Retailers and Safer Products: Leveraging Your Relationships

2nd National Summit for Retailers
7 May 2013
Agenda

- Sustainability
- The product life cycle
- Leveraging the Retailer’s role
- The Retailer’s Voice
- Seals and Certifications
- Discussion…
Sustainability

The practice of meeting today’s needs without diminishing the ability to meet tomorrow’s needs.

---Brundtland Commission, 1987
Elements of Sustainability

- Human Health
- Societal Health
- Environmental Health
- Economic Health

4
Achieving Material Sustainability
Natural Cycles

- Materials taken from the biosphere are returned to the biosphere
  - Plant oils converted to biodegradable surfactants
Achieving Material Sustainability

Recycling

- Materials can be taken from the earth and maintained in the technosphere
  - Petroleum is converted to plastic and recycled
The Product Life Cycle

- Retailing represents less than 5% of the environmental impact in a product life cycle.
GIVE ME A LEVER LONG ENOUGH AND A FULCRUM ON WHICH TO PLACE IT, AND I SHALL MOVE THE WORLD.
The Retailer As Lever
Nurturing Nature

We care today for the next seven generations of tomorrows.

Our principles:
- Choose plants not petroleum
- Source sustainably
- Decrease carbon footprint
- Produce zero waste

Transforming Commerce

We champion honesty, responsibility, and radical transparency in commerce.

Our principles:
- Be radically transparent
- Exert influence beyond our size

Enhancing Health

We enhance health through education, activism, and innovation.

Our principle:
- Create healthy products for healthy homes

Building Communities

We advance social justice and equality to unleash human potential.

Our principles:
- Create a vibrant workplace
- Nurture thriving communities
Talking With Manufacturers

• Demand Green Chemistry
  – Eliminate Substances of Concern

• Demand recycled and recyclable packaging

• Use Renewable feedstocks
  – Sustainable agricultural methods

• Demand transparency
  – On-package disclosure of ALL ingredients
Talking With Consumers

- Consumers shop in YOUR store because they TRUST you
- Ingredient disclosure strengthens that trust
- Talking about Sustainable Agriculture strengthens that trust
- Talking about recycling (and taking back packaging) strengthens that trust
Certification
Retailer Certification

- Whole Foods EcoScale
- The Sustainability Consortium
- RILA
- Others
Certification Costs

- $3,000 - $6,000 per certification
- One product line, four fragrances can cost $5,000 - $10,000
- Certification of several product lines can cost >$50,000
- Labor hours required to fill out multiple forms…
Certification

Lack of differentiation

If three products carry the same certification, are they equally green?
Brand versus Certification

- Greater visibility
- Trusted
- Differentiated
USDA Biobased Product Certification and Labeling

• Launched March 2011
• Sun, soil, sea graphic
• Wording / biobased content
• 3 versions