

# Waste Wise Farmers' Market

# HANDBOOK



**Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture**  
**One Ferry Bldg., Ste. 50, San Francisco, CA 94111**  
**info@cuesa.org / 415.291.3276**

**September 2008**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	1
Introduction .....	2
Background Information	
CUESA Markets & Programs .....	2
Ferry Building Operations & Services .....	3
City Policies & Services .....	4
FPFM Waste Management History .....	4
Making the Commitment, Obtaining Funding & Hiring a Coordinator .....	5
Creating & Operating Waste Wise Stations	
First Steps .....	6
Signage for the Waste Wise Stations .....	8
Staffing the Waste Wise Stations .....	10
Operating the Waste Wise Stations .....	13
Results of Using the Waste Wise Stations .....	14
Reducing Waste Generated by the Market	
Changing Food Service Ware and To-Go Packaging .....	15
Changing other Product Packaging .....	15
Eliminating Plastic Bags .....	16
Reducing the Number of Bags Used in the Market .....	19
Launching the New Program .....	20
Educating Market Shoppers .....	20
Next Steps .....	22
Appendix 1: Waste Wise Stations	
Appendix 2: Staffing & Training	
Appendix 3: Food Service Ware	
Appendix 4: Bag Options	
Appendix 5: Reusable Bag Options	
Appendix 6: Launch Schedule & Promotions	
Appendix 7: Educational Materials	

**Be Waste Wise: print only those pages you really need!**

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CUESA sincerely and gratefully thanks the following individuals, businesses and agencies for their financial and in-kind support, advice, and expertise in planning and implementation.

## *Project Funding:*

Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund  
San Francisco, CA  
[www.goldmanfund.org](http://www.goldmanfund.org)

## *Banner Production and In-Kind Waste Wise Station Construction Services:*

Sam Goldsmith  
Sign\*A\*Rama  
San Francisco, CA  
[sam@signaramasf.com](mailto:sam@signaramasf.com)

## *Reusable Bag Sponsorship:*

Google, Inc.  
Mountain View, CA  
[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

## *Graphic Designs:*

Charlie Walter  
Modern States Design  
San Francisco, CA  
[ctwalter@pacbell.net](mailto:ctwalter@pacbell.net)

## *In-Kind Bin Donations and Waste Auditing Services:*

Norcal Waste Systems, Inc.  
San Francisco, CA  
[www.norcalwaste.com](http://www.norcalwaste.com)

## *Project Development Advisors:*

Nicole Valverde  
(Formerly) Waste Reduction Specialist,  
Norcal Waste Systems, Inc.  
(Currently) Executive Assistant,  
Community Recycling & Resource Recovery  
Los Angeles, CA  
[nvalverde@communityrecycling.net](mailto:nvalverde@communityrecycling.net)

Golden Gate Recycling & Disposal Company  
San Francisco, CA  
[www.goldengatedisposal.com](http://www.goldengatedisposal.com)

## *Project Coordinator:*

Janice Sitton  
(Formerly) Good Green Graces  
(Currently) Environmental Services  
Department  
City of San Jose, CA  
[janice.sitton@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:janice.sitton@sanjoseca.gov)

Alex Dmitriev  
Commercial Recycling Assistant Coordinator  
Department of the Environment  
City of San Francisco, CA  
[www.sfenvironment.org](http://www.sfenvironment.org)

# INTRODUCTION

The Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture (CUESA) is a San Francisco nonprofit, founded in 1994, whose mission is to promote a sustainable food system through the operation of the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market and its educational programs. As defined in CUESA's Sustainable Agriculture Framework, a sustainable food system uses practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable, humane, and socially just. CUESA works to educate consumers about these practices and their food choices, and to encourage farmers and vendors to become more sustainable. Despite our mission, CUESA has not always operated the market itself in the most sustainable way possible. For example, waste audits conducted in October, 2007, and March, 2008, estimated that CUESA's markets generated over 35 tons of waste were being sent from CUESA's markets to the local landfill every year.

To rectify this situation, CUESA initiated efforts to more responsibly manage materials generated by and discarded at its programs and markets. Dubbed the Waste Wise Farmers' Market program, and launched on Earth Day, 2008, these new and still evolving policies and procedures have already reaped significant positive results.

**The goals of the Waste Wise Farmers' Market program are as follows:**

- **Diversion — to divert all the organic waste and recyclable materials discarded at the market away from landfills.**
- **Waste Reduction — to significantly reduce the amount of waste generated by the market, including plastic bags dispensed by market sellers.**
- **Education — to encourage shoppers and market sellers to reduce, reuse and recycle both at the market and beyond.**
- **Closing the Loop — to promote the use of post-consumer recycled products and compost by farmers and market shoppers.**

This handbook describes the planning process and implementation of CUESA's Waste Wise Farmers' Market program. In particular, this handbook focuses on the creation and management of Waste Wise Stations and efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate the use of plastic bags and non-recyclable or non-compostable packaging in our markets.

It is our hope that other markets, community events and public venues will be able to learn from our efforts. We encourage others to adopt, adapt and refine this program, and share their results so that we all may continue to improve.

If you would like further details about any of our efforts, please contact us at [info@cuesa.org](mailto:info@cuesa.org).



# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## CUESA Markets & Programs

The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market (FPFM) operates at the historic Ferry Building in downtown San Francisco year-round on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The markets range from as few as 20 sellers on a mid-winter Tuesday to over 100 sellers on a summer Saturday. Each market vendor creates a temporary booth for the day from which to sell their goods, and then breaks down their tents and tables to leave the area empty the rest of the week. Although it is difficult to take an exact count, it is estimated that over 25,000 visitors attend the markets weekly during peak season.

The FPFM also provides a venue for both active and passive education. The CUESA staff coordinates cooking demonstrations, market seller interviews, and other programs during most Saturday markets, and occasionally during Tuesday markets. Educational signage is provided for each seller's booth. CUESA also operates an Information Booth where staff and volunteers answer shoppers' questions, and distribute educational materials, and an Education Booth for produce tastings, educational exhibits and displays, and other special events. The staff also coordinates a wide variety of programs outside of the market, including farm tours, lectures and panel discussions, a weekly electronic newsletter, and a comprehensive website.

In addition, the market offers other services to customers. Parking validation, WIC & EBT (food stamp) services, and water are available at the Information Booth. From an adjacent booth, the staff operates a Veggie Valet service for shoppers, where they may store their purchases while they retrieve their cars from area lots. CUESA's Chef Pass program provides reserved adjacent street parking and the use of large rolling carts to chefs who purchase large volumes of produce for their businesses.



## **Ferry Building Operations & Services**

CUESA and its FPFM operate at the Ferry Building, which is on Port of San Francisco (city) property and is managed by Equity Office (a private property management company). The interior ground floor of the building operates as the Ferry Building MarketPlace, where over 40 small food shops and restaurants are open daily year-round. Although the MarketPlace is managed separately from the FPFM, there is a natural affinity for shoppers and opportunities for a variety of partnerships. CUESA is fortunate that there is a good waste management infrastructure in place at the building; the building installed compost and recycling compactors in 2007. However, audits have shown that until recently, recyclable and compostable materials were not being fully diverted and there was significant contamination in the compost and recycling waste streams.

## **City Policies & Services**

CUESA and the FPFM are fortunate to operate in a city like San Francisco, which is working hard to advance more responsible waste management practices. The City's Department of the Environment has taken a leadership role in developing, promoting and supporting greening initiatives and waste management ordinances.

The City promotes a color-coded bin system to collect and divert materials. Green bins are used to collect compostable materials, blue bins for recyclables, and black bins for other waste. Green bin waste is delivered to the Jepson Prairie composting facility outside the city (Vacaville), and the finished compost is then sold in bulk. Recyclables (blue bins) are sent to a local transfer station where they are sorted and then sent on to various (national and international) processing facilities for remanufacturing. Waste (black bins) is sent to the landfill. There are financial incentives for businesses that adopt and use this colored-coded three-bin system. Beginning on Earth Day (April 22), 2008, the city further simplified its recycling collection system. Because they have identified companies capable of repurposing a wider range of materials, they now accept more materials in the blue bins, including all non-compostable rigid plastics (such as coffee cup lids, clamshells, straws). This new system simplifies educational messages that explain what items are recyclable.

In November, 2006, the City enacted a Food Service Ware Ordinance requiring that all take-away food packaging be either compostable or recyclable. The ordinance took effect on June 1, 2007. The City provides businesses an extensive list of acceptable packaging options. In spring 2008, the City banned chain supermarkets and pharmacies from distributing plastic bags at the checkout line (plastic produce bags are still allowed). Although this ban does not yet apply to business like CUESA and its market sellers, CUESA plans to voluntarily comply with the ordinance and take it one step further by eliminating all plastic bags from its markets.

## **FPFM Waste Management History**

Prior to developing this Waste Wise Farmers' Market initiative, CUESA managed its on-site waste collection in the simplest manner possible. Staff placed up to twenty-four 45-gallon trash cans throughout the market, which were collected and emptied into the Ferry Building's larger

waste bins. Historically, FPFM sellers have been responsible for removing all their own trash from the site at the end of the day.



Prior to this initiative, 100% of the waste collected at the FPFM was being sent to the landfill; independent audits estimated this to be over 35 tons each year. In 2006, CUESA staff briefly attempted to collect waste, compost and recyclable materials in separate bins. Without signage, monitoring, and training, the containers were highly contaminated and staff had to sort through them at the end of the market. This time-consuming and unpleasant effort was soon abandoned.

Until the aforementioned Food Service Ware Ordinance was enacted, the majority of sellers offering meals on site (with a few sustainably-minded exceptions) had been using traditional plastic utensils and plastic or paper containers or plates. In 2007, CUESA worked with its prepared food sellers to make sure they were aware of the ordinance and to help them identify appropriate alternatives. Now all market sellers and CUESA programs are in compliance.

Most market sellers dispense plastic bags for customer use, although one or two offer alternatives such as compostable or paper bags. Sellers with pre-packaged items generally use plastic packaging.

### **Making the Commitment, Obtaining Funding & Hiring a Coordinator**

CUESA first expressed its commitment to creating a more waste wise market in its 2007 Education Plan, acknowledging that this effort would be as much about staff, market seller and market customer education as about developing a new operational approach.

Although CUESA would be able to include ongoing operational costs into its future annual budgets, it was recognized early on that the research, program development, initial supplies and implementation of this initiative would require significant start-up funds. CUESA received start-up grant funding from the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund and a sponsorship donation from Google, Inc. We also received in-kind donations of bins, planning advice and waste auditing services from Norcal Waste Systems, Inc., and construction help from Sign\*A\*Rama, plus planning advice from staff at the City of San Francisco Department of the Environment.

A portion of the grant funds were used to hire a Project Coordinator. Janice Sitton of Good Green Graces was hired to coordinate the development and implementation of this project, concluding with the kick-off celebration on Earth Day, 2008. CUESA education and operations staff also devoted many hours towards the planning and implementation of this project, but these efforts (and costs) were considered part of regular staff duties.

# CREATING & OPERATING WASTE WISE STATIONS

CUESA recognized that the biggest step in becoming more waste wise was to recycle and compost as much of the materials discarded onsite as possible. Research revealed that a growing number of public event venues around the country, and particularly in the Bay Area, had begun using a waste station model to collect and divert waste. A few other farmers' markets around the country (such as Boulder, CO, Ithaca, NY, and Santa Monica, CA) also use this approach. The waste station model typically includes separate bins for garbage, compost and/or recyclables, along with signage and in most instances, staffing.

CUESA decided that the waste station model (sometimes called recycling stations, eco stations, or in our case, the Waste Wise Stations) would be the best solution for the FPFM, and gathered feedback and suggestions from those around the country already implementing this concept. We also consulted with the City of San Francisco's Department of the Environment and our building's waste management company, Norcal Waste Systems, Inc. We recognized that creating an appropriate infrastructure would be critical and learned from our peers that public and seller education would be essential. We also believed that we had an opportunity to refine and add to the strategies used by these pioneers.

After much research, and trial and error, what follows is our recommended process for creating and operating Waste Wise Stations (WWS). We have included many of the important lessons we learned in this process, plus a few suggested alternatives, since we recognize that some of the services and resources we can access may not be available in other communities.

## FIRST STEPS

What are we collecting? How much will we collect? How many stations will we need? Where should they be located? These are some of the many questions to consider prior to developing a system of Waste Wise Stations.

### **Determine the volume of materials to be collected for each separate stream: compostables, recyclables, and garbage.**

- Conduct an audit of materials currently collected and estimate the percentages that could be separated as compost, recycling and waste.
  - An audit conducted by Norcal Waste Systems, our municipal waste management contractor, estimated that 80-90% of the materials being thrown away at our market could be composted; another 5-10% was recyclable, leaving less than 5% as true waste.
  - If such auditing services are not available through your own local hauler or government, you will need to conduct your own visual audit.

### **Secure recycling and composting services for the materials to be collected.**

- CUESA worked with Equity Office, our building management company, to ensure the use of their on-site compost and recycling compactors.
  - If no on-site services are available, seek these services directly from your local hauler or recycling center.

