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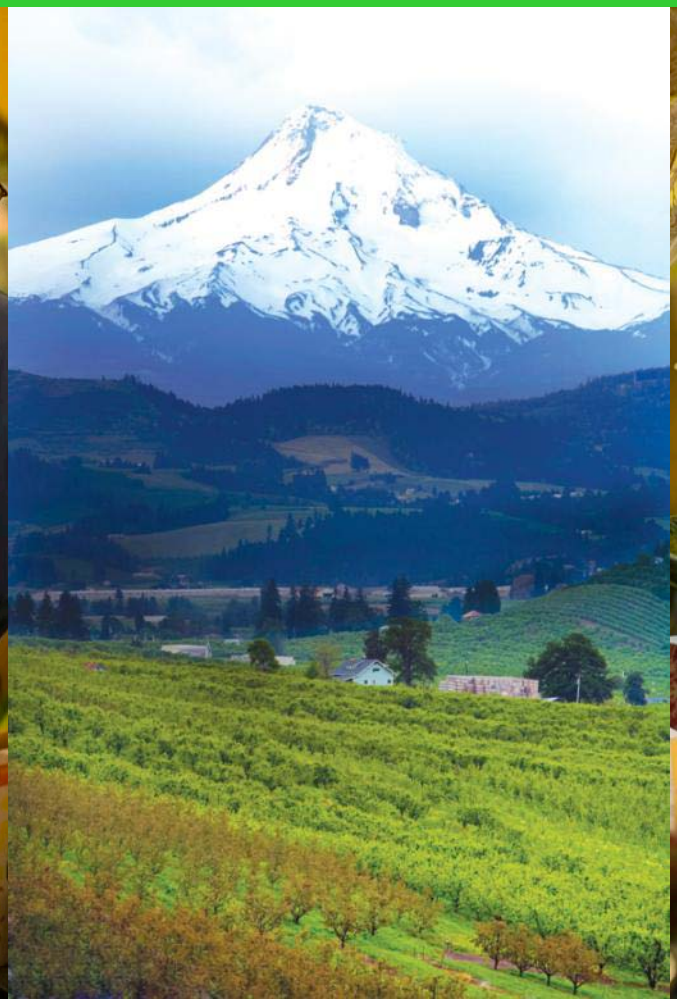
NEW SEASONS MARKET

Heather Schmidt Sustainability Manager



Food Waste
Prevention & Diversion

Our Story & System
How did we do it?
How do we know it worked?
What did we learn?
What are the impacts?

Who are We?

Friendly, neighborhood grocery

Locally owned & operated since 1999

Privately held

12 stores, 2,200 staff

Built on sustainable practices

Leadership and staff equally passionate about and committed to sustainability

Sustainable Business Model

- Regional food & farm partner
- 1/3 of product from local Home Grown region
- Local community partner
- 10% of after tax profits back to community
- Progressive health benefits
- Minimum wage starts at $10

Our System

Food Waste Recovery

Getting Started

- Began composting produce in 2003
- Started Green Teams in each store in 2007
- Followed with phased approach program
- Created comprehensive composting & recycling program & other practices

Components of Program

Prevention

Reduction

Donation

Diversion

Education

Food Waste Prevention & Reduction

- Local, direct distribution
- Strong local vendor and farmer relationships
- Cross-department support
- Value-added programs

Food Waste Donation

Food Bank partnerships at each store

Food and product donation to staff

Informal community partnerships

In 2010, donated estimated

1,040 tons of edible food

Food Waste Diversion

Compost infrastructure throughout

All stores, back of the house & customer side

Collection of deli grease, FOG, & meat rendering

Compost diversion increased
41% in first year

How did we do it?

Behind the Scenes

Green Teams

Set up Green Teams in each store

Represent departments, monthly meetings

Provides leadership, education, collaboration

Builds community relationships

Fosters ongoing sustainable programs

Phased Approach

- Focus on department with most impact
- Focus on-site waste first
- Get the infrastructure in place—give people the tools first
- Add other departments
- Develop materials and training

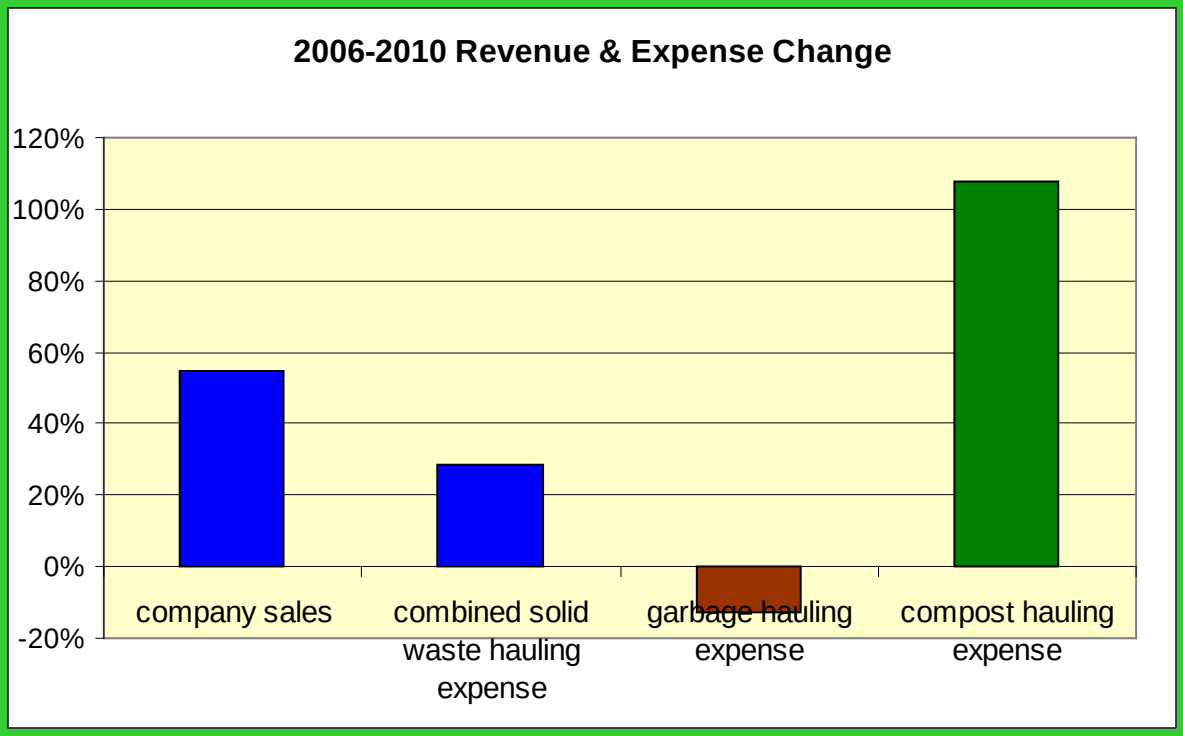
How do we know it worked?

