

Business advisors develop best practice

Envirowise and WWF team up for SME business intermediary conference

Working effectively with SMEs is not about gimmicks or tricks. It is about knowledge and experience: having the insight to know what is important to SMEs and the expertise to help them with their critical business challenges.

The vast array of business intermediaries in the UK holds a wealth of expertise and best practice in dealing with SME issues and engaging an audience. Tapping into this knowledge, however, to ensure that best practice is available to business intermediaries and SMEs across the UK, is still something of a challenge.

Envirowise and WWF - the global environment network - have teamed up to tackle this situation. They have organised a major conference aimed at business intermediaries and scheduled for 6th December in Birmingham. Entitled *Engaging SMEs: Learning from Collective Experience* the event will provide an opportunity to discuss all aspects of how to promote the

benefits of environmental improvements to SMEs and encourage them to take action. Delegates will share successes and best practice in engaging SMEs.

The event will feature guest speakers from Envirowise, the Environment Agency/SEPA/EHSNI, Business Link, Barclays Bank and a representative from WWF, and will be attended by business intermediaries from across the UK.

Important lessons emerging from the day and on a specially developed web forum will be captured in a short, best practice publication to be developed by Envirowise and WWF. This publication will make expertise and knowledge sharing easy and act as a guide for all business intermediaries.

Anyone interested in more information on the event should call the **Environment and Energy Helpline: 0800 585794**, or visit www.envirowise.gov.uk



Keep up to date and help save the environment

Update newsletter is primarily a paper publication. 10% of the circulation, however, prefer to receive *Update* via email and this number is rising. In the interests of saving raw materials and minimising waste, we would like to encourage you to receive *Update* electronically.

You will receive the information quicker and find it easier to pass to others in your organisation (which we encourage you to do). To do this we ask that you use the letter enclosed with *Update* and fax it back to the Data manager at Envirowise. Your email address will be kept confidential.

Green your suppliers - **free help** to reduce your business costs

All businesses are interested in reducing costs and generating real savings; we are looking for host companies to take up the opportunity of free help to do so!

The Supply Chain Partnership Forum, managed by Envirowise and the EEBPp, invites you to take part in a unique pilot project to help reduce your costs. We will help you to work with your key suppliers to identify where real financial savings can be made in your joint business activities. The potential benefits as a host company will be:

- increased profits
- reduced waste
- minimised supply chain costs

- minimised damaged goods
- improvements to the local environment.

The support we offer you is FREE. Envirowise will provide experts to help you identify opportunities to reduce waste and costs, you are sure to benefit from this partnership approach.

You will also receive:

- a free waste/energy audit
- advice and assistance with the implementation of initiatives

- free training workshops for your suppliers on topics such as optimising packaging use, reducing water use, energy efficiency, transport and logistics.

We are looking for firms, both in the retail and industrial sectors, to act as host companies to work with their supply chain. Places are limited, so if you would like to participate in this project please contact **Veronica Sharp** on 01235 433563 for more information.



Envirowise puts UK businesses on *FastTrack* to cost savings

An increasing number of UK businesses are taking advantage of the free on-site waste reviews offered by Envirowise. Launched at the beginning of the year, *FastTrack* visits are primarily aimed at companies with fewer than 250 employees. Over 200 visits have already taken place, helping small and medium sized companies identify potential cost savings totalling over £3 million. Most companies stand to make savings of between £500 and £7,000 per employee.



DID YOU KNOW

More than nine million British consumers avoid companies with a poor environmental image.

Thanks to the *FastTrack* initiative, one company in the Food and Drink sector now knows how to realise savings of £240,000. One textile company has been helped to identify savings of £229,000.

The environmental consultants who conduct *FastTrack* visits on behalf of Envirowise are

carefully selected and totally independent. To get a view of the companies, they use specialist software to analyse key inputs and outputs at a site. This helps to identify avoidable waste and potential savings, based on best practice waste minimisation methods. The main objective, at this stage, is to

obtain a view on the potential cost savings that the company could make through simple actions.