- If commercial composting is not available in your area, locate one or more farms willing to accept materials for composting and work with them to determine what materials they will accept.

### **Determine the number and placement of Waste Wise Stations (WWS) needed.**

- Based on the estimated volumes of materials to be collected, compute the number of WWS needed to handle that volume by material type.
  - CUESA determined it would need 5-7 Waste Wise Stations during its largest markets, and that there would be significantly more compost collected than other waste.
  - Because of staffing concerns, CUESA decided to begin with two stations on Tuesdays and five stations on Saturdays.
- Before deciding where to place the stations, we asked these questions: Where are the highest traffic areas? Where do shoppers sit down to eat prepared food at the market? Where were the highest volume waste bins located previously? Where are the fire lanes and what other safety or access requirements need to be accommodated? How can we place stations so that one is (ideally) visible from most areas of the market?
  - Based on this information, CUESA elected to locate two WWS in the front of the Ferry Building (on Tuesdays and Saturdays), and three WWS in the back of the Ferry Building along the side of the market where most of the prepared food stands are located. (on Saturdays only).
  - CUESA also decided to create A-frame signs with arrows directing customers to the nearest WWS in areas where stations were not clearly visible.



### **Decide what types of bins to use.**

- CUESA received a donation of wheeled and lidded bins from its local trash hauler that corresponded with the City's color-coded recycling, composting and waste program: green bins for compostables, blue for recycling, and black for waste. For consistency, it is recommended that you adopt the same color system used by your community.
  - If your community does not use a color-coded bin system, it is highly recommended you adopt your own color-coding system to visually reinforce the differences in the waste streams being collected.
  - Bins with closed lids require users to stop and make a decision prior to disposing of their waste versus open containers where waste can be thrown in indiscriminately by passersby.
- CUESA's bin sizes were based on estimated volumes to be collected, visually reinforcing the relative amounts anticipated to be collected.
  - CUESA selected 64-gallon green compost bins to correspond to the much larger percentage of those materials expected to be collected.

- 32-gallon blue recycling bins and black waste bins were chosen to correspond to the lower volume of these materials expected to be collected.
- There are multiple factors to consider when deciding whether to use bags to line the containers. Unlined collection bins require tipping (they must be emptied into another container without the use of bags) and they typically need to be rinsed after use. Filled bags can be very heavy, and tipping heavy bags can potentially cause spillage or worker injury. However, bags for lining bins are costly (specifically, the compostable biobags needed for compost bins), especially when analyzed against the cost of labor for rinsing bins. Furthermore, reducing the use of bags is a more waste wise practice.
  - CUESA decided to use unlined bins for compost and recycling collection, since the building's compactors had a lift for the containers. The trash bins were lined with turquoise bags, so they would be easily identified for auditing purposes.

## **SIGNAGE FOR THE WASTE WISE STATIONS**

We were advised that signage is a key element in waste diversion programs. Our research showed that there is currently a wide array of signage being used by other markets, event venues and municipalities promoting waste diversion. We evaluated many examples and decided that most were either too general for our use, too wordy, too small, or too visually confusing. We also noted that signage was not always conveniently located at the collection bins, being too low, too high, or even in the way. CUESA worked with a local graphic designer (Charlie Walter of Modern States Design) and a local sign manufacturer (Sam Goldsmith of Sign\*A\*Rama) to design more effective WWS signage. Our goal was to create signs and a sign mounting system that would be highly visible, easy to read and understand, and could be quickly and cheaply adapted as changes occurred.

**The following goals and criteria were used to develop our Waste Wise Station signage:**

- **Create a sign color scheme reflecting the City of San Francisco bin system that would be used in the market: green signs for compost, blue signs for recycling, black signs for waste.**
  - Using signs that match the colors of the corresponding collection bins visually reinforces the differences between the waste streams being collected.
- **Graphically represent the percentage of materials going into each stream.**
  - With a majority of our waste anticipated to be compostable items (our green bins), we wanted the green portion of the signage to dominate, again reinforcing the anticipated diversion rates.
- **Use action verbs whenever possible.**
  - We wanted to use phrases like “Compost It” instead of just “Compost” to reinforce that it is an active process.
  - Other markets prefer labels based on destinations, like “recycling” and “compost” and “landfill”
- **Use clear fonts and minimal text.**

- **Create a large permanent banner above each WWS that is visible from a distance.**
  - Because the stations are not at every turn in the market, and the site can be crowded, it was important to make the stations visible from a distance, with banners placed at least 8' high.
  
- **Create additional directional signs.**
  - Because of our limited number of stations, additional signage was needed to increase their visibility within the market.
  - Signs were made by reusing older A-frame signs and applying laminated paper arrows with Velcro (allowing flexibility in sign placement). These were strategically located to help shoppers find the nearest Waste Wise Station.
  
- **Create separate signs for compost, recycling and waste that can be adhered to the larger banner and updated/replaced easily and inexpensively as needed.**
  - We decided it was critical to include images of actual items from our markets to help customers choose the correct bin without having to read too much text. This also makes it easier for non-English speakers to learn how to sort items properly.
  - We wanted signs that would be easily adaptable for other sites by simply inserting different photos.
  - It was important that signs should be easy to update; they can be reprinted cheaply on site, laminated at a nearby copy center, and attached with commercial grade Velcro onto the permanent banners.
  - Signs are placed behind each container, affixed to the larger banners, and placed near average eye height.
    - The CUESA staff now believes it may also be necessary to place duplicate laminated signs on top of each closed bin to further reinforce the instructions.
  
- **Construct signage that is lightweight enough to move around easily, yet sturdy enough to withstand strong winds.**
  - We selected a meshed vinyl banner material that allows some wind passage.
  - The semicircular banners have a 2' sleeve around the arc through which 1" PVC pipe is inserted (like a tent pole). PVC was selected because it is strong but much lighter weight than metal and more flexible in the wind than wood.
    - Initially, the PVC frames were constructed in sections; however, several joints failed and broke in the strong winds that are common on our waterfront site. We replaced these with single pipes that now hold up to our site conditions.
  - Banner frames were initially inserted into metal pipe stands (pipe welded to a flat metal foot), which were weighted down with sand bags. However, they were still not heavy enough to avoid tipping over on our windy site.
  - Our final solution was to mount the metal pipe stands directly onto rolling carts, on which we can place the three collection bins. The carts and bins together provide the weight needed to prevent tipping.

- **Storing and Transporting the Signage and Collections Bins.**
  - As noted above, the banner frames are now mounted directly on rolling carts, into which we can place the three collection bins.
    - This also creates a whole self-contained Waste Wise Station system that can be easily wheeled into position. This system saves staff time and effort in placing and retrieving the stations across our large and sometimes difficult-to-access site.
  - A down side to these self-contained stations is that they require more than double the storage space than simply stacking round waste cans.

**Appendix 1 provides examples of the banners, signage, and cart system developed for the Waste Wise Stations, plus budget information, sources, and instructions for using or adapting our signs.**

## **STAFFING THE WASTE WISE STATIONS**

When we ask people to sort their materials into three separate bins instead of just tossing everything into one bin, we are asking them to change their habits. Habits are hard to break and color-coded bins and signage may not be enough. Customers are often in a hurry and don't read or even notice signage. Every market or event organizer we spoke with already using the waste station concept emphasized that it would not work well without monitors in place at each station. Here are some tips and the lessons we learned about staffing the stations.

- **Determine the number of monitors needed.**
  - Our original goal was to have at least one and ideally two volunteer monitors at each Waste Wise Station. Although our large Saturday footprint could have used more stations, we opted for five because we did not believe we could recruit enough volunteers to staff more stations than that on a continuing basis.
    - Managers of one or two-day special events often have an easier time recruiting sufficient numbers of volunteers (and volunteer rewards may include free admission to the event or event merchandise). However, we recognized early on that we faced a daunting task: needing at least two volunteer monitors on Tuesdays and five on Saturdays, every week for years and years to come.
- **Have a lead monitor.**
  - Our market operations staff does not have the time to recruit, train or supervise the ever-changing team of volunteer monitors, so it was important to create a new position (one we assigned the title of Waste Wise Coordinator) for this role.
  - Grant funding supported this new position initially, but CUESA made the commitment to provide ongoing funding for the position after recognizing its importance.
    - It may be possible to assign the lead role to a volunteer for a short-term event, but for ongoing activities like a weekly market, consistency of

leadership is needed. We decided that relying on pre-existing staff to train and coordinate ever-changing volunteers on an ongoing basis would ultimately not be as time or cost-effective as hiring a coordinator.

- **Recruiting volunteer monitors.**

- CUESA is fortunate to have a part-time Volunteer Coordinator who has taken the lead in recruiting monitors for this program.
  - In lieu of having this position, or in place of this person when they are away, the Waste Wise Coordinator can assume this role instead.
- We recruit volunteers and interns through our own website, weekly e-letter, fliers posted around town, and through postings on a variety of community and volunteer websites.
  - Postings on Craigslist ([craigslist.com](http://craigslist.com)) have been our most successful means of recruiting new volunteers.
  - Other sources include: The Volunteer Center ([thevolunteercenter.net](http://thevolunteercenter.net)); Volunteer Match ([volunteermatch.org](http://volunteermatch.org)); Barefoot Student ([barefootstudent.com](http://barefootstudent.com)); Do Something ([dosomething.org](http://dosomething.org)); UC Davis ([humancorps.ucdavis.edu/volunteers/](http://humancorps.ucdavis.edu/volunteers/)); and the Northern California Recycling Association ([ncrarecycles.org](http://ncrarecycles.org)).
  - Volunteer recruitment was easier at the beginning of this new initiative, because of the excitement surrounding the program, but became more challenging as time passed.
- Longer term, we will be expanding our relationship with New Door Ventures (NDV), a San Francisco nonprofit that provides job skills training and funds work experiences for at risk young adults. NDV has previously placed clients with us to work in other areas of market operations.
  - NDV clients will now also help when needed as Waste Station Monitors.
- Our volunteers work the entire market day (six hours on Saturdays, four on Tuesdays) with a 30-minute lunch break and restroom or market shopping breaks as needed. We would probably be able to recruit more volunteers if shifts were shorter, but we would then need to recruit twice as many volunteers. We may experiment with different shift lengths in the future.

- **Provide sufficient training & support.**

- As mentioned above, a primary duty of our Waste Wise Coordinator is to provide the ever-changing mix of volunteer monitors an overview of the program goals and their duties. Don't assume that your volunteers, no matter how interested they are in the issues, know how to properly distinguish compost and/or recyclables from other waste correctly.
  - CUESA asks first-time monitors to arrive 30 minutes before their shift so that there is time to be trained by the Waste Wise Coordinator.
- Training is generally conducted at a Waste Wise Station, but a quiet indoor location may be preferred for more in-depth training. Be sure to also provide a secured place for volunteers to store their personal belongings.
- Keep a variety of containers, bottles, plates and other materials from the market to use as examples when teaching new volunteers how to properly sort materials.

- Create additional materials that describe how compost and recycling are processed. Ask monitors to share this information; the more information customers are given, the more likely they are to become engaged in the program.
  - Provide gloves and/or Pikstiks (long handled grabbers), so monitors can remove and transfer materials that are disposed of incorrectly.
  - Reinforce that monitors need to stay at their assigned stations and be alert.
    - It only takes a moment for compost or recycling bins to be contaminated.
  - Be sure to provide restroom and other breaks.
  - We provide each volunteer a name tag, and loan them a Ferry Plaza Farmers Market apron to wear during their shift, both for protection, and to further identify them as authorized workers.
  - Our Waste Wise Coordinator rotates among our stations to distribute snacks, provide breaks, answer questions and boost morale.
  - We learned quickly that many visitors were interested in learning more about composting and recycling. Monitors now have small cards to hand out that list contact information for residential and commercial recycling and composting programs in San Francisco and other nearby communities.
- **Maintaining adequate WWS staffing — and what happens when you don't.**
    - As noted above, recruiting volunteer monitors has and will remain a difficult task, given the number of monitors needed to keep our stations staffed.
    - The first time that there were not enough volunteers to staff every WWS, we were forced into a new strategy. By accident, we discovered that we could adequately manage the stations without full staffing.
    - When there were unstaffed stations, our Waste Wise Coordinator began to cycle more frequently through the circuit of unstaffed stations. At each stop, the Waste Wise Coordinator would use a Pikstik to do a quick resorting of the bins to redeposit the waste properly.
    - A staffed station is the best way to keep waste sorted. However, we learned that, if checked frequently enough, it was possible to keep the waste properly sorted with a rotating monitor when full staffing was unavailable.
      - We believe this is due in part to the fact that our regular shoppers/visitors have become more aware of how to sort their waste in our three-bin system, and so there are fewer users needing reinforcement or help.
      - This reduced staffing approach will most likely not be successful at larger venues (where roaming staff may not be able to access heavily-used containers often enough), or at one-time or short term events where guests are not used to sorting their waste.

