

# AGRICULTURAL WASTE REDUCTION



## Thurston County Solid Waste

Waste reduction, the combination of waste prevention and recycling efforts, makes good financial sense. In addition to financial advantages, waste prevention benefits the environment, benefits society, and your company establishes itself as a good community citizen, providing immeasurable, lasting rewards.

# Agricultural Waste Reduction

## TIPS FROM THURSTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE

**Waste reduction begins by understanding what is being purchased, how goods are used. It is then put to use by finding ways to eliminate, reduce, reuse, and recycle materials. A good strategy is to target the largest components in the waste stream, and implement the easy waste reduction steps first. Below are some ideas to help you identify waste reduction opportunities at your business.**

### WASTE PREVENTION

- Purchase items with recycled-content or refurbished parts. Pay attention to items used regularly like crates, cartons, bags, Gaylords and Gaylord liners, office and janitorial supplies. Many European and domestic plastics manufacturers are offering recycled-content crates. Ask vendors what they carry.
- Use re-refined petroleum products. These products are less harmful for the environment.
- Investigate using lube and hydraulic oils made from rapeseed oil and 100% vegetable oil; these products are often made in Sweden for the forest industry. They are biodegradable, non-toxic and have a higher rating for temperature and viscosity than petroleum products.
- Use food by-products as an animal feed (check with local authorities to see if a permit is required).
- Arrange for cooperative buying whenever possible.
- Request recycled-content corrugated cardboard that delivers excellent wet strength performance. Often packaging products with higher recycled content aren't as white, however purchasing them helps to assure that there will be a market for the cardboard that you recycle!
- Evaluate your bottling operations for opportunities to reduce bottle waste.
- Incorporate waste reduction into the planning process for special projects: Minimize discards from construction and demolition; plan to reuse materials and provide extra container capacity for recycling.

- If you use catering services, you may be able to negotiate a discount for using your own dishes. Encourage caterers to serve ‘family-style’ in reusable serving dishes.

## RECYCLING

### Common Recycled Content Products

- Bulb crates
- Flower cartons
- Check-out bags
- Consumer goods
- Gaylord totes
- Gaylord liners
- Janitorial supplies
- Lubrication
- Hydraulic oils
- Packaging
- Product packaging

### On-site Recycling

- Create a recycling system for material you want to collect. Establish collection areas, methods of transport, and times to pick up. Just as you have a recycling bin for your office paper indoors, think about the logistics for collecting items like flower trays or hydraulic oils.
- Paper, glass, metals, wood, fiber barrels, used automotive oil, oil filters and packaging can all be recycled or reused.

## COMPOSTING

- Contact your waste hauler about collection service for food scraps, food-solid paper, and yard debris that can be commercially composted.
- There are other options that an organization can look into other than large-scale commercial composting, here are a few:
  - Haul vegetative matter to a local farmer to be incorporated into small-scale composting.
  - On-site composting often is feasible and less costly than alternatives, depending on quantity and other logistics. Compost all organic wastes and use in landscaping

operations. Incorporate pomace and lees into vineyard solids, use as compost (do not store during winter months).

- Spent soil: Incorporate into composting operations
- Animal Product Waste: If there is a large quantity (such as fish dust) it can be sold for animal feed, actually earning additional income while cutting disposal costs.

## OUTREACH

### Internal

- Keep employees informed and involved – provide regular updates to employees and management about waste reduction efforts. Everyone likes to hear a good word, and employees need to know that their commitments help achieve program goals. Positive communication and employee recognition (via newsletters, email announcements, recognition events) are critical to long-term success of waste reduction programs.
- Allow people involved with your business a chance to suggest ways to reduce waste. Consider operating a suggestion system that offers recognition for good waste reduction ideas.
- Have an annual employee training workshop to keep employees informed about reuse and recycling policies and procedures.
- Train new employees. Let them know they are expected to use resources carefully and to fully participate in waste reduction programs. Explain how to prevent waste and how to recycle materials.

### External

- Let the public know about your waste reduction efforts. Send news releases about your efforts to local papers as well as trade and environmental publications.
- Join the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) WasteWise program. WasteWise is a free program open to businesses, schools, local governments, and non-profit organizations of all sizes and from all industry sectors. WasteWise helps to meet goals to reduce and recycle municipal solid waste and selected industrial wastes. By participating in WasteWise your business can:
  - Reduce purchasing and disposal costs.
  - Access a toll-free helpline for technical assistance.

- Receive an Annual Climate Profile describing greenhouse gas reduction.
- Obtain public recognition in WasteWise publications, case studies, and meetings.
- Network in member and regional forums.
- Receive WasteWise Awards that recognize outstanding achievements.
- Acquire outreach and educational materials.

**For more waste reduction ideas and assistance visit the “Business Waste Reduction” link of [www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org](http://www.ThurstonSolidWaste.org) or call (360) 867-2491.**