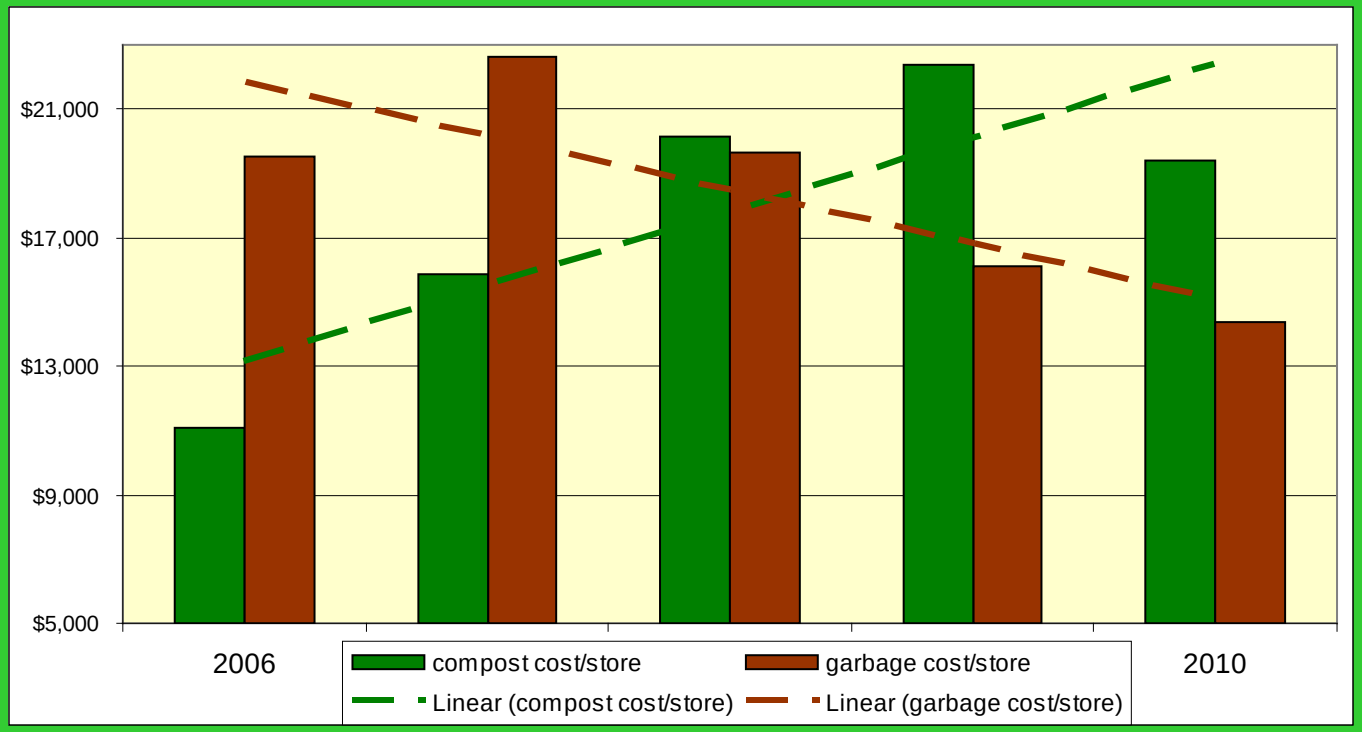
Tracking the progress

Increased Diversion

- Compost tonnage diversion increased 109%
- Last year we composted 2,346 tons (4,692,000 million pounds)

Created Cost Savings




$21,000
$17,000
$13,000
$9,000
$5,000
2006
2010
compost cost/store
garbage cost/store
Linear (compost cost/store)
Linear (garbage cost/store)

Engaged Staff

- Put us on a sustainable change continuum
- Created conversation buzz
- Ranked by staff as highest area of personal satisfaction

Recognized for Sustainability

What did we learn?

Best Practices

Create a waste to worth shift

Which…

Impacts upstream food waste prevention & reduction
Impacts downstream diversion
Impacts other sustainable practices

We Learned

Be practical
Adapt to make it work
Don’t try to be perfect
Go for the biggest impact
Ask questions
Avoid the police state
Think out of the box
Be persistent

Important Elements

Point person

Cohesion & consistency

Leadership

Passion

Tools and support

Communication

What are the impacts?

Global Local Individual

- Prevents pollution
- Produces nutrient-rich soil
- Enriches land
- Serves customers and community
- Provides hands-on opportunity for staff
- Staff retention & morale
- Creates cost savings

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