**Appendix 2 includes examples of the volunteer and market seller training materials, plus the Waste Wise Coordinator job description.**

## OPERATING THE WASTE WISE STATIONS

Here is the system CUESA has developed for operating the stations:

- **The CUESA Market Operations staff rolls the Waste Wise Station carts into their predetermined places in the market at the start of each day.**
- **The Waste Wise Coordinator greets and trains volunteer monitors prior to the start of each market, and they keep the stations staffed during the day.**
- **The Market Operations staff cycle through the stations regularly with extra empty bins and replace those that have filled up. They return the full bins to the collection site (in our case, the building's trash compactor room) and empty them into the proper compactor inside the building.**
  - Having extra bins is crucial to keeping the stations operating smoothly.
  - The Waste Wise Coordinator and monitors stay at the stations to help assist customers, rather than leaving their stations to empty bins.
- **If bins are filling up before the Market Operations staff makes their regularly scheduled rounds, the Waste Wise Coordinator contacts them by radio to note where pickup is needed.**
  - Each station is given a number, so that replacement needs can be quickly communicated: for example, “green bin for Station 1” or “blue and green bins for Station 3” can be called on the radio.
- **The Market Operations staff empties the bins one final time at the end of market. They then rinse out the unlined containers and roll the stations back into the designated storage area.**
  - One station is briefly relocated outside the building's trash room at the end of the market to allow market sellers a chance to dispose of waste they have collected at their stands before they leave for the day. The Waste Wise Coordinator staffs this last station to ensure that sellers sort their materials properly, while the Market Operations staff empties and cleans the other stations.
- **The Waste Wise Coordinator is responsible for quarterly audits of the waste streams so we can track our diversion volumes and rates.**
  - When audits are conducted, operations staff does not pick up bins on a regular basis. Instead, the Waste Wise Coordinator radios for pickup when it is needed, so that the volume of each bin can be recorded before it is replaced.

# RESULTS OF USING THE WASTE WISE STATIONS

The best way to measure the impact of our efforts is to compare waste audits from before and after the introduction of the Waste Wise Stations. Our goal was to divert at least 90% of the materials collected on site from our local landfill, a result we achieved. It is possible this rate may even increase slightly in the future as we work to eliminate non-compostable or recyclable packaging (as discussed in the next section). What we didn't anticipate was that total materials collected would also decrease.

There are likely several reasons why overall weights dropped after the introduction of the Waste Wise Stations. Our initial visual audits may have been off. Some site visitors may be using bins inside the building or on immediately adjacent properties rather than using our stations. There may be fewer shoppers on site because of the recent economic downturn. Some market sellers have recently changed, reduced or eliminated some packaging or to go containers. Educational efforts may be having a positive effect in encouraging shoppers to reduce and reuse rather than discard certain items.

## Collection and Diversion Rates

### Pre-Waste Wise Stations\*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Lbs/wk</i>	<i>Tons/yr</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
<b>Waste</b>	1,404.0	36.5	100.0%
<b>% Diverted from Landfill</b>		0.0	<b>0.0%</b>

### Post-Waste Wise Stations\*\*

<i>Category</i>	<i>Lbs/wk</i>	<i>Tons/yr</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
<b>Compost</b>	<b>697.0</b>	<b>18.1</b>	77.0%
<b>Recycling</b>	<b>118.2</b>	<b>3.1</b>	13.1%
<b>Waste</b>	89.4	2.3	9.9%
Total	904.6	23.5	100.0%
<b>% Diverted from Landfill</b>		21.2	<b>90.1%</b>

\* = Estimate based on a visual audit conducted by Norcal Waste Systems staff in March, 2008

\*\* = Estimate based on a weight audit conducted by CUESA staff in August, 2008

## **REDUCING WASTE GENERATED BY THE MARKET**

In order to ensure the highest diversion rate possible, both at our Waste Wise Stations and by consumers after they leave our site, we plan to reduce and ultimately eliminate the non-compostable or non-recyclable bags and packaging used throughout our markets. We will also simultaneously encourage shoppers to bring and reuse their own bags.

## **CHANGING FOOD SERVICE WARE AND TO-GO PACKAGING**

As noted in the previous section, a recent San Francisco ordinance now requires that all take-away food packaging be either compostable or recyclable.

**CUESA responded to this ordinance by including the following seller requirement beginning with our 2008 Market Rules & Policies (rules are updated annually):**

“All market sellers must comply with the San Francisco Food Service Ware Law to use compostable or recyclable food service ware, including containers, plates or trays, cups, cutlery, wraps, napkins, straws & stirrers. A city-provided list of acceptable materials and sources is attached, including permissible exemptions.”

Because our market sellers and culinary programs are in compliance with this law, we have already been able to reduce the amount of garbage generated by the market.

**Appendix 3 contains the San Francisco Food Service Ware Law, and the City’s list of acceptable or recommended materials and sources.**

## **CHANGING OTHER PRODUCT PACKAGING**

Beyond the food service ware now covered under the ordinance cited above, many FPFM sellers offer other pre-packaged items for sale, such as sealed bags of nuts or dried fruits. A future goal is to ensure that this packaging is also either returnable, recyclable or compostable.

The City’s list referenced above also includes appropriate options for most of these other products. We would like to have all our sellers use these alternative packaging materials. However, we believe it is important to provide plenty of time for market sellers to select and trial alternatives before committing to new packaging systems (especially ones that may be more expensive). We also recognize that some products (like raw meats) may still require plastic wrap for health and safety reasons. CUESA staff holds quarterly market seller meetings to give updates and gather feedback. A recent seller meeting provided an opportunity to start showing examples of the currently available alternative packaging options and to gather feedback regarding anticipated problems in switching over. Sellers were generally very supportive of our goals, but also wanted help in making the transition.

**We are requesting voluntary change initially before eventually requiring compliance, and so are including the following statement in our 2009 Market Rules & Policies (which go into effect February, 2009):**

“Sellers who use plastic packaging will be encouraged to reduce or minimize this use in 2009 and explore alternative packaging. CUESA will actively promote at its Information Booth and through its e-letter those sellers who are voluntarily complying with this transition. CUESA may consider introducing a ban on plastic packaging beginning in the 2010 season with exceptions as needed to comply with health and food safety laws.”

Finally, in assessing our market operations we quickly recognized that plastic water bottles were a significant part of our on-site waste stream, but one that could be easily reduced. Previously, CUESA staff distributed water in plastic bottles from the Information Booth. Now we keep a picnic-style water dispenser at the booth. Customers may refill their own bottles or take one of our compostable paper cups free of charge. Plastic drink bottles still enter the market, but our markets are no longer contributing to the nationwide overabundance of single-use disposable plastic bottles.



## **ELIMINATING PLASTIC BAGS**

Plastic bags are convenient, inexpensive and well-suited for weighing and storing produce, especially leafy vegetables. However, they are not recyclable within the City of San Francisco’s program, and so must be discarded as waste. The recent city ordinance banning the use of plastic bags does not currently extend to small businesses or operations such as our farmers’ markets. However, our goal is to voluntarily comply with this ban.

By taking a poll of the market sellers, CUESA estimated that more than 1,100,000 plastic bags were dispensed from its markets during 2007. Plastic bags were everywhere, and some shoppers would end up with as many as 10 to 15 bags each week after a visit to the market. According to national statistics, only 1% of these plastic bags will ever be recycled. Some might be used again during a subsequent market visit or to clean up after a pet, but most either end up in a landfill or wreak havoc on the Bay Area’s waterways and marine wildlife. Furthermore, if they get erroneously tossed into the recycling or compost bin, they can interfere with the recycling process or contaminate organic compost.

## **CHANGING THE MARKET RULES**

Recognizing that it will take time and coordination to make the switch from dispensing plastic bags, during the first year of our new Waste Wise Farmers Market program we encouraged sellers to not use plastic bags and encouraged customers to bring their own. For the second year of the program, we will be requiring it.

### **From our 2008 Market Rules & Policies:**

“All market sellers are encouraged to dispense compostable or recyclable bags in 2008; a CUESA-researched list of biodegradable bag sources will be provided on request. CUESA will promote at its Information Booth those sellers who are voluntarily complying with this transition. Please note that market sellers will be required to use compostable or recyclable bags beginning in 2009. CUESA is currently actively negotiating on group purchasing and/or subsidized access to these alternative bags.”

### **From our 2009 Market Rules & Policies:**

“Beginning February 1, 2009, all market sellers are required to dispense only bags that are fully compostable or recyclable within the City of San Francisco waste collection program. Examples include bio-bags, which are compostable, and paper bags, which are recyclable; however, plastic bags are not recyclable within the city system. Sellers may also distribute reusable fiber bags, and are encouraged to create incentives for shoppers to bring their own bags or containers. A CUESA-researched list of biodegradable and recyclable bag sources is being provided in your application packages or is available anytime upon request.”

## **IMPLEMENTING THE CHANGE**

We realize that it may be difficult or time consuming for market sellers to research, compare, and select alternate bags. That’s why CUESA is actively working to facilitate and support this transition. First, we are researching the ever-increasing variety of recyclable and compostable options available.

### **Appendix 4 summarizes some paper and compostable bag options, including costs.**

Which bags are best? The CUESA staff conducted a test in which they stored salad greens in the refrigerator in plastic, paper and biodegradable plastic bags. They learned that plastic bags kept the greens fresh for about a week, while the biodegradable bags kept them fresh for only a day. Greens stored in a paper bags wilted in less than a day. Plastic still works best, but is the least environmentally responsible choice. In a separate test, staff learned that salad greens stored in either a plastic salad spinner or sealed large plastic container also stayed fresh for one week.

Our next step (Autumn 2008) in eliminating plastic bags will be to work with market sellers to determine which alternatives will work best for their products. Paper may be a good and less

costly option for many market items, but per our test above, will not suffice for some products. Shoppers will then also need to be advised that some market products may need to be transferred to other containers at home.

Based on seller feedback and experiences with alternative products, we will recommend a few best options, and work with local distributors to ensure that market sellers can access these alternative bags at the best possible price.

But price is still an issue. Plastic bags are cheap, typically costing less than 2 cents per unit for the size of bags most commonly used in our market. Paper bags, which are readily recyclable (or compostable) and sometimes made from recycled materials, cost slightly more. They currently average around eight cents each for the size of bags typically used in our market. Compostable plastic bags are considerably more expensive, currently averaging twelve to sixteen cents for the size of bags used in our markets.

Who would bear the costs of these alternative bags? CUESA believes it should be the customer, not the seller, but that the customer needs to understand there are significant environmental benefits resulting from these additional costs. However, there is no consensus among the few sellers voluntarily using alternative bags as to how to address this issue. One seller using paper bags simply absorbs the cost while another seller using compostable bags charges customers an extra 25 cents per bag. So, how best to address these increased costs?

**Here are the options we are currently considering:**

- Sellers charge extra for the bags dispensed.
  - Computing extra fees may bog down the sales process, which can be challenging enough during a busy market. Many sellers round prices down to the nearest quarter-dollar, which significantly speeds up the process of giving change in a busy market. Adding in the price of a bag would require a change in their process.
  - Unless bag prices are uniform, customers may take bags from sellers with free or lower priced bag options to use at a seller's booth where the costs are higher; this is an unfortunate outcome we have already witnessed in our market with one seller who is charging for their compostable bags.
  - On the other hand, being charged extra for bags may serve as a strong incentive for customers to bring their own reusable or recycled bags. This would also reinforce the message that bags are a resource that has a value, not just a free, disposable convenience item.
  
- Sellers incorporate the cost of bags into their unit pricing.
  - This could result in uneven unit prices (\$3.15 versus \$3 per pound, for example) that would make it harder for those very few sellers who compute total prices manually (most sellers have digital scales).
  - The public may not understand why products cost more unless there is a disclaimer or explanation regarding the costs of the bags, such as "Produce at our

market will appear more expensive when compared to supermarkets that use cheap plastic bags”.

- Sellers absorb increased costs of dispensing alternative bags.
  - The sellers typically absorb the costs of plastic bags at two cents each, but it will be a much greater burden to absorb costlier paper or compostable bags.
- CUESA sells bags directly to shoppers so that sellers do not have to dispense them or include those costs in their business planning.
  - This would require CUESA to hire and manage additional staff (we currently do not manage any product sales) and find and secure storage space.
  - If bags are not available at the point of sale, some customers may become frustrated. On a crowded day, it can take several minutes to get from one end of the market to the other.
  - Those vendors selling at other markets may still need to supply their own bags for those other sites, and this would complicate their pricing strategies (and public perceptions of prices) across different markets.
  - If CUESA were selling paper bags and biodegradable bags, we could also sell durable, washable cotton produce bags and canvas shopping bags, helping reduce the number of bags consumed at the market.

CUESA has yet to decide which approach will be most effective, but we anticipate that any new system will include public education regarding the alternative bags and their costs. The next edition of this handbook will include updates as to which strategy or strategies have been adopted, including the effectiveness of and response to these changes.

## **REDUCING THE NUMBER OF BAGS USED IN THE MARKET**

In addition to eliminating the use of plastic bags (discussed in the previous section), we want to simultaneously work to encourage shoppers to think twice before taking any bag, and reuse bags when they can. We also hope they will seek out and shop with durable reusable bags.

