



2012

## Maryland Green Registry Leadership Award Winner



### JBS International, Inc.



5515 Security Lane, Ste.800  
North Bethesda MD 20852  
301-495-1080  
[www.jbsinternational.com](http://www.jbsinternational.com)

*The Maryland Green Registry Leadership Awards recognize organizations that have shown a strong commitment to the implementation of sustainable practices, the demonstration of measurable results, and the continual improvement of environmental performance. Read here how this award winner achieved its environmental success and continues to move forward along the path to sustainability.*

#### **What innovation or set of results are you most proud of?**

JBS is committed to enriching the lives of people through a solid commitment to social and environmental responsibility. Making environmental responsibility part of our corporate culture is very important to us. One way we live out the commitment is by helping our clients hold greener meetings and making our corporate meetings green.

The Meeting Center at JBS works with hotels, vendors, and clients to green the meetings we manage. At a minimum, we ensure that all hotels we use have a recycling policy in place. In addition, we look at a hotel's overall policy of sustainability and giving back to the community. We also consider their internal policies such as buying locally, donating leftover food to food banks, replacing standard light bulbs with energy efficient ones, having low-flow toilets, and purchasing recycled products.

Over the past several years, we have seen our advocacy for greener meetings embraced by clients that are now making a concerted effort to eliminate plenary and workshop handouts by posting sessions to websites and handing out flash drives. We made the transition from paper forms for continuing education unit (CEU) credits to paperless approaches, including the scanning of name badges to document attendance for CEU purposes. In addition, we collect name badges at the end of every meeting; we then reuse the holders and recycle the badges. We also donate our used signage to local schools

for their art classes and/or bring them back to the office to be reused for new signs.

#### **How do you involve employees from all parts of your organization in your environmental programs and projects and how do you keep them motivated?**

Our corporate Green Team monitors our environmental efforts, recommends new initiatives to the Executive Officers, and promotes our efforts through in-person presentations and articles on the employee intranet. We include a one-page message from the JBS Green Team in all new employee welcome packets and have a dedicated section of our employee intranet that focuses on environmental issues and information. In addition, we post a green tip on the JBS Facebook page at least once a month, along with



***JBS Green Team member explaining the corporate recycling and composting program at JBS Health Fair***

the Green Team logo to emphasize that it is an environmental message. Our brown-bag lunches on environmental topics and our green sessions at the annual Health & Wellness Fair are well attended and provide opportunities for staff to learn new information about environmental issues. We also offer a Green Employee Award in recognition of green living practices in both personal and work life.

Our composting and recycling initiatives are the way most employees participate in our environmental programs. Because composting in corporate and urban environments is not as common as composting in more rural areas, we made sure to inform and educate staff in the planning and implementation stages, explaining what can be composted and alleviating fears of uncleanness and bad smells. JBS

replaced its trash bins with individual receptacles for composting, recycling, and waste. Informational signs were developed to explain what items are compostable and recyclable and encourage these practices.

Led by the Green Team in partnership with Whole Foods (which has offices in the same building), 12+ tons of compostable waste was diverted from landfills in the first year of the program. To build on this success, in 2012, we coordinated with the Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection's Recycling Coordinator to lead a composting activity for Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day. Children learned how to compost at home through a hands-on activity designed to inspire the young to be green.

We also announce changes to our suppliers and operations that promote our environmental commitment—for example, when we changed our coffee supplier to Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company, a local company that offers USDA-certified organic, fair trade coffee. Another way the environmental message is reinforced is by having cleaning supplies for all kitchens that are nontoxic and environmentally friendly and are specifically purchased for their environmental safety.



To encourage environmental activism at work, at home, and in the community, every 6 months, the JBS Green Team presents a "Green Employee Award" in recognition of green living. The award acknowledges individual JBS employees who demonstrate exceptional environmental stewardship either at home or in the office. Employees are nominated by their peers for their involvement in green activities, policies, programs, or generally a noteworthy environmental conscientiousness.

***What's the first step you would recommend that someone take when starting to green their organization?***

At JBS, the idea for a sustainable workplace came from our staff. Several employees who are advocates and activists within the environmental movement asked the company to embark on this initiative. They volunteered to design and lead what has become known as our Green Team, and our efforts took off from there. We are very

proud of all they have accomplished at JBS. We recommend that organizations look for their in-house environmentalists and ask them to be part of the leadership team at the very beginning. We have found that mixing grassroots enthusiasm and energy with strong executive support is a winning combination.

Once you have a leadership team in place, our advice would be to start small and not to try to do everything at once. Some steps are easy and inexpensive, such as replacing paper products and plasticware with reusable coffee mugs and cutlery. You can change non-environmentally friendly cleaning products with environmentally friendly ones as your old stock is depleted; purchase environmentally sustainable/fair trade coffee and tea products; use green caterers for company events; and make recycling easy by providing recycling bins throughout the office and placing a recycling container for paper at each employee's desk. As you begin to see savings in many of these areas, start to look at bigger projects, such as purchasing/leasing more energy-efficient copiers and computers that will save more money in the long run. It is also important to do background research on vendors to find



*Members of the JBS Green Team*

out what they are doing to become more sustainable—ask them questions and share your concerns about protecting the environment with them.

***For more information on environmental best practices at JBS International, Inc., visit the Maryland Green Registry website.***

*The Maryland Green Registry is a voluntary program that promotes and recognizes environmentally sustainable practices in organizations of all types and sizes across the State. Visit the Maryland Green Registry website at [www.green.maryland.gov/registry](http://www.green.maryland.gov/registry) for tips and resources designed to help organizations set and meet their own goals on the path to sustainability.*

