



U.S. Food Waste Challenge

Reduce, Recover, Recycle

Organization(s): The Wakefern Food Corp. Waste Reduction Program

City, State:

Website: <http://wakefern.shoprite.com/about-us/sustainability/>

What are the reduction, recovery or recycling activities?

From a small, struggling cooperative with eight members – all owners of their own grocery stores – Wakefern Food Corp. has grown into the largest retailer-owned cooperative in the United States. Founded in 1946, the cooperative is comprised of 48 members who today individually own and operate more than 250 supermarkets under the ShopRite banner in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware. In 1996, Wakefern introduced PriceRite stores, extending the company's reach into Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Today, there are 50 PriceRite stores in five states. As the merchandising and distribution arm of both ShopRite and PriceRite, Wakefern, together with its member companies, employ more than 50,000 people; making it one of the largest employers in New Jersey. In addition, Wakefern also distributes products to other supermarkets throughout the northeastern United States and Bermuda. Wakefern was recently named one of the Best Places to Work in NJ by NJBIZ Magazine. In 2011, Supermarket News gave Wakefern its Retail Excellence Award and The Griffin Report named Wakefern its Retailer of the Year.

Objective

Our objective is to work with our ShopRite member/owners and our corporate facilities to reduce waste by recycling, composting and food donations. We became a USEPA FRC endorser in 2012, and at that point, started the process of educating our members about the FRC program. As a cooperative, we consider each of our 48 members as separate organizations. Along with Wakefern owned and operated ShopRite Stores (SRS) and Price Rite, we have made a concerted effort to educate our 50 members and their organizations about the US EPA Food Recovery Program.

Activity 1

November 2013 Sustainability Summit - Every two years, our company has a Sustainability Summit. At that Summit, we will continue to educate our members about waste reduction practices as well as the USEPA/USDA WasteWise/Food Recovery Program (FRP).

Activity 2

Education via Committees - Our organization has several committees addressing focus areas. The Environmental Committee is comprised of 10 members and over 25 associates from the most pertinent Corporate Divisions (e.g., Corporate Communications, Engineering, Advertising, Marketing, Quality Assurance and Merchandise). We will continue to educate our members about waste reduction opportunities in this committee as well as others. To date two members have joined the FRP (15 stores) and two others are readying to join (11 stores). We will continue promoting the program throughout the coming years.

Activity 3

Associate Communication - Our Corporation has an internet portal reaching our 1, 500 Wakefern Associates. Each week educational pieces about our sustainability program are posted. Throughout the past year over 15 pieces covered waste reduction, composting, food donations, the benefits of the WasteWise/Food Recovery Program (FRP), and retail participation. Education on waste reduction will

continue in coming years.

Activity 4

Press Coverage/Social Media - When two of our members joined WasteWise and FRC, two press conferences were held and press releases completed and released to press in their geographic regions. We will do the same when subsequent members sign on. Our Facebook page will continue to highlight those efforts as members sign on.

Activity 5

Green Team Formation- In 2012 Wakefern created and distributed over 300 retail sustainability tool kits to each of our ShopRite and Price Rite stores. The kit was designed to help our Associates “go green” by providing resources and guidance for practical and innovative ways to make our stores more “sustainable.” It also allows them to engage with customers in an educated way. One section of the kit contains information about waste reduction and food recovery. That section also recommends and provides contact information on WasteWise and the Food Recovery Program. We will continue striving to form a green team at every store!

Activity 6

Customer Education/ShopRite Earth News- ShopRite publishes an annual environmental newsletter called ShopRite Earth News. Each of our 250 stores receive 1, 500 hard copies of the newsletter. It is also placed on www.shoprite.com for the entire year. For the last two years, we have highlighted our partnership with the US EPA’s WasteWise and the Food Recovery Challenge (FRC). We will continue to do so in our 2014 issue.