Nationwide, inexpensive reusable bags are becoming readily available. CUESA wanted to encourage reuse by providing our regular market shoppers with these. As part of the kick-off celebration launching our Waste Wise Farmers Market program, we received corporate sponsorship that enabled us to distribute 10,000 reusable bags to our regular market shoppers. These bags featured text reinforcing our “reduce, reuse, recycle” messaging on one side, plus the market days and times and a list of reasons to shop at a farmers’ market on the other side.

Signage at our Information Booth reminds people to bring their own bags to the market. Several market sellers have similar signs at their stands encouraging customers to BYOB (bring your own bag).

**Appendix 5 summarizes a variety of reusable bag options, including costs.**

## **LAUNCHING THE NEW PROGRAM**

After months of research and planning, CUESA elected to unveil its new Waste Wise Farmers' Market program during Earth Week (April 22-26), 2008. The kickoff would primarily celebrate the introduction of the Waste Wise Stations, since some service ware changes had occurred previously, and bag and packaging changes would follow much later. Because of our need to practice setting the Waste Wise Stations up, switching them out, cleaning and placing them back into storage, they were actually introduced into the market one week before the launch celebration event.

For weeks preceding this launch date, articles appeared in our weekly e-letter and on our website, and announcements were posted in the markets preparing shoppers for the waste sorting changes that would soon be introduced.

In addition to unveiling our new Waste Wise Stations and giving away 10,000 free reusable shopping bags, CUESA created special educational displays and hosted other activities and partners.

**Appendix 6 includes the entire Kickoff Celebration Schedule of activities, plus examples of press releases and eletter articles also used to promote the launch of the Waste Wise Farmers Market program.**

## **EDUCATING MARKET SHOPPERS**

Our new Waste Wise Stations have good signage and adequate staffing to help visitors properly sort their waste. Market rules will first require sellers to dispense only compostable or recyclable bags, followed eventually by allowing only compostable or recyclable packaging. In addition to supporting our market sellers in making these changes, CUESA recognizes that we must simultaneously and continuously educate market shoppers. They need to understand why these new efforts are important, and what costs (both economic and environmental) are involved, in order to support our efforts.

CUESA has developed educational pieces, displays, games and articles to help educate shoppers about our Waste Wise Farmers Market program. Many of these were unveiled at the kickoff celebrations held Earth Week (April 22-26), 2008, during which we first began using our Waste Wise Stations. We've been working since to incorporate Waste Wise messaging into all of our education programs.

**Here is a summary of the education programs during the first six months of this new initiative:**

### **Education at the farmers' market**

- Waste Wise Station signage and monitors.

- Waste Wise discovery station display with interactive game and compost touch box.
- Information booth signage and handouts on the Waste Wise Farmers Market program.
  - Waste Wise Shopping Tips sheet.
  - Recycling Our Food handout.
- Restaurant Signage
  - We created signs specific to each restaurant/prepared food vendor selling in our market to reinforce where waste from their stall should be discarded (paper plates with food scraps in the green bin, glass bottles in the blue bin, etc.).
  - Further work needs to be done to ensure restaurants display these signs consistently.
- The use of compostable service ware is reinforced verbally at our culinary programs. We remind people that the forks, plates and cups all go in the green bins at the adjacent Waste Wise Station.

### **Waste Wise Farm Tour**

- CUESA organized a tour to the Jepson Prairie Organics facility, where organic materials from the green bin are turned into compost, and to a nearby farm that uses that facility's compost in their fields.

### **Virtual education**

- The Waste Wise webpage at [www.cuesa.org](http://www.cuesa.org) includes the following:
  - Program overview.
  - Information on recycling and composting.
  - Waste Wise web game (sort materials into the right bin; the answers are revealed when you mouse over each material).
  - Links to community resources.
  - Waste wise tips.
  - Slideshow from Waste Wise Farm Tour.
- CUESA writes and distributes a free weekly electronic newsletter to over 8,000 subscribers
  - Articles on recycling and composting (example articles in Appendix 7) preceded the launch of the program.
  - A new Waste Wise tip is included in the e-letter each week (these are later archived on our webpage).

**Appendix 7 provides examples of the educational exhibits, print pieces, activities, and other items used to promote, explain and reinforce our Waste Wise Farmers Market program.**

**You may reprint or use any of these materials. We only request that you cite CUESA as the source, link to our website for online uses, and notify us by email first at [info@cuesa.org](mailto:info@cuesa.org).**

## NEXT STEPS

As stated in the Introduction of this Handbook, the goals of this program are:

- Diversion — to divert all the organic waste and recyclable materials discarded at the market away from landfills.
- Waste Reduction — to significantly reduce the amount of waste generated by the market, including plastic bags dispensed by market sellers.
- Education — to encourage shoppers and market sellers to reduce, reuse and recycle both at the market and beyond.
- Closing the Loop — to promote the use of post-consumer recycled products and compost by farmers and market shoppers.

After five months of planning we were able to unveil the first stages of our new Waste Wise Farmers' Market program (the Waste Wise Stations) in late April, 2008. In the following five months we have been able to make refinements to the Waste Wise Stations, and have adopted forthcoming policy changes that will support additional waste wise strategies.

We have been successful in diverting all organic waste and recyclables collected at our Waste Wise Stations. We have also noticed a significant reduction in the weight of materials collected on site, although it is unclear how much of that is specifically due to our efforts. We have created extensive educational signs, articles, displays and other materials to reinforce waste wise strategies both in our markets and beyond.

One of our next steps will be to find suitable alternatives to plastic bags (per our new policy that goes into effect in February, 2009). This effort will also include some strategy to lessen or defer the market seller costs for these alternative products, along with extensive customer education to explain the environmental and economic costs associated with this new policy. This may be followed in 2010 with a new policy introducing a ban on plastic packaging except as needed to comply with health and food safety laws.

Another future step will be to better promote the use of post-consumer products (such as recycled bags) to market shoppers, along with continuing efforts to encourage shoppers to reduce and reuse bags and containers. We will also work to connect more farmers to sources of finished compost. Finally, we will also continue to create articles, fact sheets, displays, and other educational pieces reinforcing ongoing efforts and promoting and supporting future steps in becoming a Waste Wise Farmers' Market.

# **Appendix 1**

## **WASTE WISE STATIONS**

**Examples of the banners, signage, and cart system developed for the Waste Wise Stations, including budget and sources, plus instructions for using or adapting our signs**



The first version of the Waste Wise Stations used free-standing bins, and a segmented PVC frame with joints near where the banner attached. The joints broke in heavy winds and the entire banner would often blow over, as relying solely on the weight of the bins placed on top of the metal sleeves was not sufficient.





The revised Waste Wise Stations are now on rolling carts, which greatly eases set-up but increases storage space requirements. The PVC banner frame is one solid length so there are no weak joints to break in high winds. The metal sleeve is bolted to the cart base, so there is sufficient mass to keep the banners from blowing over. Bungee cords help stabilize the bins; however, we would eventually like a sturdier side barrier. A final improvement will be to put additional laminated signs on top of each bin to reinforce sorting options.





Signs are fastened with Velcro to the banners. This enables them to be replaced or updated easily. They can be printed and laminated at a local shop very inexpensively.

A-frame signs in the market direct shoppers to the closest Station. The arrows also attach with Velcro so they can be rearranged to point wherever needed.

# Be Waste Wise!

90% of the market waste in your hand  
can be composted. Compost it here!

RECYCLE IT

COMPOST IT

WASTE IT

Funding provided by  
Richard and Rhoda  
Goldman Fund

Ferry Plaza  
Farmers Market

# Be Waste Wise!

90% of the market waste in your hand can be composted. Compost it here!

## RECYCLE IT



Funding provided by  
Richard and Rhoda  
Goldman Fund

## COMPOST IT



## WASTE IT



Ferry Plaza  
Farmers Market



Fruit and Vegetable Scraps



Wooden Utensils



Oyster Shells



Napkins



Unfinished Food Scraps



Paper Coffee Cups with sleeves  
**NO LIDS!**



Meat & Bones  
(empty tin foil goes in blue bin)



Soiled Paper Products  
(including compostable fork)



Plastic Cup  
Lids &  
Straws



Plastic  
Utensils  
(Non-  
Compostable)



Glass  
Bottles



Tin Foil  
Without  
Food



Plastic  
Bottles



Plastic  
Containers



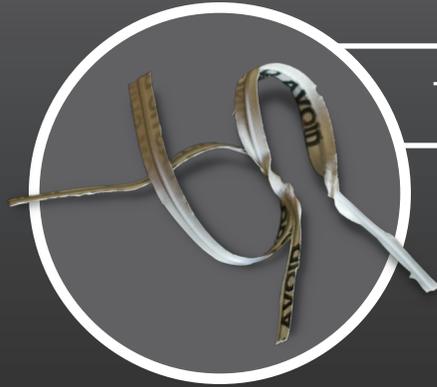
Aluminum  
Cans



Coffee  
Cup Lids  
(Black & White)



Potato Chip  
Bags



Twist Ties



Plastic Bags



Rubber  
Bands



Plastic  
Wrap

# Waste Wise Farmers' Market BUDGET

## Planning & Implementation Budget

### REVENUE

	Total
Corporate donation (Google, Inc.)	\$7,900.00
Grant funds (Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund)	\$17,000.00
In-kind Donation (waste bins from Norcal Waste Systems)	\$1,365.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$26,265.00</b>

### EXPENSES

	Total	Per Station
Waste Stations		
4 Rolling carts + shipping costs	\$1,137.20	\$284.30
Hardware (8 sets of poles, braces, PVC, Velcro, etc.)	\$2,075.27	\$259.41
7 Digital vinyl mesh banners + printing + sewing	\$2,115.00	\$302.14
Design of banners & signs + printing 17 sets of signs	\$2,910.00	\$171.18
Sign lamination- 17 sets of 3 signs each	\$716.21	\$42.13
Collection bins	\$1,365.00	\$170.63
PikStiks	\$120.00	\$12.00
<b>Total costs per completed Waste Station</b>		<b>\$1,241.78</b>

#### Directional signage for site

A-frame sign design	\$240.00
4 A-frame signs; printing & laminating	\$1,714.30

#### Reusable Bag Giveaway

Bag design	\$100.00
Bag production + shipping	\$7,900.00

#### Educational Displays & Kick-off Event Supplies

Display & game pieces printing & laminating	\$206.78
Film rental	\$10.00
Kick-off event special activities	\$250.00

#### Staffing\*

Project Coordinator- research, planning & implementation	\$4,512.50
Waste Wise Coordinator (April 19-August 23)	\$2,514.00

**TOTAL EXPENSES** **\$27,886.26**

Net **-\$1,621.26**

\* Note: this budget does not include the costs of CUESA operations and education staff who also worked to plan and implement this program; those efforts (and costs) were considered to be part of their regular staff duties.

## Anticipated Ongoing Operational Budget

### Staffing

Waste Wise Coordinator (12 months)	\$7,488.00
------------------------------------	------------

### Supplies & Equipment for 6 Stations + Backups

Replacement signs, banner & cart upkeep/repair	\$800.00
Bags for black waste bins	\$91.00

**Total Anticipated Annual Operating Expenses** **\$8,379.00**

Estimated operational cost per day per waste station **\$23.02**

## Waste Wise Station & Bag Specifications

<i>Item</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Cost/unit</i>
Rolling carts	Vicro Folding Chair Truck/Storage Cart (HC26)	CSN Chairs; <a href="http://www.csnchairs.com">www.csnchairs.com</a>	\$230.30
Semi-circle banners	41" tall X 69" wide Digital Vinyl Mesh with 2" sleeve	Sign*A*Rama; <a href="mailto:sales@signaramasf.com">sales@signaramasf.com</a>	\$235.00
Reusable shopping bags	NWPP Standard Shopping Bags; 15.5" x 12.5" x 8.5"	Green Bag Company; <a href="http://www.greenbag.info">www.greenbag.info</a>	\$0.79

## Using or Adapting our Banner or Signs

CUESA expended considerable effort and expense in designing the banners and signs for the Waste Wise Stations. It is our hope that these resources can be either used as designed or easily adapted by others creating waste stations.

Therefore, you may reprint and reproduce our signs and banners as designed at any time. However, we ask that you notify us at [info@cuesa.org](mailto:info@cuesa.org) so that we may track their use by others.

If you would like to adapt these signs, perhaps by changing photos to more specifically reflect items at your own site, or to obtain the files in different formats or sizes, we ask you to contact our graphic designer (listed below), who will be able to provide you a bid for services for amending these basic items.

