



Submitted by: Andy Harris
Company/Organization: Hannaford

Challenge or Opportunity:

The challenge that we are addressing was twofold; First, as we march toward our long-term goal of zero waste, we wanted to eliminate plastics and in particular our plastic bags from getting into landfills. Plastic bags are petroleum based and spend years in landfills, once they arrive there. However, having bags available in a grocery store is a basic expectation of every customer today. The second part of that challenge was to get whole communities involved in the process. This ties in directly to our deep-rooted commitment to our communities.

Approach or Solution:

First we make recycling bags at our stores very easy. There are well labeled bins in every entrance foyer of all our stores. Secondly, we work with the schools directly in helping educate young children about recycling. We do this by hosting a contest every year across the state where all kids can color a picture with a recycling theme at school. All the artwork is judged and one winner from each state will have their picture on the side of some of our reusable bags. We receive thousands of entries annually.

Recently we partnered with the schools again on another program with the Trex Decking company. Trex Company uses plastic bags, case wrap and stretch wrap in the production of their decking products. Individual schools reach out to parents and kids to have the plastics collected and brought to school where they are sorted and bagged, prior to being brought to the local Hannaford, which serves as the drop off location in each community!

From our stores, the materials start their journey to Trex Company where they are made into decking. It's a great program all around, educating parents and their children, and helping them be part of the solution by recycling. I often think how cool it would be for a family to who participated in this program to have a deck built with Trex decking at their home and be able to see the recycling loop go full circle!!

Impact:

Last year we recycled over 75% of our waste including 1628 tons of plastic bags and case wrap. This is almost double what the average supermarket today is currently recycling. We also have a long-standing relationship with the communities that we serve.

Email this document to michelle@nhbsr.org by July 31, 2015!