



## **-Grocery Stores- Waste Reduction Fact Sheet**

### **GENERAL TIPS**

- ◆ Refrain from stocking products which are over-packaged. Purchase products which have minimal packaging, recycled content in the packaging, or reusable or recyclable packaging. This includes packaging used to ship the product to your store.
- ◆ Give out bags for small purchases only on request.
- ◆ Install a "bulk" section for various foods (e.g. flour, candy, coffee, etc.).
- ◆ Promote, advertise, and inform your customers of your 3Rs program. Tell them what you are doing and why.
- ◆ Promote & support organic systems of agriculture.
- ◆ Implement a "first-in, first-out" inventory to reduce off-spec materials. If feasible many expired products can be reused by food banks, etc. ◆ Use non-toxic cleaners whenever possible.
- ◆ Ensure all staff are aware of and familiar with all company waste reduction programs, policies and objectives. Keep them informed. Set up a staff waste reduction committee.
- ◆ Install metal halide multivapour energy-efficient lighting.
- ◆ Install heat exchangers which capture excess heat from compressors and bakery ovens, and use that heat to preheat hot water.

*In order to achieve the target of at least 60% diversion of waste from disposal by 2008, the Province of Ontario has passed regulations requiring specific waste generators to conduct waste audits, develop waste reduction workplans and source separate recyclable materials. Details of Ontario's 3Rs Regulations and guides on audits and workplans can be found on the Ministry of the Environment's website, [www.ene.gov.on.ca/pic.htm](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/pic.htm).*

*Many companies have already instituted waste reduction programs knowing that the financial benefits to their business would be substantial. These benefits come in the form of reduced disposal charges, lower supply cost and an enhanced corporate image. In general, waste reduction is a means of achieving a higher degree of efficiency in your operation.*

*This fact sheet and others in the series have been developed by the Association of Municipal Recycling Coordinators (AMRC), and funded by the Province of Ontario, to assist you in your waste diversion efforts. The tips given here are by no means a complete list of possible reduction methods, but they will provide a solid basis for beginning a waste diversion program.*

- ◆ Contact the publishers of magazines and newspapers carried by the store. Many publishers will accept or buy back outdated issues for recycling.
- ◆ Print fliers on recycled paper. Smaller-sized fliers will decrease waste and costs.
- ◆ Investigate the feasibility of customers returning recyclable materials (e.g. plastic bags, flyers, etc).
- ◆ Offer a "depot" for customers to return their used plastic bags for recycling, or give a small refund to those customers who reuse their bags.
- ◆ Encourage residents to pick up cardboard boxes to reuse when moving.
- ◆ Purchase plastic bags with recycled content.
- ◆ Offer customers the opportunity to purchase durable reusable bags.
- ◆ Use closed freezers for product display.
- ◆ Contact local municipality, hauler or recycling company about setting up a recycling program for all blue box materials (e.g fine paper, cardboard, plastics, glass, wood, etc.). Or encourage employees to take blue box materials home.

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## BAKERY DEPARTMENT

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- ◆ Bake only what is needed. Do not over-bake to keep the shelves looking full.
- ◆ Purchase all materials in either bulk or reusable or recyclable containers (e.g. 50 kg kraft bags can be recycled with cardboard).
- ◆ Reduce the amount of packaging used in the department. Instead of individual packages, set up bins for rolls, muffins, etc. and allow customers to take what they need in reusable plastic bags.
- ◆ Often bakery waste is easily composted.

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## DELI DEPARTMENT

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- ◆ Improve storage in display counters. One idea is to replace incandescent lighting with lighting which does not create as much heat.
- ◆ Try to sell the meat-ends (mark down or reduce price) to divert this material from the garbage.
- ◆ Reduce the amount of meat that is pre-sliced.
- ◆ Do not order more than what is expected to sell.
- ◆ Collect scraps from the deli department for use in the manufacturing of animal feed and tallow.
- ◆ Reduce overpackaging.

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## MEAT DEPARTMENT

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- ◆ Keep less meat out for display, where feasible to do so, and more in cold storage to avoid spoilage.
- ◆ Collect scraps from the meat department for use in the manufacturing of animal feed and tallow.
- ◆ Purchase meats that are pre-trimmed and boneless. This will significantly reduce the waste coming from the meat department.
- ◆ Reduce overpackaging and eliminate "blood" sponges.

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## PRODUCE DEPARTMENT

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- ◆ Order only what is needed.
- ◆ Separate soiled and waxed cardboard from clean cardboard to decrease the risk of contaminating recyclable material.
- ◆ Keep less produce out for display, where feasible to do so, and more in cool storage.
- ◆ Trim less from incoming produce.
- ◆ Waste from the produce department is excellent composting material or animal feed. Investigate local markets in your area for this material, and/or advertise the availability of this waste to customers and local farmers. Contact the local municipality for a list of potential markets including centralized composting facilities.

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## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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*Ministry of the Environment  
Public Information Centre*  
1-800-565-4923  
picemail@ene.gov.on.ca  
www.ene.gov.on.ca/pic.htm

*Canadian Council of  
Grocery Distributors*  
1-877-666-2243  
www.ccgd.ca

*Ontario Waste Management  
Association (OWMA)*  
905-791-9500  
mgoulding@owma.org  
www.owma.org

*Association of Municipal  
Recycling Coordinators (AMRC)*  
519-823-1990  
amrc@amrc.ca  
www.amrc.ca

*Your Local Municipality*

*This publication is part of a series of Waste Reduction Fact sheets that are available from your local municipality. Additional Fact Sheets can be obtained on a variety of industrial, commercial and institutional sectors (automotive, commercial printing, etc.), and various business operations (e.g. offices, cafeterias and lunch rooms, etc.). Please contact your local municipality for more information.*