Graphic Designer: Charlie Walter, Modern States Design  
[ctwalter@pacbell.net](mailto:ctwalter@pacbell.net)

# **Appendix 2**

## **STAFFING & TRAINING**

**Examples of market seller and volunteer monitor training materials, plus Waste Wise Coordinator job description**

## **Information Provided During Waste Wise Farmers' Market Program Introductory Meeting for Market Sellers, March 15, 2008**

### **Why is CUESA launching a Waste Wise program?**

- An estimated 90% of materials discarded at market could be composted, but is going to landfill instead.
- When food scraps go to landfill, they produce methane, which is 23 times stronger than CO<sub>2</sub>.
- CUESA is committed to sustainable agriculture – would rather capture these food scraps and materials and make them available for reuse to grow foods.
- Opportunity to educate public regarding benefits of closing the food loop.
- A desire to reduce disposable products, including plastic bags and one-use containers. Phase out of plastic bags will begin in 2009, and CUESA needs your help to do this.
- Market shoppers are hungry for it.

### **What will the Waste Wise program include?**

- New Waste Wise Stations with three bins: one each for compost, recycling and waste.
- Educational materials highlighting the lifecycle of food from scraps to compost to food.
- Tips for shoppers regarding how to purchase and store food in reusable containers.
- Reusable bag give-away (10,000 bags).
- Educational, fun activities including bag parade, slide show of recycled art, screening of *The Story of Stuff*, etc., as part of the Kickoff Celebration.
- Resource guide for other farmers' markets interested in launching compost & recycling collection.
- Potential program to acknowledge sellers who use only compostable packaging.

### **What will the new WW program affect market sellers?**

- Sellers have the ability to make or break this program based on how food is packaged.
- Per the Food Ware ordinance, anyone selling food in SF must use compostable ware that is labeled appropriately.
- All sellers, even those not serving ready-to-eat food, are encouraged to use compostable or recyclable products.
- Once program is up and running, sellers who keep their compost separate from other waste may be allowed to leave compost in market compost compactor instead of hauling this out. Check with Staff for more information. For now, sellers should not put their waste or materials in the consumer bins; we will add this step later after we refine our collection systems.

### **CUESA wants to eliminate plastic bags and single use containers used at the market. Here are some ideas to help you reduce plastic and single use containers.**

- Keep plastic bags out of reach.
- Don't offer a bag right away.
- Ask, "Did you bring your own bag? Did you bring a reusable container?"
- Sell in bulk versus pre-packaged goods.
- Use a lightweight plastic container, basket or reusable bag to weigh produce.
- Reusable bags and/or containers are best option.
- Start charging for bags to encourage reuse OR offer discount for those who bring their own bag/container.
- Offer tips to customers on how to store produce without plastic bags.
- Reducing the need for plastic bags will ultimately save you money, and do the environment and marine animals a world of good.

### **Reviewed compostable serviceware products and labeling requirements.**

# Waste Wise Volunteer Training

Volunteers are asked to report 30 minutes before their shift. The Waste Wise Coordinator should present the following training:

- Overview of the Waste Wise Farmers Market program
  - Purpose of program (properly divert all waste deposited at the market and educate visitors)
  - Why it was implemented (i.e., waste audits and customer/seller requests)
  - How much waste is being diverted from the landfill
  - Role of volunteers (educate guests, help them divert their waste; re-sort waste not properly discarded)
  - Location and arrangement of Waste Wise Stations
- Overview of market layout and other site resources
  - Location of Information Booth, Education Booth, & Veggie Valet Booth
  - Location of restrooms, bank machines, etc
- Specifics of what can and cannot be recycled or composted
  - Best to show actual examples of items typically discarded at the market
  - Review the helpful signage at each station
  - Compost all food waste
  - Recycle all/most plastics, glass, aluminum, tin
  - Utensils – how to tell the difference between compostable and plastic
  - Paper products – compost all paper products that have touched food
  - PLA (polylactic acid) containers – how to identify
  - Dirty foil can't be recycled
  - Items made of mixed materials can't be recycled or composted
  - Review the City of San Francisco's new plastics ordinance
  - Explain why plastic bags can't be recycled (they get caught in sorting machinery)
- Important reminders
  - Keep bin lids closed so contamination doesn't happen while you're not watching
  - Stand to the side of the bins so visitors can see and read the signage
  - Don't leave Pikstiks unattended; they are coveted by scavengers and others
  - How to assist shoppers politely regarding the removal of coffee cup lids, cold drink lids
  - Thank people for bringing reusable bags
  - Take the time to educate visitors about as to why they can or can't recycle or compost items
  - Dealing with scavengers; ask them to come back later to claim bottles, etc., but let them scavenge if they become agitated and then notify CUESA staff
- Other details
  - Assign break and relief schedules
  - Hand out Pikstiks, gloves, Resource Info Cards (to give out as needed); explain where and when to turn these items back in
  - Review how to close out the stations at the end of the day (wait for Staff to pick up bins, so they are not left unattended)
  - Escort volunteers to their stations
  - Help them re-sort any items not properly discarded (serves as a review of what goes where)
- Wrap up
  - Thank the volunteers for their work on our behalf

## **Waste Wise Coordinator Job Description**

The Waste Wise Coordinator will be responsible for teaching market shoppers to properly sort compostables and recyclables and managing volunteer Waste Wise Station monitors at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. The Coordinator will train volunteers, assign work stations and break schedules, coordinate with the market operations team, and manage and support volunteers throughout the day. The Coordinator will serve as a Waste Wise Station monitor during volunteer breaks and on days of incomplete volunteer coverage. He/she will also rotate between unstaffed Waste Wise stations as needed to sort and manage materials. He/she will oversee general maintenance of the Waste Wise Stations and conduct occasional audits of discarded materials. The Waste Wise Coordinator should be passionate about recycling and composting and interested in sharing this information with others. Training will be provided. Hours are generally 9:30-2:30 on Tuesdays and 7:30 to 2:30 on Saturdays. This position reports to CUESA's Assistant Director of Operations.

# **Appendix 3**

## **FOOD SERVICE WARE**

**San Francisco Food Service Ware law, plus the City's  
list of recommended service ware materials and sources**



OFFICE OF THE  
CITY ADMINISTRATOR



SF Environment

## New Law Promotes Healthier San Francisco and Can Improve the Bottom-Line for Restaurants and Food Vendors

**Effective June 1, 2007, food vendors and restaurants in San Francisco must use compostable or recyclable to-go containers. Polystyrene foam (Styrofoam™) disposable food service ware can no longer be used for food prepared in San Francisco.**



There are many food service ware alternatives that can be composted or recycled by businesses or residents that can help reduce their trash volumes and service costs. Thousands of San Francisco restaurants and other businesses are recycling and participating in the food scrap and compostables collection program and as a result are getting discounts of up to 75% off their garbage service costs. Residents also have access to composting

and recycling collection services and can put compostable or recyclable food service ware in their green or blue carts.

San Francisco Department of the Environment (SF Environment) is available to assist businesses with finding suitable food service ware and can provide on-site training and assistance to participate in the recycling and food scrap and compostables collection programs.

### Examples of Acceptable Food Service Ware:



For more information or to request assistance, visit [SFEnvironment.org/foodservice](http://SFEnvironment.org/foodservice) or call **(415) 355-3700**, or **City's Customer Service 3-1-1**

**SFEnvironment Our home. Our city. Our planet.** SF Environment is a department of the City and County of San Francisco.



Printed on 100% Post Consumer Recycled Paper

# What You Need To Know About New Food Service Ware Law

## What are the requirements of the new food service ware law?

- San Francisco food vendors are prohibited from using polystyrene foam, otherwise known as Styrofoam™, food service ware for food prepared and served in San Francisco, with no exceptions.
- All other disposable food service ware for food prepared and served in San Francisco, must be compostable or recyclable unless there is no suitable product that is within 15% of the cost of non-compostable or non-recyclable alternatives. (There is no cost exemption for Styrofoam™).

## Who has to follow the new food service ware law?

All San Francisco food vendors selling food prepared and served in San Francisco must use compostable or recyclable food service ware. Restaurants, delis, fast food establishments, vendors at fairs, food trucks, and all City facilities and contractors must follow this law.

## What are the penalties for non-compliance?

Violations may result in fines: 1st time = warning, 2nd time = \$100, 3rd time = \$200, 4th or more time = \$500. Enforcement is by the City administrator and will be in part complaint-driven, meaning your customers may notify the City of violations, by calling (415) 554-4851.

## What is wrong with polystyrene foam (Styrofoam™)?

Made from oil, polystyrene foam is non-renewable, non-biodegradable, and non-recyclable. Polystyrene foam food service ware ends up in landfills, waterways or the ocean. It can break into pieces, which are often mistaken for food and ingested by marine animals, birds, and fish. Medical studies suggest that chemicals in polystyrene foam can cause cancer and can leach into food or drinks.

## What are approved food service ware products?

### Compostable products include:

- Paper or other plant fiber, such as from sugarcane, rice, or bamboo. Polyethylene film coating on paper is currently accepted, but not any foam coating.
- Corn, soy, potato or other plant starch based bio-plastics, such as "PLA" clear plastic, that are labeled as "compostable" and meet compostability standards (ASTM D6400). These products should be marked with a green band, stripe or sticker to allow compostable identification by the compostables collector and processor.

These products are described at [SFEnvironment.org/foodservice](https://www.sfeenvironment.org/foodservice) or call (415) 355-3700 to request product list.

### Recyclable products include:

- Aluminum foil or trays and   and  plastic containers and lids.

## Where can alternative food service ware products be purchased?

Ask your current supplier about products that meet the City's new requirements. Suppliers for compostable and recyclable products can be found at [SFEnvironment.org/foodservice](https://www.sfeenvironment.org/foodservice) or call (415) 355-3700 to request list of suppliers.

## What can you do to reduce food service ware waste?

- Allow and encourage customers to bring their own mugs or reusable to-go containers for take-out use and offer a discount when customers bring their own food service ware.
- Charge customers a fee to cover any additional costs for disposable take-out containers.
- Use reusable service ware instead of disposable ones for eat-in customers.

For more information please visit [SFEnvironment.org](https://www.sfeenvironment.org) or call (415) 355-3700, or City's Customer Service 3-1-1

**SFEnvironment Our home. Our city. Our planet.** SF Environment is a department of the City and County of San Francisco.

# Distributors of Compostable or Recyclable Food Ware



**SF Environment**

**Our home. Our city. Our planet.**  
 SFEnvironment.org • (415) 355-3700  
 A Department of the City and County of San Francisco

Distributors	Contact & Phone	Email	Website	hinged, clamshell or lidded deli to go containers	Folded to-go container boxes	hot cups / lids	cold cups & lids	cutlery	plates	bowls	straws	trays, pie shells	bags
Access Group	Chris Matson (510) 567-1000	CMatson@accessgroupnca.com	<a href="http://naturesplastic.wilkinsonindustries.com/">http://naturesplastic.wilkinsonindustries.com/</a>	PLA			PLA		F, P	F, P		A, PLA	YES
American Paper & Plastic Inc	Larry Morris (877) 255-7198 (626) 444-0000	<a href="mailto:larry@appinc.com">larry@appinc.com</a> , <a href="mailto:info@appinc.com">info@appinc.com</a>	<a href="http://www.appinc.com">www.appinc.com</a>	A, PLA		P, EP	PLA	C	P, F	P, F	C	A, P	YES
Arrow Tableware	Carpio Lee (650)871-8226	<a href="mailto:carpiolee@arrowtableware.com">carpiolee@arrowtableware.com</a>	<a href="http://www.arrowtableware.com">www.arrowtableware.com</a>	F		F	F		F	F		F	
Biodegradable FoodService	Kevin Duffy (541) 593-2191 (503)810-5707	<a href="mailto:kevinD@bdfs.net">kevinD@bdfs.net</a>	<a href="http://www.bdfs.net">www.bdfs.net</a>	F, PLA		P, F, PO, FA	PLA, BA	PO, BA	F, BA	F, BA		F, PO, BA	YES
BiRite	Robert Durkin 415-656-0187 x331	<a href="mailto:durnkin@BiRite.com">durnkin@BiRite.com</a>	<a href="http://www.BiRite.com">www.BiRite.com</a>	P, PLA	P	P	PLA		P	P			
Cash & Carry	Mario Gavidia (415) 836-9296	<a href="mailto:cc570@smartandfinal.com">cc570@smartandfinal.com</a>	<a href="http://www.smartandfinal.com/">http://www.smartandfinal.com/</a>	P, PLA	P	P			P	P		P	
Cereplast	Michael Muchin (310) 676-5000	<a href="mailto:mmuchin@cereplast.com">mmuchin@cereplast.com</a>	<a href="http://www.cereplast.com">www.cereplast.com</a>	C			C	PLA	C	C			
Costco	Shirley P. Cen (415) 626-4388	<a href="mailto:w144mbr@costco.com">w144mbr@costco.com</a>	<a href="http://www.costco.com">www.costco.com</a>	P	P	P	P		P	P			
Eco-Products	Luke Vernon (303) 449-1876	<a href="mailto:lvernon@ecoproducts.com">lvernon@ecoproducts.com</a>	<a href="http://biodegradablestore.com">biodegradablestore.com</a>	PLA, F		P, EP	PLA	PO, C	P, F,	F		F, P	YES
Excellent Packaging and Supply	Allen King (800) 317-2737	<a href="mailto:allen@excellentpackaging.com">allen@excellentpackaging.com</a>	<a href="http://www.excellentpackaging.com">www.excellentpackaging.com</a>	PLA, F, P	P	F, EP	PLA	PO	F	F, EP	PLA	F	YES
Huhtamaki	Sally Chouprov (650) 344-3605	<a href="mailto:sally.chouprov@us.huhtamaki.com">sally.chouprov@us.huhtamaki.com</a>	<a href="http://www.us.huhtamaki.com">www.us.huhtamaki.com</a>	P	P	P	P		P	P		P	
Genpak	Michael Muchin (310) 676-5000	<a href="mailto:mmuchin@cereplast.com">mmuchin@cereplast.com</a>	<a href="http://harvestcollection.genpak.com/products.cfm">harvestcollection.genpak.com/products.cfm</a>	C			C		C	C			
Goodwill Fair Trading Co.	Kin Lao (415)203-7323	<a href="mailto:felisbertolao_112@hotmail.com">felisbertolao_112@hotmail.com</a>	<a href="http://www.goodwillfairtrading.com">www.goodwillfairtrading.com</a>	PP	P	P							YES
Green Earth Office Supply	Andrea Wilson (800) 327-8449	<a href="mailto:andrea@greenearthofficesupply.com">andrea@greenearthofficesupply.com</a>	<a href="http://greenearthofficesupply.stores.yahoo.net/furniture.html">greenearthofficesupply.stores.yahoo.net/furniture.html</a>	P, F, PLA	P,	F, EP	PLA	PO, C	P, F	F	PLA	F, PLA,	YES

