

# ABE'S<sup>®</sup> Real Bagels Ltd

## Auckland EnviroSmart<sup>®</sup> Pilot Programme Achievements

ABE'S<sup>®</sup> Real Bagels Ltd joined the Auckland EnviroSmart<sup>®</sup> pilot programme, in 2004, to achieve a number of environmental objectives.

The two-year programme provided assistance to businesses to improve their environmental performance by reducing solid waste, using energy, water and raw materials efficiently, and purchasing environmentally sound products and services, as well as achieving environmental certification to the Enviro-Mark<sup>®</sup> NZ Gold level.

### Key achievements

- Redesign of product packaging resulted in fitting more product on pallets and more efficient use of transport, with savings of \$70,000
- Greater re-use of boxes led to a reduction of over 3.5 tonnes of cardboard annually
- Achieved Enviro-Mark<sup>®</sup> NZ Gold level

## About the business

ABE'S Real Bagels produces bagels and bagel crisps. The company applied for and gained Bio-Gro certification for its organic bagel range. All products, standard and organic, are made without using preservatives, artificial flavours, colours or genetically modified ingredients. The company employs 30 people at its site in Mt Wellington, Auckland, and supplies bagels throughout the country. For more information on the company see [www.bagels.co.nz](http://www.bagels.co.nz)



Prior to joining the programme, ABE'S had reduced cardboard waste by improving the re-use of boxes which packaged its products, and it had forged links with 13 decile-1 schools which it provides with day-old bagel returns. Bagels past the "sell by" date go to a pig farmer.

## Programme achievements

### Resource Efficiency

- By redesigning the boxes for bagel crisps, the number of packets that could be fitted into a box went from six to 12, and about a third more boxes could be fitted on a pallet. This in turn meant a halving of distribution costs and resulted in savings of over \$70,000.
- Bigger deliveries of flour are being made which has resulted in one delivery a week rather than two or three. This resulted in savings of \$30,000 and negated a 7% increase in delivery costs. It also reduced by a third the number of large trucks coming and going.

## Waste reduction

- ABE'S re-uses the cardboard boxes in which it send its bagels to Auckland supermarkets, up to 10 times, before recycling. This saves an estimated 3.5 tonnes of cardboard annually.
- Cardboard cage collections went from two a week to one a fortnight through making sure boxes were reused as much as possible first, and then that boxes going for recycling were flattened before being put into the cage.

## Energy efficiency

- Energy efficient light bulbs have been installed and an energy efficiency programme has been developed that is expected to make further savings in the future.

## Suppliers and contractors

- ABE'S sent letters to all of their suppliers detailing the changes they have made since joining the programme.

## Other benefits

- Joining the programme made things formal and the whole company knew about it and was involved so it helped support efforts made previously by individuals on an ad hoc basis.
- Commitment to the programme resulted in looking for further opportunities.
- The company has had informal comment from supermarkets that there has been a good response from customers to its efforts.
- The company states that it cares about the planet when looking for new staff and this has been positive for recruitment.
- ABE'S staff take pride in working for a company which cares about the environment and the community, and this has improved employee morale.

## Challenges

- ABE'S found the biggest challenge was to identify new areas in which to make a difference, find the time to investigate the opportunities, and then realise them.

## The future

- ABE'S<sup>®</sup> has identified that having a silo for flour would be significantly better than having flour delivered in bags. Due to physical constraints and costs, a silo will not be installed at the current site, but the company will consider installing one if it moves.
- The company is committed to keep looking for "what next".

## Advice for others

"Look for every opportunity!" says programme champion Megan Sargent. "Remember that communication with staff, customers and suppliers is the key to success. The more people who know about what you're doing, the more support you'll get, the more opportunities will present themselves and the more people will be inspired to see what they can do."

If you would like more information about the programme, please see [www.enviroSMART.co.nz](http://www.enviroSMART.co.nz)



This programme was sponsored by North Shore City Council, Auckland City Council, Waitakere City Council, Manukau City Council, Papakura District Council, Auckland Regional Council, Landcare Research and the Ministry for the Environment.