



COALITION *for* RESOURCE RECOVERY

GROCERS, FARMERS, BOX-MAKERS AND GLOBAL GREEN USA PARTNER TO DEVELOP AND PILOT RECYCLABLE PRODUCE BOXES

Inaugural Trial Held in Heart of CA's Growing Region in Celebration of Earth Day

April 19, 2012 – Santa Cruz, CA – Recyclable produce box trials commenced in honor of Earth Day at New Leaf Community Market's flagship store in Santa Cruz, California. The event took place in the heart of a major farming region for leafy greens, which are commonly packed in unrecyclable boxes. The produce was provided by local farm Lakeside Organic Gardens, and the latest in commercially available Fibre Box Association certified recyclable boxes were supplied by members of Global Green USA's Coalition for Resource Recovery (CoRR), Green Bay Packaging and Interstate Container.

Greens, vegetables, seafood and meats are often transported in paraffin-coated cardboard, generating 1.45 million tons of solid waste that must be landfilled or burned. If designed for recycling and recycled, retailers and restaurants could realize a net benefit of combined cost savings and revenue generation of \$200 million nationwide. CoRR has worked since 2008 to accelerate the industry adoption of recyclable alternative coated packaging and recycling it, which could reduce America's annual carbon emissions by 4.5 million mtCO_{2e}, equivalent to eliminating an entire coal-fired power plant.¹

The recyclable boxes were packed with iceberg lettuce, celery hearts, and broccoli at Lakeside Organic Gardens' Watsonville facility. The produce was cooled using a vacuum process, placed in humid storage, and delivered by truck to New Leaf. There, the boxes were inspected and unpacked, and some of the produce was used to make a fresh salad. As part of this pilot, a more intensive hydro-vacuum cooling process, commonly used to cool produce, was tested on Interstate Container's boxes for the first time with promising results.

Green Bay Packaging and Interstate Container are two of several major manufacturers of recyclable boxes for a variety of wet applications. "Grocers are increasingly aware of the savings from receiving recyclable boxes that can be put into the corrugated stream instead of trashed," said Paul Martin, Vice President and General Manager at Green Bay Packaging. Jeff Cormier, National Sales and Marketing Manager at Interstate Container, echoed these sentiments. "We want to give farmers a cost-neutral, recyclable box that lets them bring added value to retailers," he said. "Most importantly, the boxes must have the strength needed to protect the produce."

Lakeside Organic Gardens, a 2,000 acre, 100% organic farm based in Watsonville, was motivated to participate not only by the benefits to their customers, but as part of their overarching goal of promoting environmental stewardship. "Lakeside is committed to maximizing our responsible practices," said Caroline Hogue, Sales Manager. "Our customers want to know that we are saving resources and using renewable and recyclable products, and this project was a great way for us to go above and beyond by helping spread the word about the benefits of using recyclable packaging."

New Leaf Community Market, a local chain of grocery stores with 7 locations in the Central Coast region, hosted the event at their flagship store. "We are very excited to help move this

effort forward,” said Matt Landi, their Produce Manager. “Recyclable boxes have the potential to help us save money on trash fees, and they’re better for the environment than non-recyclable, wax-coated boxes. New Leaf has always supported doing what’s best for our community, and it is gratifying to partner with growers and box makers to facilitate the development of recyclable produce packaging.”

City representatives including Santa Cruz Mayor Don Lane and Lowell Hurst, Council Member and former Mayor of Watsonville, attended the event.

According to Lowell Hurst, “Sustainability is very important to the economic health of the agricultural community in Watsonville and recycling is a key part of it. We are encouraged by these innovations in recyclable boxes and local participation in facilitating their development.”

According to Annie White of Global Green USA and Director of CoRR, “Global Green has had great success in working with leaders in the poultry industry to transition to recyclable boxes. This demonstration is our first step toward developing solutions for the produce industry.” “We are delighted by the participation of Lakeside Organics and New Leaf Market in working with us to develop high-performing, cost-effective recyclable solutions,” said Lily Kelly, the event organizer and Program Associate at Global Green USA. “While there is still more work to be done to expand the number of recyclable products for wet applications, this is an excellent first step.”

The Coalition for Resource Recovery (www.thecorr.org) is an industry working group dedicated to generating business value by turning waste into assets. CoRR is a project of Global Green USA, a 501(c)3 organization and a national leader in advocating for smart solutions to global warming including green building for affordable housing, schools, cities and communities that save money, improve health and create green jobs.

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¹ The Fibre Box Association estimates that 5% of OCC is wax coated. EPA’s 2010 Solid Waste Facts and Figures, EPA WARM Tool and Greenhouse Gas Equivalencies Calculator were used to calculate potential greenhouse gas savings. Savings assumes 100% of the boxes and packaging generated is recycled. National restaurateur and grocers’ savings are based on a national average tipping fee of \$42.08 based on the 2006 data in BioCycle’s State of Garbage report. A spot market price of \$100/ton of OCC was assumed.