EP= PLA lined paper cup (Econtainer), P=Paper, PLA=clear corn based plastic, C= opaque plant based plastic, F=Molded Fiber (Bagasse and plant based fibers), BA= bamboo, PO=potato based plastic, A= Aluminum, PP = #5 plastic /Polypropylene

Updated 10/16/2007

Distributors	Contact & Phone	Email	Website	<i>hinged, clamshell or lidded deli to go containers</i>	<i>Folded to-go container boxes</i>	<i>hot cups / lids</i>	<i>cold cups &amp; lids</i>	<i>cutlery</i>	<i>plates</i>	<i>bowls</i>	<i>straws</i>	<i>trays</i>	<i>bags</i>
Green is Green, Inc	Anders (415) 215-8553	anders@greenisgreeninc.com	http://www.greenisgreeninc.com/GiG-product%20list.pdf	F, PLA		F	PLA	PO	F	F	C	F	YES
Maple Trade Corporation	Sam Ha (650) 296-8998	sales@mapletradecorp.com	www.mapletradecorp.com	PP									
New Asia Food	David Cheng (510) 887-7112	<a href="mailto:dc@asiafoodus.com">dc@asiafoodus.com</a>		P	P	P							
Pactiv	Todd Lowman (208) 887-9313	<a href="mailto:tlowman@pactiv.com">tlowman@pactiv.com</a>	<a href="http://www.pactiv.com">www.pactiv.com</a>	PP						PP		A, P, PP	
Pan Pacific Export & Import	Ali Akbar (510) 582-4893 (510) 582-4817	ali710412@aol.com	www.waterfromfiji.com (click Protect the Earth)	F			F		F	F		F	
Prime Link Solutions	Alan Ko (650) 375-1398	alan@primelinksolution.com		F					F	F		F	
PPT Brothers	Raymond Tam (415) 430-7030	tpm48@hotmail.com		PP									
Rainbow Grocery	Laura Kemp (415) 863-0620		rainbowgrocery.org				F	C	F	F			YES
Restaurant Depot	(415) 920-2888	manager.045@jetrord.com	www.restaurantdepot.com	P, PLA	P	P	P		P	P			
S.F. Supply Master	(415) 642-0700	shah@sfsupplymaster.com		P	P	P, EP	PLA		P, F	P, F		P	
Simply Biodegradable	Brad Price (509)764-0233 (509)910-1430	brad@simplybiodegradable.com	www.simplybiodegradable.com	F, PLA		F	PLA	C	F	F		F	YES
Smart and Final	(800) 894-0511		http://www.smartandfinal.com	PLA		P	PLA		P, PO				
Sysco Food Services	Jeremy Jacobs (510) 226.3425	<a href="mailto:Jacobs.Jeremy@sfo.sysco.com">Jacobs.Jeremy@sfo.sysco.com</a>	http://www.sysco.com/	C, P, PLA	P	P, EP, F	P, PLA	P, C, PO	P, F	P, F	PLA	P, F	YES
Three Bridges Trading	(415) 609-7362	ThreeBridgesTrading@gmail.com		F					F	F		F	
US Foodservice	Michael J. Cala John Herrera (925) 606-3585	michael.cala@usfood.com john.herrera@usfood.com	www.usfoodservice.com	C, F		EP	C	C	F	F			YES
WorldCentric Store	(650) 283-3797	bio@worldcentric.org	www.worldcentric.org/store	F, PLA		F	PLA	PO	F	F	YES	F	YES

References to any commercial business, organization, or product does not constitute nor imply endorsement. Please note that some vendors may carry non-compliant products in addition to those approved and listed above.

EP= PLA lined paper cup (Econtainer), P=Paper, PLA=clear corn based plastic, C= opaque plant based plastic, F=Molded Fiber (Bagasse and plant based fibers), BA= bamboo, PO=potato based plastic, A= Aluminum, PP = #5 plastic /Polypropylene

Updated 10/16/2007

# **Appendix 4**

## **BAG OPTIONS**

**Paper and compostable bag options, including costs**

# RECYCLABLE OR COMPOSTABLE SHOPPING BAG OPTIONS

A sampling of a few of the paper or biodegradable bag options that CUESA staff and Ferry Plaza Farmers Market sellers are considering for use in lieu of plastic shopping bags. Prices are as of September, 2008, and will vary depending on the quantities ordered.

## PAPER BAGS

Description	Dimensions	Case Pack	Case Price	Unit Price	Supplier
4 lb Brown Grocery Bag	5 x 3.1 x 9.75	500	\$11.55	\$0.02	Excellent Packaging & Supply, Richmond CA
8 lb Brown Grocery Bag	8.1 x 4 x 12.35	500	\$15.71	\$0.03	Excellent Packaging & Supply, Richmond CA
12 lb Brown Grocery Bag	7 x 4 x 13	500	\$20.98	\$0.04	Excellent Packaging & Supply, Richmond CA
Kraft Grocery Bag	8.25 x 6.1 x 14	500	\$27.30	\$0.05	Excellent Packaging & Supply, Richmond CA
Handle Grocery Bag	12 x 7 x 17	300	\$58.22	\$0.19	Excellent Packaging & Supply, Richmond CA
Handle Grocery Bag	12 x 7 x 14	300	\$52.39	\$0.17	Excellent Packaging & Supply, Richmond CA
7 lb Home Toter Bag	6.75 x 4.75 x 8.5	1000	\$84.15	\$0.08	Package Containers, Inc, Canby OR
10 lb Home Toter Bag	7.75 x 4.75 x 10	1000	\$107.85	\$0.10	Package Containers, Inc, Canby OR

Note: Brown bags have minimum of 40% recycled material

## BIODEGRADABLE BAGS

Description	Dimensions	Bags/case	Cases/pallet	Unit Price	Supplier
T-shirt Handle Bag	16.1 x 18, 0.8ml thick	400	126	\$0.10	BioBag USA, Palm Harbour FL
Tear-off Roll Shopping Bag	17 x 11.25, 0.8 ml thick	NA	NA	\$0.06	BioBag USA, Palm Harbour FL
Griphole Bag	9.8 x 13.4, 0.91 ml thick	1000	68	\$0.06	BioBag USA, Palm Harbour FL

\* This is a prototype, exact price and case/pallet info available late 2008

# **Appendix 5**

## **REUSABLE BAG OPTIONS**

**Reusable bag options, including costs**

## REUSABLE BAG COMPARISON

Prices as of January, 2008

Supplier	Contact	Bag type	Bag Dimensions (in.)	Price/bag	Details
Green Bags	www.greenbags.com	NWPP Standard	13.5 x 12.5 x 8.5	\$0.79	NWPP: non-woven polypropylene Up to 80% recycled materials Made in China under fair labor policies
Green-Kits	www.green-kits.com	Junior totes	14 x 16 x 4, 20" handle	\$1.39	Natural cotton canvas Cotton grown in and bags made in India
Enviro-Tote	www.enviro-tote.com	Grocery tote	17 x 13.5 x 4, 28" handle	\$1.99	NWPP: non-woven polypropylene Place of manufacture unknown
Enviro-Tote	www.enviro-tote.com	Grocery bag	18 x 15 x 7, 25" handle	\$3.03	Natural cotton canvas Source of cotton and place of manufacture unknown
Bag 4 You	www.bags4you.com	Custom	16 x 14 x 5, 22" handles	\$2.70	Muslin sheeting Unknown sourcing and place of manufacture
Bag 4 You	www.bags4you.com	Grocer tote	15 x 13 x 4	\$3.20	Unbleached natural cotton canvas Organic cotton version available Made in India
Bag 4 You	www.bags4you.com	Global Grocer	18 x 16 x 7	\$3.80	Unbleached natural cotton canvas Made in India
Chico Bags	www.chicobag.com	Expandable bag	16 x 18 open/3 x 4 stuffed	\$2.80	Synthetic Made in China under fair labor policies
Western Textile	www.bagmakers.com	Fashion tote	18 x 15 x 5, 23" handle	\$2.85	Recycled cotton or certified organic cotton options Made in San Francisco; source of cotton unknown
Western Textile	www.bagmakers.com	Grocery tote	16.5 x 17 x 6, 23" handle	\$2.95	Recycled cotton or certified organic cotton options Made in San Francisco; source of cotton unknown
The Cloth Bag Co.	www.clothbag.com	Std Cotton Bag	12 x 16 x 6	\$3.75	Unbleached cotton, source unknown Made in Georgia
Eco Bags	www.ecobags.com	CAN-501	19 x 15.5 x 5, 22" handle	\$3.00	Natural cotton, source unknown Made in India under fair labor practices

# **Appendix 6**

## **LAUNCH SCHEDULE & PROMOTIONS**

**Schedule of Activities for the Kickoff Celebration, plus the press release and CUESA e-letter articles used to promote the launch of the Waste Wise Farmers Market program**

# Waste Wise Farmers Market KICKOFF CELEBRATION Schedule of Activities

## Tuesday, April 22, 2008

10:00 am – 2:00 pm

**New Waste Wise Stations** - Compost and recycle to your heart's content at our new Waste Wise stations. Volunteers will be on hand to help you determine what's compostable or recyclable (most things), and what's waste (surprisingly little!).

**Reusable bag giveaway** - If you're a local shopper, come to the South Side of Ferry Building for a free reusable tote bag. Bay Area residents only; shoppers may be asked to show ID to determine eligibility.

**Waste Wise educational display** - Learn more about what happens to food scraps when they go in the trash versus when they get composted. Touch compost created by San Francisco's food scraps. Learn how to discern compostable from non-compostable food service ware.

**Reclaim Game** - Test your recycling and composting knowledge with this fun interactive game.

**Information tables** - The San Francisco Department of the Environment will have a special table in the market to provide information and answer questions about the Fantastic 3 program (compost, recycling and waste). Golden Gate Disposal/Sunset Scavenger (under the auspices of Norcal Waste Systems) will have a special table in the market to provide assistance and information for those interested in adding to or changing their recycling and composting service. The Maker Faire folks will have a special table in the market showcasing local crafts people making things with recycled and reclaimed materials and other green projects.

12:30 pm

**Bag Parade** - Bring your own reusable bag and show it off in the Bag Parade. Participants should meet at the North Corner of the arcade at 12:15 pm.

## Saturday, April 26, 2008

8:00 am – 2:00 pm

**New Waste Wise stations** - Compost and recycle to your heart's content at our new Waste Wise stations. Volunteers will be on hand to help you determine what's compostable or recyclable (most things), and what's waste (surprisingly little!).

**Reusable bag giveaway** - If you're a local shopper, come to the South Side of Ferry Building for a free reusable tote bag. Bay Area residents only; shoppers may be asked to show ID to determine eligibility.

**Waste Wise educational display** - Learn more about what happens to food scraps when they go in the trash versus when they get composted. Touch compost created by San Francisco's food scraps. Learn how to discern compostable from non-compostable food service ware.

**Reclaim Game** - Test your recycling and composting knowledge with this fun interactive game.

**Information tables** - The San Francisco Department of the Environment will have a special table in the market to provide information and answer questions about the Fantastic 3 program (compost, recycling & waste). Golden Gate Disposal / Sunset Scavenger will have a special table in the market to provide assistance and information for those interested in adding to or changing their recycling and composting service. The Maker Faire will have a special table in the market showcasing local crafts people making things with recycled and reclaimed materials and other green projects.

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

***The Story of Stuff* film screening** - Every hour on the hour, the 20-minute film “The Story of Stuff” will be shown in the Port Commission Hearing Room, second floor of the Ferry Building. Don't miss this fast-paced, fact-filled look at our consumption and production patterns.

