

Sustainable Practices



Patrick Spencer
Director, Cork ReHarvest
Willamette Valley Vineyards



Photos Courtesy of Cork ReHarvest

In the summer of 2008, during a lunch meeting with Willamette Valley Vineyards Founder/CEO **Jim Bernau**, the topic of corks came up. Jim brought up the idea that with the billions of natural corks being shipped into the United States every year, someone should figure out a way to recycle them.

Part of his interest in cork came from the fact that **Willamette Valley Vineyards** had the distinct honor of being the first winery in the world, to receive certification from the **Rainforest Alliance** for its commitment to using 100% **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)** cork, not to mention that the tasting room at their vineyard generates thousands of corks each year. What I found has led me on an amazing journey, leading to the creation of **Cork ReHarvest** the nation's leading non-profit cork recycling organization.

In researching cork, I found that the 6.6 million acres of Mediterranean cork forest are on the United Nations list of "**25 Hot Spots**" for environmental survival of the planet. The cork tree is not cut down, but harvested by hand, every 9 to 12 years. These forests provide a vital source of income for thousands of people and they support one of the world's highest levels of forest biodiversity, including the critically endangered Iberian lynx, the Iberian imperial eagle, the Barbary deer, many species of rare birds as well as many fungi, ferns and other plants. Cork oak forests also play a key role in maintaining watersheds, preventing erosion and keeping soils healthy. They are a great example of balanced conservation and economic development. Their preservation is vital for the well-being of the Mediterranean region.

The goals for Cork ReHarvest are three fold:

1. To collect and recycle some of the billions of corks currently being relegated to landfills.
2. To do so without increasing their carbon footprint.
3. To help educate the American public about one of the world's most environmentally important regions and to help dispel some of the misinformation about cork and alternative closures, i.e. synthetic closures and screwcaps.

In February of 2009, Cork ReHarvest launched a cork collection and recycling program with its partners, **Willamette Valley Vineyards**, **Whole Foods Markets (WFM)**, **Rainforest Alliance**, **Bacchus Fine Wines** and **Western Pulp**. Collection boxes were placed in the 11 WFM stores in WA and OR. The corks are collected by a transportation model that has a zero carbon footprint increase and brought to Western Pulp in Corvallis, to be used in a bottle shipper for the wine industry. Thus creating a "cradle to cradle" product.

Since the start of the program in February, it has expanded to WFM stores in Arizona, Nevada, California, Massachusetts and Canada. Preparations are being made to launch the program nationwide in March of 2010.

Cork ReHarvest has added local businesses such as **Roth's Fresh Markets** to its roster of cork collection sites and has gained national collection partners **Harrah's Entertainment** in Las Vegas and **Michael Mina Restaurant Group**.

For more information about Cork Reharvest visit www.corkreharvest.org.

Truitt Bros. Earns Green Designation

In November, **Truitt Bros. Inc.** received third-party certification for their "special products" food processing plant from **Food Alliance**, a national eco-labeling program that certifies environmentally sound and socially responsible food producers.



The Salem plant produces shelf-stable meals, side dishes, sauces and soups packed in flexible pouches and trays. This is the second certification that Truitt Bros. has received from Food Alliance. Three years ago Truitt Bros. received the designation for its local cannery operations. "We are finding that there is a tremendous amount of demand for sustainably produced food in the food service sector," said **Peter Truitt**, president and co-founder of Truitt Bros.

To earn Food Alliance certification, Truitt Bros. has demonstrated compliance with a set of standards ranging from sustainable practices at its processing plant to ensuring safe working conditions. Food Alliance also requires continuous improvement across a spectrum of environmental and social issues. For more information visit www.truittbros.com.

Residents, business and civic leaders attended the **Salem Community Energy Forum** in December to learn about Salem's current energy use, relevant energy policies and programs, and practical tools for preparing Salem to meet future energy demands and capitalize on opportunities for economic growth. The forum was an opportunity for stakeholders and interested citizens to provide input on draft goals and actions to be included in Salem's Community Energy Strategy. Attendees included representatives from **SANYO Solar; Chemeketa Community College; Willamette University; Bicycle Transportation Alliance; Department of Energy; Pringle Creek Community; and Salem-Keizer Transit.**

Several ideas emerged from the sessions, including:

- Capitalizing a revolving loan fund to serve as "gap" financing for residents and businesses to use for energy efficiency improvements.
- Developing a community-wide plan for locating electric vehicle charging infrastructure.
- Creating a clearinghouse of information for residents and businesses to use to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Improving access to transportation options for bicycle, pedestrians, and transit.

In May 2009, the City was awarded a formula grant in the amount of \$1.5 M from the **U.S. Department of Energy**. In August 2009, the City was provided the first \$250,000 to begin work on the Energy Strategy. The remaining \$1.2 M will be used to complete the strategy, develop short term projects/ programs, and initiate energy savings projects in City facilities.