Each company that undertakes a *FastTrack* visit receives a short report which covers the findings and recommendations and also highlights the potential for savings.

To register for your free *FastTrack* visit, please call the Environment and Energy Helpline on 0800 585794, or visit the Envirowise website at www.envirowise.gov.uk

Little things mean a lot at Yeo Valley Organic

Little things mean a lot at Yeo Valley Organic, the privately owned company that, in less than a decade, has grown to become the country's biggest organic dairy business.

From small beginnings, when Yeo Valley started making yogurt supplied by just three Somerset farms that had moved to organic production, it now produces the country's most popular natural and fruited yogurts, as well as butter, fromage frais, crème fraîche, organic ice creams and frozen yogurt.

The company is always asking itself, 'is there a more effective, more energy efficient, environmentally friendly way to operate?'

Learning of the Government-funded Envirowise initiative, Yeo Valley Organic was quick to accept the offer of a *FastTrack* visit, to see if someone else could find ways that it could perform even more effectively.

The company's management are the first to admit that the Envirowise visit was still able to

show them a thing or two, like how to potentially, save water. Dairy food production uses a lot of water, as the tanks and packaging machinery must be kept scrupulously clean.

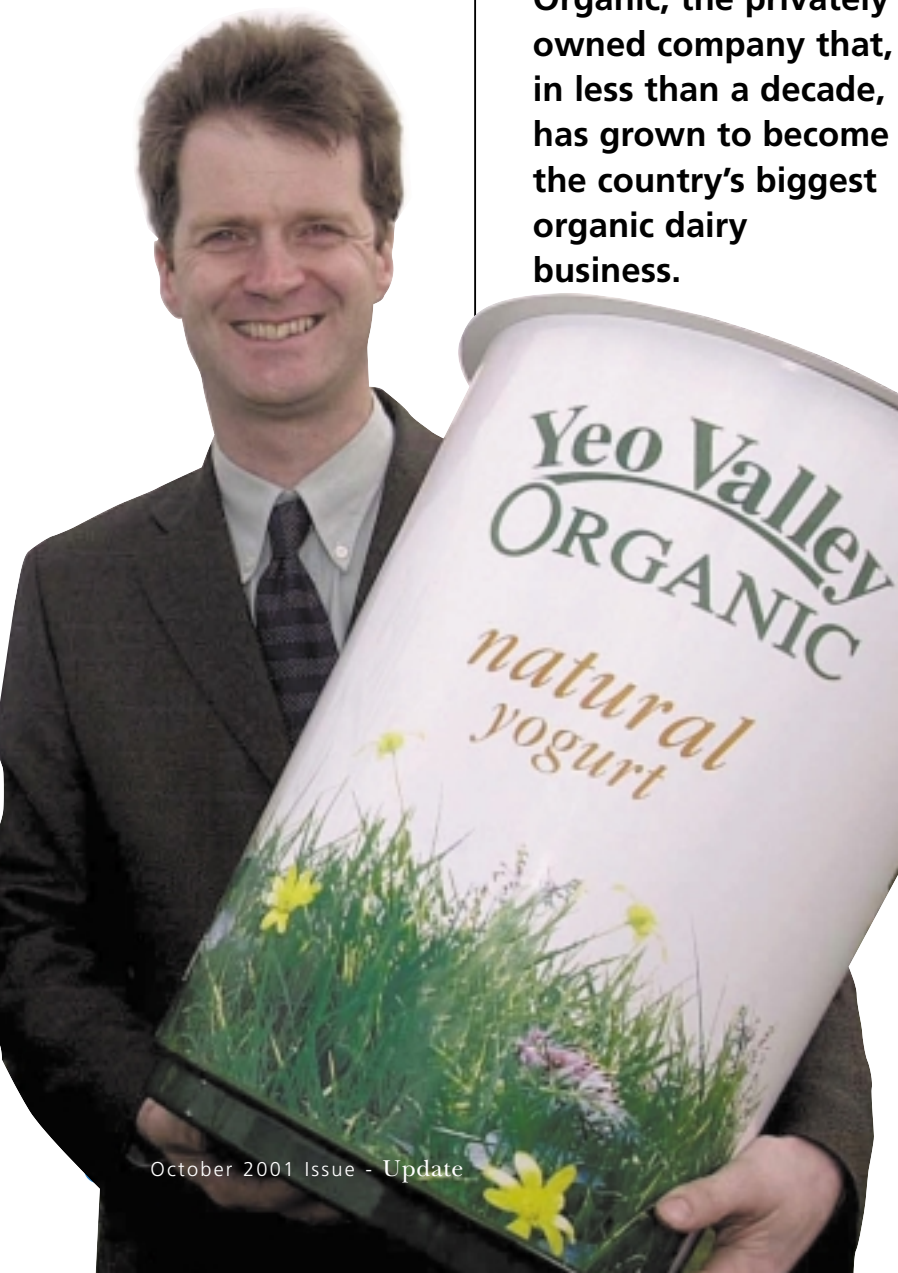
Currently 2 inch hoses are used for this purpose, now the company is investigating the use of half inch ones, which will give an impressive reduction in water wastage and no apparent reduction in cleanliness. To maintain its unrivalled quality, Yeo Valley Organic frequently tests the temperature of its chilled product. This had been done with a 'destructive probe', which was inserted into selected packs, which were then unsaleable. The *FastTrack* advisor suggested the adoption of an infrared sensor. This has eliminated all the wastage and proved even more accurate than the previous system.