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

**Recycled art display** - In the Port Commission Hearing Room, Trash Mash-Up, a community youth art project, will display some of their “Maskostumes,” which are original pageant masks and costumes inspired by traditions from around the world and made using disposable materials collected before they enter the waste stream. Norcal Waste Systems will have a recycled art slide show from their Artist in Residence Program at SF Recycling & Disposal, Inc.

10:15 am – 11:00 am

**Meet the waste-wise sellers** - Learn about some of the innovative waste-wise practices of Ferry Plaza Farmers Market sellers! Nigel Walker uses compost generated by the city of San Francisco at his Eatwell Farm in Dixon. Benoit de Korsak of Saint Benoit Yogurt uses returnable, reusable packaging for his yogurt. Sebastian Bariani of Bariani Olive Oil reuses pastes left over from pressing his olives to generate heat in his custom oven. Todd Champagne of Happy Girl Kitchens prevents waste through pickling and preserving.

11:00 am – 12: 45pm

**Waste-wise cooking demonstration** - Enjoy two cooking demonstrations in CUESA's teaching kitchen, outside under the arcades north of the Ferry Building's clock tower. For the first hour, Craig Stoll of Delfina will be using ingredients purchased that morning at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. At 11:45 am Aaron French of the Sunny Side Café' will focus on waste reduction techniques in the kitchen.

12:30 pm

**Bag Parade**- Bring your own bag and show it off in the Bag Parade. Participants should meet in the North Arcade near Taylor's Refresher at 12:15 pm. Trash Mash-Up will liven up the parade with fun costumes and noise makers made from reclaimed materials.



One Ferry Building, Ste 50  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
tel (415) 291-3276  
fax (415) 291-3275  
www.cuesa.org

Contact: Christine Farren  
Tel: (415) 291-3276 x 103  
Cell: (415) 279-6948  
Email: christine@cuesa.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Ferry Plaza Farmers Market Launches Waste Reduction Initiative** Waste Wise stations • Plastic bag reduction campaign • Education displays

### **Board of Directors**

#### **President**

Janet Griggs

#### **Vice Presidents**

Peggy Knickerbocker  
Karen Cook

#### **Secretary**

Ted Loewen

#### **Treasurer**

Kathy Yang

William Crepps

John Dickman

John Field

Bonnie Fisher

Desmond Jolly

Thomas McNamee

Mary Powell

Stephen Revetria

Susan Walter

Warren Weber

Peter Wilson

### **Advisory Committee**

Fitzgerald Kelly

Beverly Mills

Lawrie Mott

Michael Pollan

Sean Swezey

Patricia Unterman

Alice Waters

Marie Zeller

### **Executive Director**

Dave Stockdale

### **San Francisco, CA (March 18, 2008)**

The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market will turn a brighter shade of green this Earth Day with a comprehensive waste reduction program and education campaign, featuring custom-made Waste Wise stations, informational displays, and a goal to phase out the use of plastic bags in the farmers' market in 2009. At the markets on Tuesday, April 22, and Saturday, April 26, the nonprofit Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture (CUESA), which operates the farmers' market, will roll out new Waste Wise stations made of side-by-side collection bins for compost, recycling, and trash. Launch day festivities include a give-away of 10,000 reusable bags, sponsored by Google, a screening of the fun and fact-filled film about our consumption and production patterns entitled *The Story of Stuff*, a cooking demonstration, a reusable bag parade, recycled art exhibits and more! See the attached document or go to [www.cuesa.org](http://www.cuesa.org) for the times and locations. All members of the media are invited to attend the two launch days, and special tours and interviews can be conducted upon request.

On a typical summer Saturday last year, more than one hundred 45-gallon garbage bags destined for the landfill were loaded with food scraps, plastic water bottles, to-go coffee cups, paper plates, soda cans, packaging and other discarded items, 90% of which could have been recycled or composted. When compostable food scraps are sent to the landfill, not only are their valuable nutrients wasted, but they can actually cause environmental harm. In the landfill, organic materials decompose anaerobically (without oxygen), releasing methane, a greenhouse gas that is 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide.

The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market's new Waste Wise stations will be staffed by volunteer monitors to help shoppers put their materials in the correct bin, so that food scraps and papers can become nourishing compost, plastics and metals can be recycled, and far less material will be wasted.

An estimated 70 tons of compostable materials will be diverted from the landfill on an annual basis due to this innovative program. An educational display at the farmers' market will provide additional information about how to be a waste-wise shopper, explaining what happens to food scraps when they go in the trash versus when they get composted. CUESA is also working with market sellers to encourage reusable or sustainable packaging alternatives. A Waste Wise manual will be created to share with other farmers' markets that are interested in adopting similar practices. Funding for the program was provided by the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund.

“Changing the way we handle waste at the farmers' market demonstrates our commitment to sound ecological practices,” says Dave Stockdale, CUESA's Executive Director. “We believe education is essential in transforming the consumer habits of our shoppers, so along with infrastructure changes, we are planning ongoing educational programs. We are proud to contribute to a healthier planet by bringing delicious, locally grown food to the residents of the San Francisco Bay Area, and it is time to move the market one step further in its level of sustainability.”

#####

CUESA is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation organization dedicated to promoting a sustainable food system through the operation of the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market and its educational programs.

# Creating a Waste Wise Market

(Article first published in CUESA's March 18, 2008, e-letter)

The Ferry Plaza Farmers Market generates community, delicious food, and an enormous amount of waste. On Saturdays during the height of market season, more than one hundred 45-gallon garbage bags are filled with food scraps, plastic water bottles, coffee cups, paper plates, packaging, soda cans and other discarded things, all of which eventually end up in the landfill. And that's just at the market; it doesn't include packaging and plastic bags. Over the course of the year, our sellers distribute over 1,100,000 plastic bags, most of which are not ultimately reused or recycled.

The creation of this much rubbish, and the dumping of perfectly good recyclable resources in the landfill, is antithetical to our mission of promoting a sustainable food system. Over the years, we've attempted to implement recycling programs and have found that our debris dilemma can't be tackled simply by putting out bins and signage. We need a comprehensive plan that includes infrastructure, market-wide support, staffing, and education. With a grant from the Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund, and in-kind donations from Norcal Waste Systems and Golden Gate Disposal, we've been working since January to devise a waste-reduction strategy that will significantly lessen the ecological impact of the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. We are kicking off our new Waste Wise Market initiative on April 22 and 26, to coincide with Earth Day.

Our first Waste Wise Market goal is to properly sort all of the materials discarded at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. This means that everything that's recyclable gets recycled, everything that's compostable gets composted, and everything that's waste gets wasted. Second, we plan to reduce the amount of waste generated at the market, including gradually reducing the number of plastic bags distributed by our sellers and encouraging compostable and recyclable packaging. We also hope to increase our shoppers' reuse, recycling, and composting of food packaging and scraps at home, and we aim to inspire visitors from other parts of the country and the world to take these waste-wise values home with them. Beyond 2008, we'll create new Waste Wise goals annually, seeking eventually to phase out plastic bags entirely, and ultimately eliminate waste altogether.

To reach our goals, the actions and commitment of our market shoppers are essential. We are counting on you to take the time to reduce waste by remembering to bring your own bags, containers, and coffee cups; we also need you to correctly sort your discards at the market and in your home. It is our job to make this as easy and fun as possible. In the coming weeks, e-letter readers can look for extensive information about composting, recycling, and conservation, including tips, resources, and more. At the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market, expect to see trials of our new three-bin collection system in the weeks preceding the launch. On April 22 and 26, get ready for a huge Waste Wise celebration, including a reusable bag parade, free reusable bag giveaways, an educational display, new Waste Wise stations, film screenings, a recycled art exhibit, cooking demonstrations, and more!

It will take considerable effort to implement and sustain this initiative, and we will need the help of a whole lot of volunteers. We have learned from event managers, and the small handful of other markets around the nation that have implemented similar programs, that each Waste Wise station will require a monitor. Monitors ensure that shoppers sort their materials into the right bin. Otherwise, contamination occurs, which can mean that a whole bin of recycling or compost has to go to the landfill. Our large market footprint necessitates as many as seven stations on a busy Saturday, and each will need a volunteer monitor at all times. That's a lot people-power! We are currently recruiting volunteers to become Waste Wise monitors.

## Help us Become Wiser about Waste

(Article first published in CUESA's April 18, 2008, e-letter)

Our Waste Wise Initiative launch is just a few days away! Starting on Earth Day, April 22, we will be rolling out new Waste Wise collection stations at the market, each with three bins: a green bin for compost, a blue bin for recycling and a black bin for waste. The bin for compost is twice as large as the other two bins, because 90% of what is thrown away at the market is food scraps and biodegradable food service products, which go in the green bin to be recycled into compost.

Waste Wise stations will be located throughout the Tuesday and Saturday farmers' markets and will be easy to spot with their tall, rounded banners in blue, green and black (like the image to the left). This signage and a team of trained volunteers will help shoppers put their materials in the correct bin.

Preventing contamination of the compost and recycling bins is crucial to the success of our Waste Wise initiative. If our compost bin has too many cup lids, straws, or plastics in it, the materials will go to the landfill instead of becoming compost. If the recycle bin has too many food scraps or plastic wrap, the entire bin of recycling will be wasted. The success of our program lies in the hands of our shoppers, as we do not have the staff or the time to sort everything after the market closes.

In addition to the new stations, Waste Wise Celebrations on Tuesday, April 22, and Saturday, April 26, will include an array of fun activities about recycling and conserving resources. At the Saturday celebration, we will share a slide show of art created from San Francisco's refuse by the Norcal Artist In Residence program, as well as *The Story of Stuff*, a short film that highlights the full cycle of materials from extraction to manufacturing to disposal and everything in between. The Trash Mash-up group will also display costumes made from recycled art.

Do you have a favorite reusable bag you would like to show off? Join our Reusable Bag Parade scheduled at 12:30 pm both Tuesday and Saturday. Do you need a reusable bag? Pick up one either Tuesday or Saturday, when we give 10,000 tote bags, like the one pictured to the left, away to local shoppers to help reduce the need for plastic bags at our market (ID may be required).

Learn more about how you can reduce waste in your home or office! The San Francisco Department of the Environment, Sunset Scavenger and Golden Gate Disposal representatives will be available on Tuesday and Saturday to provide information and resources, including how to reduce your junk mail. Food and Water Watch will share information about their bottled water reduction campaign (Tuesday only), and the Maker Faire will show off crafts made from previously wasted materials.

You can test your knowledge of recycling and composting practices at our Reclaim Game and at our Educational Display, which will also include real compost made from San Francisco food scraps! Plus, we will feature cooking demonstrations on Saturday to help you reduce wasted food at home, and give you a chance to meet some of our waste-wise sellers. You can even recycle your old batteries and cell phones during the launch.

Other Kick-Off Event Participating Groups:

<http://www.sfrecycling.com/AIR/index.php?t=d>  
<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/>  
<http://www.sfenvironment.org/>

<http://trashmashup.googlepages.com/>  
<http://www.makerfaire.com/>  
<http://www.sfrecycling.com/>

Funding for the coordination, infrastructure and launch of our Waste Wise initiative was provided by the Richard and Rhoda Goldman fund. Special thanks to Janice Sitton of Good Green Graces for her assistance in helping us create a less wasteful and more resourceful farmers' market.

# Appendix 7

## **EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS**

**Educational signs, exhibits, articles, activities, and other items used to support the Waste Wise Farmers Market program**

**You may reprint any of these materials.  
We only request that you cite CUESA as the source,  
add a link to our website if you use our materials online,  
and notify us by email first at [info@cuesa.org](mailto:info@cuesa.org)**

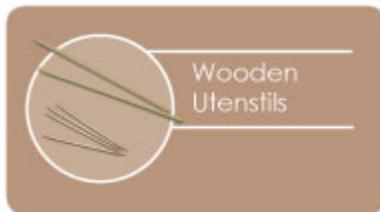


Note: an interactive version of this game is available online at:  
[http://www.cuesa.org/events/waste\\_wise/game.php](http://www.cuesa.org/events/waste_wise/game.php)

## TEST YOURSELF!

Do you know which items go in which bin? Roll over each image to see what you should do with the item pictured when you're at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market or live in San Francisco.

**Compost it** (green bin), **recycle it** (blue bin), **or waste it** (black bin)?





Fruit &  
Vegetable  
Scraps



Plastic  
Wrap



Glass  
Bottles



Paper  
Cups &  
Bowls



Plastic  
Containers



Plastic  
Bags



Rubber  
Bands



PLA Plastic  
Cups



Plastic  
Sample  
Spoons



Bagasse  
Clamshell  
Containers



Plastic  
Tubs



PLA  
Clamshell  
Containers

# When you compost...

Every day, the city of San Francisco sends 300 tons of compostable materials to the Jepson Prairie Organics composting facility in Vacaville.



This compost is used on productive lands throughout the Bay Area, including some farms that sell at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. The carrot tops you compost in January could end up becoming part of the carrots you purchase in July!



