WEIS MARKETS MULTIFACETED FOOD WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Weis Markets follows the goals of the FWRA and has a multifaceted approach to food waste management integrating donations, source reduction and composting as viable options.

• **Goal #1** – Weis reduces the amount of food waste generated by reworking food to service other areas in the store such as the salad bar and repackage food to make fresh vegetable mixes for our customers.
• **Goal #2** – Weis donates baked goods from every store and in summer 2015 initiated a program in 28 stores to donate meat products to the Maryland Food Bank.
• **Goal #3** – Weis composts food waste in 65 stores and returns the finished compost for resale to customers, closing the loop. The Weis Distribution Center manages food waste at a farm anaerobic digester that provides power to a dairy farm.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND

• Food waste is the largest segment of the waste stream and establishing diversion and recycling programs is critical to achieving a Zero Waste status. The program has developed over the past 5 years and continues to expand and diversify. There needs to be a multi pronged approach to managing food waste.
• There is not a single solution but a need for numerous outlets and options.
• The baseline was established through the continued measuring weights and volumes of food waste over time with the composting program. Weis counts the number of toters emptied per week and also measures the weight of every load of food waste. The meat donation program uses existing scanning procedures to track the value of the donations. The food waste programs are managed by the Sustainability Manager with assistance and input from the Operations Team, Store Managers and the Store Green Leaders.
• The composting program is driven internally at Weis as part of the company’s Zero Waste initiative. The food donation program is partners with The Maryland Food Bank and the Central PA Food Bank along with numerous local organizations and state food agencies to help feed the hungry through monetary and food donations.
The in-store reduction efforts are managed by the Produce Departments and Store Managers. In 2014, Weis composted 4,000 tons of food waste and continues to increase food donations. Weis is committed to continual reductions in food waste through various means and will continue to look at new technologies and expand existing donation partnerships to increase food waste reduction efforts.

For more information please contact Patti Olenick, Sustainability Manager at polenick@weismarkets.com