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eNews

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Greetings!

Our monthly e-Newsletter will provide you with

- news
- tools
- resources...

to help you be successful as a business leader in the growing sustainability movement.

Visit our new website for information on:

[Declaration of Sustainability Member Benefits](#)
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Join Us for FTSLA Members Networking Meeting January 24th, 2009 at the Ecological Farming Conference

In this special two-hour session connect with your peers to discuss strategies for how to create and implement a successful sustainability plan. Discuss the key indicators used to drive improved organizational performance. Find out about the best practices in sustainability reporting, receive tools for assessing your businesses environmental and social performance.



This workshop is free and open to FTSLA Members, a light breakfast will be provided.

When: January 24, 2009 8:30am-10:30am

Where: Ecological Farming Conference Pacific Grove California

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How to Launch and Maintain a Successful "Green Team"

The primary job of a "sustainability" or "social responsibility" team is to dig deep into the fabric of the business to flesh out problems and to create a road map for redesigning processes and products to better align with sustainability objectives.



Effective Sustainability Teams should:

- * Have upper management support for the purpose of establishing the team.
- *Have a diverse set of skills and knowledge of parts of the business operation.
- *Must be given the resources and authority to guide organizational

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initiatives.

*Have a clear mission, membership, goals and deliverables.

*Establish a timeline in order to mark progress, mitigate burn-out, and energize staff.

Addressing the following questions in the team launching process will greatly increase the chances of achieving your objective:

Why? Articulate the business need for the project. Link the outcomes you expect the team to achieve with the strategic issues of the business.

Who? Who will be the members on the team and what is their commitment? Will all departments be represented on the team?

What? What will the team accomplish? What is the scope of the project? How will the outcome be measured? What is the timeline?

When and Where? How often will you meet?

How? Who will facilitate? What are the ground rules for meetings and the decision processes? Will the team have a budget or other resources?

New Federal Energy Tax Credits for Employee Bicycle Commuting and More

The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act signed into law on Oct 3, 2008, includes numerous tax breaks for energy-related expenditures and activities. Here are a few highlights:



New Employee Fringe Benefit for Bicycle Commuters - The law creates a new tax-free fringe benefit program for employees who commute to work on bikes, effective for tax years starting in 2009. Under the new provision, an employer can give employees up to \$240 in tax-free reimbursements to cover expenditures to buy, improve, repair or store bicycles regularly used for commuting to work.

The Deduction for Making Commercial Building Energy Efficient is Expanded - The law extends the provision allowing deductions for the cost of qualified energy-saving improvements to commercial building in the U.S. for 5 more years. The maximum deduction is \$1.80 per square foot.

Business Energy Tax Credit is Extended and Expanded -The law extends the business energy tax credit for qualifying energy equipment through 2016. For solar, fuel cell and small-wind turbines the credit is equal to 30% of expenditures; for geothermal and combined heat/power systems equal to 10% of expenditures.

[To learn more about these and other credits click here.](#)

How to Guard Against "Greenwashing"

The rise in "green" marketing claims has been unmistakable. Consumers Union now reviews more than 150+ eco-labeling claims on their website <http://www.greenerchoices.org>. This leaves many consumers and producers alike wondering how to distinguish real claims from "greenwashing" - false or misleading green marketing claims.

TerraChoice Environmental Marketing Inc. conducted a survey of six category-leading big box stores in an effort to understand and quantify greenwashing claims. Based on the survey results, TerraChoice identified six patterns in the greenwashing:

1) Hidden Trade-Off

-Suggesting a product is "green" based on a single or narrow set of environmental attributes (contains recycled content) without attention to other, perhaps more important, environmental issues (such as energy impacts of the overall product). Such claims are not usually false, but paint a "greener" picture of the product than a more complete environmental analysis would support.

2) No Proof- Any environmental claim that cannot be substantiated by easily accessible supporting information, or by a reliable third-party certification.

3) Vagueness -Any claim that is so poorly defined or broad that its real meaning is likely to be misunderstood by the intended consumer.

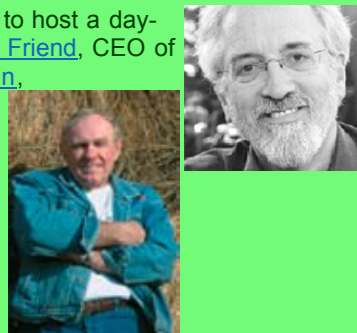
4) Irrelevance

- Making an environmental claim that may be truthful but is unimportant and unhelpful for consumers seeking environmentally preferable products.

[Read the Full Report "The Six Sins of "Greenwashing"](#)

Register now for the Organic Industry Sustainability Intensive

February 26, 2009 FTSLA is pleased to host a day-long "Sustainability Intensive" with [Gil Friend](#), CEO of Natural Logic, Inc.; [Fred Kirschenmann](#), Distinguished Fellow at the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. The afternoon will feature a panel of organic industry leaders including [Clif Bar](#), [PCC Natural Markets](#), [Organic Apparel](#) and others. Attendees will learn the foundational frameworks to help understand and communicate the basics of "sustainability". Find out about ways food and agriculture is likely to be impacted by climate change, increasing energy prices and other trends. Revisit the values and practices of sustainability, come away with tools to evaluate your business practices and improve your systems. Be inspired by success stories from industry leaders.



Don't miss this special educational event!

To register online go to the [Organicology Web Site](#).

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