# When you waste...

When compostable food scraps and yard debris are sent to the landfill, not only are their valuable nutrients wasted, but they can actually cause environmental harm. In the landfill, organic materials decompose anaerobically (without oxygen), releasing methane, a greenhouse gas that is 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Landfills account for 34% of methane emissions in the United States.



## Waste Wise Shopping Tips

1. Bring your own bags, containers, utensils, bottles and mugs!



2. Reuse bags and containers again and again.

3. Assemble a farmers' market shopping kit and keep it in one place so you can grab and go when you're ready to head to the market.

4. Buy from sellers that make waste-free shopping easy.

5. Refrigerate your produce as soon as you get home, to keep it fresh longer.

6. Buy only what you can reasonably eat.

7. Use as many parts of vegetables and animals as you can.

8. Recycle and compost at the market and at home!

# What to put in your waste wise shopping kit...



## Tote bag

For: Storing your kit and carrying your purchases



## To-go mug

For: Coffee, tea, and other hot beverages



## Used Paper & Plastic Bags

For: Bread, mushrooms, loose produce, greens, etc.



## Reusable Plastic Tubs

For: Delicate fruits, nuts, beans, salad mix, etc.



## Reusable Produce Bags

For: Potatoes, onions, root vegetables, citrus fruits, etc.



## Utensils

For: Eating at the market



## Bottle

For: Water and juice



## Cloth Napkin

For: Use in place of paper napkins

CUESA gave away 10,000 reusable shopping bags commencing with its April 22, 2008, kickoff event. Customers were asked to show an I.D. so bags could be distributed to Bay Area residents (presumed regular market shoppers) versus tourists visiting the site. We asked them to sign a pledge sheet (example below) to reinforce our “reduce and reuse” messaging. Collecting zip codes at the same time enabled us to gather updated information regarding where our shoppers live.



I pledge to bring my own bags whenever I shop.

Name

ZIP code

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Can you tell the difference between plastic and compostable plastic? Many compostable to-go containers look like plastic but are made from biodegradable materials. The easiest way to tell the difference is to check the bottom of the container for labeling. If it is compostable, it will say "Compostable" or "PLA." Disposable cutlery may also be compostable, but is rarely labeled as such. If you are unsure, check with the vendor.



# Jepson Prairie Compost

Feel free to smell and touch the compost in this tub. It's made from San Francisco food scraps and other compostable materials, like the ones collected at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market.



## Blue Bottle Coffee Co. Recycling Information

**cup lids** = blue bin (recycle)

**all other serviceware**  
= green bin (compost)



## Aidells Sausage Co. Recycling Information

**cans, bottles, and foil** (remove food scraps) = blue bin (recycle)

**food-soiled paper and napkins**  
= green bin (compost)



## Donna's Tamales Recycling Information

**plastic tubs** = blue bin (recycle)

**all other serviceware, including forks** = green bin (compost)

**plastic chip bags**  
= black bin (trash)



## Alive! Restaurant Recycling Information

**all serviceware**  
= green bin (compost)



# Recycling our food

(Article first published in CUESA's April 4, 2008, e-letter)

## What is compost?

Compost is formed when organic matter (material that comes from plants or animals) decomposes aerobically (with oxygen). The resulting nitrogen- and carbon-rich substance can be added to soil to improve its structure, provide and hold soil nutrients, prevent erosion, and encourage beneficial insects and microorganisms.

## Why compost?

When compostable food scraps and yard debris are sent to the landfill, not only are their valuable nutrients wasted, but they can actually cause environmental harm. In the landfill, organic materials decompose anaerobically (without oxygen), releasing methane, a greenhouse gas that is 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide. Landfills account for 34% of methane emissions in the United States. Meanwhile, America is losing its soil fertility and topsoil at alarming rates. When food scraps are recycled, either in a backyard compost pile or as part of a municipal composting system, they are turned from waste into a resource and used to enrich gardens and agricultural lands.

In San Francisco, that's exactly what's happening when you put your orange peels, biodegradable forks, and coffee cups in the green bin. Every day, the city sends about 300 tons of compostable materials to Jepson Prairie Organics composting facility in Vacaville. The materials are screened to remove contaminants (mainly plastics) and spread out in long windrows. A mere 60 days later, the materials have become compost. This compost is used on productive lands throughout the Bay Area, including some farms that sell at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. Capturing the organic resources from the market and redistributing them to farms offers a tidy and elegant solution to the waste problem: your coffee cup could end up becoming part of your tomato!

## Composting as part of our Waste Wise Market

At the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market, more than 90% of what ends up in our garbage cans is compostable. Those resources, when not captured for composting, are wasted and contribute to greenhouse gases instead of renewing soils. Beginning April 22, all compostable items discarded in the green bin at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market will join the materials of many San Francisco households and restaurants at the Jepson Prairie composting facility. Our new Waste Wise initiative will divert an estimated 78 tons of compostable materials from the landfill annually!

To make our market—and our food system—more sustainable, we need your help. We hope you will work with us to create less waste, and put your food scraps, food-soiled paper, and biodegradable serviceware in the green bins at the market and at home.

## What you can do

**1. Reduce waste.** Composting your paper cups is a great idea, but it's even better to bring your own reusable cup (or plate, napkin, etc.). Each paper cup takes trees and energy to manufacture, so the most sustainable choice is to avoid single-use products whenever possible.

**2. Compost at the market.** Beginning April 22, Waste Wise stations around the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market will include three bins: green for compost, blue for recycling, and black for garbage. Bins will be clearly

marked and include information about what belongs in each bin. Waste Wise stations will also be attended by volunteers who will be happy to help you choose the right bin!

**3. Compost at home.** The San Francisco Department of the Environment will have representatives on site during our Waste Wise Market launch to help you learn what can go in the green bin at your home. You can also check out the links below to find out about composting in your backyard or with a worm bin.

**4. Reduce wasted food.** According to a study by the University of Arizona, American households throw out an average of 1.28 pounds of food per day. Annually, this adds up to 467 pounds per year per family. This food loss costs the average family of four at least \$589 per year. Keep better track of what's in your fridge, use leftovers creatively, and learn to use as much of a vegetable or animal as possible.

**5. Volunteer to teach others.** Waste Wise station monitors are needed to help shoppers sort their discards into the recycling, compost, and garbage bins. Contact us for more information.

### **What's compostable?**

Composting is not as hard as you might think. If it is food or a food-related paper product, it can go in the green bin. Plastic straws, cup lids, and other plastics are not compostable, so please take a moment to remove these items from their partner paper products. Breaking up isn't always easy, but in this case, it is the right thing to do. When the green bin gets contaminated with too much non-compostable plastic, we have to throw the whole thing in the garbage! For your reference, here's a list of what's compostable:

**All food:** fruit, vegetables, meat, poultry, seafood, shellfish, bones, rice, beans, pasta, bread, cheese, and eggshells, oyster shells, burritos (without foil wrappers), etc.

**Food-soiled paper:** waxed cardboard, napkins, paper towels, paper plates, paper cups (without lids) paper milk cartons, tea bags, coffee grounds/filters

**Plants:** floral trimmings, tree trimmings, leaves, grass, brush, weeds

**Biodegradable food serviceware:** This includes paper plates, paper coffee cups, and "bio-plastics," which look like plastic but are made out of corn, soy, potatoes, or other organic materials.

### **How do you tell the difference between plastic containers and cutlery and the compostable look-alikes?**

Many of the new compostable to-go containers in use inside the Ferry Building, at the farmers' market, and throughout the Bay Area look like plastic, but they are made from corn or other biodegradable materials. The easiest way to tell the difference is to check the bottom of the to-go ware container for labeling. Some are compostable; others go in the recycling bin.

If it is compostable, it will say "Compostable" or "PLA" and you can put these in the green bin. Sometimes these compostable items (such as the cups from Alive! Restaurant) have a green stripe to make them easier to identify.

Disposable cutlery may also be compostable, but unfortunately, forks, spoons and knives are rarely labeled as compostable. If you are unsure, check with the vendor who gave you the cutlery or bring it to a Waste Wise station for assistance.

Effective April 22, all rigid plastics, such as bottles, tubs, and lids, can be recycled in the blue bin in the City of San Francisco. Anything that is not recyclable or compostable goes in the black bin.

# Reducing Packaging and Packaging Waste

(Article first published in CUESA's April 11, 2008, e-letter)

*On April 22 and 26, CUESA is launching a new Waste Wise Farmers' Market initiative. Through this program we will significantly reduce the Market's environmental impact by composting and recycling most of the materials discarded at the market and reducing the amount of plastic bags and other packaging that leave our premises.*

From toys to phones to food and water, almost everything we purchase is encased, presented, or carried away in plastic or another packaging material. Both before and after it is used, this packaging has a significant impact on our environment. According to a US EPA statistic from 2005, 31.2% of municipal waste is generated from packaging. A good portion of this goes to the landfill; the rest is incinerated, recycled, or ends up littering our oceans and cities. Packaging also takes energy and natural resources to produce. Writes Daniel Imhoff in his book *Paper or Plastic*, "The downstream issues of collection, recycling, landfilling, and incinerating, while consequential, are dwarfed by the 'upstream' consequences of packaging production." The production of packaging requires energy and natural resources like wood, metals, minerals and crude oil. Tree-harvesting, ore-mining and oil-drilling all have significant environmental impacts, including habitat degradation and pollution.

Recycling has a HUGE positive impact on the environment, because it takes fewer resources (like energy and water) to reprocess materials than to create them from scratch. For example, recycling an aluminum can takes 95% less energy than making an aluminum can from scratch. Reprocessing also reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

The city of San Francisco is on the forefront of reducing packaging waste. In 2007, the city initiated a ban on plastic carrying bags in large supermarkets. And the city's latest announcement is a major boon for the environment: starting on Earth Day 2008, all non-compostable, rigid plastics will be accepted for recycling in the blue bins as well (only some rigid plastics are currently accepted). The city is making it increasingly easier to recycle and compost, which will help San Francisco meet its goal of diverting 75% percent of discarded materials from the landfill by 2010 and reaching zero waste by 2020.

Every week at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market, we see inspiring examples of both sellers and shoppers seeking to reduce their environmental impact. Many sellers offer returnable or compostable packaging and encourage customers to "BYOB" (bring your own bag), as shown in this sign at the Tierra Vegetables stall. Waste-wise shoppers carry their own reusable tote bags, coffee cups, water bottles, and even spoons and plates. Still, we have a long way to go towards zero waste. More than one million plastic bags are distributed annually at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market. At our information booth and at other events, 4,800 plastic bottles of water are consumed annually, most of which are used once and discarded. Until now, almost all materials discarded at the market (98% of which are recyclable or compostable) were wasted.

Starting on Earth Day, April 22, this is all changing...

## WHAT WE'RE DOING

**1. Handing out 10,000 reusable bags.** If you're a local resident, come to the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market on April 22 or 26 for a free reusable tote bag and use it whenever you visit the market and for all your other shopping needs.

**2. No longer offering bottled water.** Instead, we'll offer delicious Hetch Hetchy water straight from the tap, free at our information booth to those who bring their own bottle or cup and for a small donation for those who need a compostable cup.

**3. Providing Waste Wise stations.** Waste Wise stations will include three bins: green for compost, blue for recycling, and black for garbage. Bins will be clearly marked and include information about what belongs in each bin. Waste Wise stations will also be attended by volunteers who will be happy to help you choose the right bin!

**4. Working with market sellers to help them reduce packaging waste.**

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

**1. Bring your own bags, containers, water bottle, coffee cup, plate and cutlery.** While recycling saves energy and resources, reducing your consumption of packaging has even greater benefits.

**2. Don't take a plastic bag if you don't need one.** If every San Francisco resident reduced their plastic bag intake by just one bag a week, we would save 38,690,132 plastic bags per year, and all the resources and energy required to produce them.

**3. Reuse plastic bags and food containers.**

**4. Recycle recyclables and compost compostables.** Use the Waste Wise stations at the market, and get know what your municipality accepts for recycling and composting so that you can properly sort what you discard at home.

**5. Buy products with recycled content.** If there's no market for products that make use of recycled materials, there will be little incentive for reprocessors to accept our recyclables.

## SOME FACTS ABOUT RECYCLING

- According to EPA calculations, recycling and composting in 2006 saved the energy equivalent of more than 10 billion gallons of gasoline!
- Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to power a light bulb for four hours.
- The greenhouse gases eliminated by recycling 7 million tons of metal is equivalent to removing 5 million cars from the road for one year!
- Recycling and reuse helps our economy! Currently, the recycling and reuse industries provide over 1.1 million jobs in the US and gross over \$236 billion in revenues per year.

## RESOURCES

Check out the sites below to find out what's recyclable and compostable in your county.

**Alameda** - [stopwaste.org](http://stopwaste.org)

**Contra Costa** - [www.wastediversion.org](http://www.wastediversion.org)

**Marin** - [marinrecycles.org](http://marinrecycles.org)

**San Francisco** - [sfrecycling.com](http://sfrecycling.com)

**San Mateo** - [www.alliedwastesanmateocounty.com](http://www.alliedwastesanmateocounty.com)