



Sustainability Program

Smart companies know that sustainability is good for both the Earth and the bottom line. For example, reducing packaging, water management and improving transportation efficiency all help to minimize a company's environmental footprint, while lowering operating costs. To that end, our sustainability program focuses on the following areas:

1. Packaging Reduction
2. Organics
3. Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle
4. Suppliers
5. Fuel and Energy Efficiency
6. Water Conservation
7. Green Donations

Packaging Reduction

Packaging is among the largest sources of waste for any company. As such, our sustainability improvement team established a packaging reduction program that has reduced our packaging requirements by 14 percent in the past three years. In addition to lowering the volume of packaging materials used, we have also substituted many traditional plastic packages with biodegradable packaging materials, such as corn-based plastics.

Organics

Organic agriculture is often considered a subset of sustainable agriculture, which is the very reason our group of companies has invested so heavily in organics. Freshline is now a packer of a wide variety of organic items, including citrus, onions, tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage and peppers.

Freshline's sister company, Fresh Advancements, is a leader in Ontario's organic movement and is now fortunate to be the largest seller of organic produce within the Ontario Food Terminal.



Sustainability Program

Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle

Reduce, Reuse and Recycle has long been the motto of sustainability practitioners. It was also the motto of Freshline employees, who voluntarily drafted a “three R’s” program that was presented and eventually implemented by management. Today, this program diverts a quarter ton of waste away from landfills yearly.

Suppliers

We only partner with growers that have a proven history of good agricultural practices and each supplier is first audited to ensure they meet our stringent safety criteria. The following are minimum requirements that suppliers must meet:

- Irrigation water must undergo yearly microbiological testing by an independent laboratory. Smaller farms must undergo quarterly testing.
- Crops must be grown at a minimum distance from sources of animal waste.
- Fertilizers cannot contain raw manure and compost must be certified to be free of E.coli 0157:H7.
- Produce must be refrigerated within 3-4 hours of harvesting.
- All produce is inspected upon arriving at our warehouse and random samples are taken from each shipment for microbiological testing and quality assessment.

Fuel and Energy Efficiency

In late 2006 our Sustainability Improvement Team turned its attention to our fleet of delivery vehicles and came up with some simple methods to improve transportation efficiency. Today, our vehicles are routed by route optimization software and will even turn off automatically after five minutes of idle time. These two changes have reduced our CO² emissions per pound by one-quarter and lowered yearly fuel costs by \$50,000 and \$70,000 in 2007 and 2008, respectively.

Over this same period, we have also managed to significantly reduce energy usage in our offices and warehouse by 20 percent. This was achieved by embracing a plethora of energy reducing techniques, such as energy efficient lighting, improved insulation, programmable thermostats, and sensor light bulbs that automatically turn off when a room is empty.



Sustainability Program

Water Conservation

Keeping processed fruits and vegetables safe and fresh is a highly water intensive process. Cleaning produce and sanitizing equipment requires a significant amount of water, which we have managed to minimize via our Water Saving Program. Our modern processing facility was furnished with processing and washing equipment designed to optimize water usage without compromising safety. As of late 2007, we have reduced water use by 10 percent.

Green Donations

Future generations will benefit tremendously from the efforts we make today to minimize our environmental impact. To do our part, Freshline donated \$20,000 and \$25,000 in 2006 and 2007, respectively, to various environmental stewardship programs.