD ASSOCIATION

### “2010 SUSTAINABILITY AGENDA for the CONNECTICUT FOOD INDUSTRY”

Sustainability, environmental awareness, escalating energy costs, climate change, carbon footprints, and greenhouse gas initiatives are some of the important public policy issues confronting legislators, regulators, decision makers, and the business community. The Connecticut Food Association understands the leadership role its members must play in corporate social responsibility by creating public awareness and adopting programs that can generate environmental benefits as well as help reduce operational costs. The Connecticut Food Association defines sustainability as follows: Business and personal strategies and practices that promote the long-term well-being of the environment, society, and the financial stability of the Connecticut food industry.

The Association is embracing an intensified campaign to endorse sustainability programs that improve the environment, enhance public education, benefit communities in which we do business and create a model for other industries to emulate. We recognize the need to develop benchmarking platforms to measure success. Our members realize that working with state and local environmental agencies, energy policy leaders and the general public will enable us to reach our joint goals and create programs that serve our mutual environmental interests. We recognize that leading edge sustainability information and best practices are available through the Food Marketing Institute, environmental non-government groups (E-NGO's) and suppliers.

The Connecticut Food Association will continue to support, share, and/or explore the following points as the cornerstones of our sustainability platform:

#### **Promote 21<sup>st</sup> Century Recycling**

- Maintain [21stcenturyrecycling.org](http://21stcenturyrecycling.org) website which highlights the trends and benefits of single stream recycling.
- Showcase to the legislature that single stream recycling is a better and more comprehensive alternative to the further expansion of the bottle law.
- Partner with CRRA and DEP to promote the expansion of single stream recycling.
- Disseminate the results of single stream recycling efforts toward the goal of reducing solid waste in the state.
- Where beneficial, partner with Recycle Bank to institute incentive based programs to increase recycling rates.

#### **Continue to Promote Reinvigorated Recycling**

- Utilize our community-based stores and association to develop and communicate a newly branded recycling message to assist in raising recycling rates.
- On a store by store basis, work with community groups in support of environmental projects to include beach, parks, and playground cleanups, funding recycle bins for beaches, Earth Day supplies, showcasing products made from recycled plastic bags, etc.
- Develop partnerships with communities, NGOs, and states in improving litter control programs, solid waste reduction programs, and “best practices” in recycling.
- Work with local school systems to include curbside recycling lesson plans such as “Keep America Beautiful” as part of curriculum.
- Encourage recycling by placing plastic bag bins in stores for customer use.

- Encourage participation in “WasteWise” a voluntary partnership program sponsored by the EPA that provides business with promotional material, technical assistance and conducts workshops on solid waste reduction.
- Continue the reclamation of baled corrugated cardboard and plastic shrink wrap at store and distribution centers.
- Expand store level recycling efforts to include all recyclable glass,metals, plastics, and paper.
- Continue to promote recycling of paper at office level.
- Encourage the creation and utilization of training modules for store level management and sales associates on recycling best management practices.
- Develop a section within the Connecticut Food Retailers Sustainability Guidelines that establishes best management practices (PMPs) for recycling and waste disposal.

### **Shopping Bag Reduction/Recycling Initiative**

- Proactively publicize the leadership role that the food industry has performed in increasing the use of reusable bags
- Sell and promote the use of cloth/canvas bags for reuse.
- Continue the implementation of the CFA developed REACT program designed to increase the use of reusable bags and remind consumers to bring their own bags.
- Incentivize consumers to reuse plastic bags: 2-5 cent per bag re-use program.
- Promote the fact that plastic bags can be recycled, place recycle bins in visible locations for ease of consumers uses, return to distribution center or third party for conversion into new products such as Trex decking, benches, rulers, etc. Work with the American Chemical Council to educate and consumers and legislators.
- Continue to educate consumers and legislators on the environmental and economic consequences of banning plastic bags.
- Work with legislators to develop a statewide solution to increase the use of reusable bags in all retail outlets.

### **Expand Food Waste Composting/Elimination**

- Work with local communities to find sites for the composting of floral, baked goods, and produce that normally would have been discarded.
- Work with DEP to initiate legislation that would encourage commercial composting facilities to locate in CT.
- Expand the use of Produce Extractors. This device reduces produce trash weight by 22% by shredding and pressing liquids from fruits and vegetables that normally would have been thrown out whole, then offer for composting.
- Work with member companies to promote the use of food waste elimination systems and the conversion of food waste to energy.

### **Energy Efficiencies**

- Develop Connecticut Food Retailer Sustainability Guidelines with the goal of assisting CT supermarkets to become “Energy Star Efficient”.
- Conduct a facility wide energy audit on retail locations.
- Incorporate sustainable building practices into construction and renovation projects.
- Pursue LEED certification for new construction under the LEED V2009 New Construction and Major Renovations standards and further convert to LEED for Retail when available.
- Pursue LEED certification for existing buildings through LEED V2009 Operations and Maintenance standard for remodels and minor expansions/renovations.
- Continue to monitor and implement new technologies for store level energy efficiencies.

- Share cost saving success stories such as “dim the lights” programs, installation of energy efficient lighting, secondary- coolant refrigeration systems, night covers, and energy audit programs.
- Install refrigeration systems with leak detection sensors and non-ozone depleting compounds.
- Partner with a utility company to develop a “Supermarket Energy Efficiency Best Practices” model store and share with CFA members.
- Communicate and encourage the use of the new FMI Carbon Calculator which allows stores to calculate their carbon footprint, compare emissions baseline against peers, understand impact and explore potential savings.
- Create and operate a CFA interface mechanism that is designed to facilitate application processes associated with the acquisition of federal and state financial incentives/utility companies’ incentive monies for new and remodeled sustainable store construction
- Cohort with CL&P in their “Business Sustainability Challenge.”

### **Trucking Efficiencies**

- Encourage members to research and join, where appropriate, the EPA Climate Leaders, Green Chill, Green Power Partners, or Smart Way Transportation programs.
- Design trucks to allow drivers to go no faster than speed limit or install governors to better manage the use of diesel fuel. New fleet vehicles based should have route optimization software to further reduce VMT( vehicle miles traveled) ad greenhouse gas emissions.
- Recycle waste motor, transmission, and hydraulic oils and waste anti-freeze.
- Reduce the impact of trucking fleets and distribution network by using backhauling, hybrid technologies, bio-fuels, or other sustainable practices.

### **Expand Donations of Fresh Foods**

- Donate fresh dairy, meat, and bakery products to local food banks or food pantries in an effort to help those programs thrive and to reduce waste at store level.

### **Packaging Reduction**

- Work with trade association partners on national and state level to reduce packaging waste and communicate success stories, i.e. PET reduction in water bottles.
- Educate members and legislators on the work of the Sustainability Packaging Coalition to reduce packaging throughout the distribution channel.

### **Partner with State Agencies**

- Interact with the appropriate state agencies and their representatives to share ideas, identify objectives and determine projects for potential partnerships. Enhance key relationships.
- Serve on the CTDEP Solid Waste Advisory Committee and appropriate sub- committee on Increasing Source Reduction and Recycling Rates.
- Support the expansion of “Pay as you Throw” programs beyond the current towns.

### **Empower the CFA Environmental Committee**

- This “Sustainability” agenda will become the platform for the Committee.
- The Committee will be charged with formulating “Sustainability Guidelines for the CT food industry.
- The committee will educate and encourage CFA members to participate in various aspects of sound “sustainability” policies and make recommendations on sustainability, source reduction, recycling, composting, and environmental awareness.