Draft goals and actions developed at the Forum are being refined with help from the Energy Strategy Technical Working Group. A list of short term actions identified for funding by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) was approved by the City Council in December. If the DOE approves the City's list of short term projects, funding for these projects is expected sometime in March, 2010. A final Community Energy Strategy will be completed this spring, at which time City staff will seek Council's adoption of the document. The strategy will include actions the City can take to improve energy efficiency and save cost in its own facilities, as well as goals, projects, and programs designed to improve energy efficiency, conservation, and cost savings in the industrial, commercial, transportation, and residential sectors, promote sustainable industry and jobs, and related activities as appropriate. **For more information call Annie Gorskie at 503-588-6178 or visit www.cityofsalem.net.**

Mid-Willamette Valley Green Award Nominations

The **Friends of Straub Environmental Learning Center, Marion County Public Works-Environmental Services, and Garten Services, Inc.** are seeking nominations for the first-ever annual **Mid-Willamette Valley Green Awards.**

Nominations are being sought for individuals, businesses, and organizations located in Marion County and the greater Salem area.

Green Award categories include:

- **RECYCLER OF THE YEAR**

With separate opportunities for Individual/Family, Educator and Business

- **SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR**

With separate opportunities for Small Business, Large Business and Non-Profit

- **EARTHWISE CERTIFIED BUSINESS OF THE YEAR**

- **GREEN BUILDING OF THE YEAR**

Nomination forms and category descriptions are available online at www.fselc.org, or you may call (503) 391-4145 to request a copy be mailed to you.

Send completed nominations to:

2010 Mid-Willamette Valley
Green Awards Selection
Committee
Friends of Straub Environmental
Learning Center
765 14th Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Or nomination forms can be submitted electronically to: fselc@fselc.org.

Nominations must be received by 4:00 p.m. January 31, 2010 to be eligible for consideration.



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www.cityofsalem.net and select **Public Works** or contact Mike Gotterba at **503-588-6347**

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Green Industries

Don't Forget International Markets

Christine Whitney, International Trade Assistant
Portland U.S. Export Assistance Center

Export Strategies, Tools, and Techniques Seminar

January 27, 2010

Chemeketa Center for Business & Industry

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As Oregon companies innovate to take advantage of opportunities and incentives in growing renewable and green industry sectors in the U.S., they should not overlook the potential and possibilities to grow internationally as well. The **U.S. Department of Energy** estimates there could be up to \$40 billion/year in increased exports of green technologies, generating up to 750,000 green jobs by 2020.

As U.S. policies have begun to create opportunities for green industry and clean tech, many foreign markets are well ahead in implementing green practices, and government, industrial and citizen consumers are looking for new ways to make renewable and environmentally conscious choices for technology and services. **Mary Saunders**, an Assistant Secretary in the **U.S. Department of Commerce** has stated that "With the rest of the world hungry for concrete climate change solutions, they are looking to the United States to act as an incubator of innovative technologies."

In Oregon, companies are increasingly making innovative changes that are allowing for new opportunities in the growing renewable and green industry sectors. In Salem, this type of innovation is represented by firms such **Sequential Biofuels**, which is refining used cooking oil, waste grease and crushed oilseeds into biodiesel for use in transportation and home heating applications. **AgriPlas, Inc.**, a Brooks, Oregon based recycler and exporter of (largely agricultural) plastics had formed a partnership with **Plas2Fuel**, another Oregon based technology company to turn waste plastic into petroleum products. **West Salem Machinery**, a manufacturer of shredders, grinders, screens and recycling systems, allows its industrial clients to convert waste into marketable products. WSM has begun to focus more effectively on wood energy, biomass and alternative fuel processing applications to target expanding domestic and possible international opportunities.

By implementing modifications to manufacturing practices, plant usage or products, the companies are creating new ways to be competitive. This is especially important in our current economic environment as these new innovations bring with them new opportunities for jobs.

Markets that are showing vast potential for opportunities in green technology include China, India and Canada. According to a September, 2009 report by the **United Nations Environment Program**, China has invested 34% of its economic stimulus package into green projects. The **China Greentech Initiative** reports that the potential market for green technology is estimated between \$500 billion and \$1 trillion in the coming years. In **India**, the renewable energy market is estimated at \$500 million and is expected to grow at an annual rate of 15%. New Indian government policies mandate that the contribution of renewable and non-conventional energy sources increase from 3,000MW to 10,000MW over the next few years.

This will give rise to major export and investment opportunities for U. S. companies in areas such as solar energy, wind energy, small hydro project, waste-to-energy, biomass and alternative fuel. Similarly, **Canada's** market for renewable energy equipment is estimated to grow at a double-digit pace over the next decade worth an anticipated \$18 billion. To take advantage of these market opportunities, companies will need to be creative and take advantage of the many resources that will help them take their green technology and innovations into the international marketplace.

SEDCOR has played a leading role in supporting the global competitiveness of area firms. In cooperation with the **U.S. Export Assistance Center (USEAC)** in Portland (part of the **U.S. Department of Commerce and Small Business Administration**), **SEDCOR** provides resources and counseling to businesses and active referrals to the market research and international market development services of the Portland USEAC and its global reach through U.S. Embassies and consulates abroad.

In January, **SEDCOR** will partner with the USEAC to sponsor an **Export Strategies Seminar** in Salem designed to assist firms in growing their trade capacity to pursue entry into foreign markets and address cultural, regulatory and other issues which may impact their global marketing strategy. This partnership will be critical to positioning Salem area firms for continued international success as global markets begin their slow recovery.

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