One of the most dramatic savings the *FastTrack* advisor suggested was to the pallet wrapping. Prior to the *FastTrack* visit 500gms of wrap were used

per pallet. The advisor proposed using a different machine that uses a lighter weight film and stretches it as it is applied. The end result; only 250gms of wrap is now used per pallet with the cost savings made by this reduction the new machinery will have paid for itself in just 6 months.

"We have always tried to be very energy efficient and environmentally aware," said Amanda Kendal, the Yeo Valley executive in charge of the Envirowise project, "but the *FastTrack* report was very impressive. It pointed us towards lots of new directions, some small, some large, but all with the potential to improve our environmental performance.

We have adopted many of the proposals already and are now planning to tackle some of the bigger ones, which will require more organisation, or bigger investment."



Water winners

Water Efficiency Awards winners to be announced soon

All the entries are in, and the judges have retired to consider their verdict. The winners of this year's Water UK and Environment Agency Water Efficiency Awards will be announced at the Awards Presentation Evening, to be held in London on 12th November and hosted by Pamela Taylor, Chief Executive of Water UK and Barbara Young, Chief Executive of the Environment Agency. You will be able to find out who the winners are on the Envirowise website: www.envirowise.gov.uk

This year's awards include categories supported by Envirowise, the National Farmers' Union and Ofwat.

The awards are intended to recognise excellence in water conservation and efficiency in a wide range of industries and organisations, and to highlight the related business and environmental benefits.

Envirowise is supporting the Industry and Business Category, and judges were impressed by the volume and quality of entries. All told, the Envirowise Industry and Business category attracted 29 strong entries from industries ranging from laundries and printers to fish merchants and automotive manufacturers.

From the diversity of entries it is clear that businesses from all over the UK are benefiting from water efficiency.

The winner will need to demonstrate an innovative solution, as well as clear process methodology.

Last year's Industry and Business Award Winner, however, Hanson Brick, showed how simple measures can deliver dramatic results. The company implemented a production process change to increase materials recycling and realised water savings of 71%.

The difficult task of choosing this year's winners has already begun, with the entries whittled down to a shortlist of five.

The shortlisted projects are as follows:

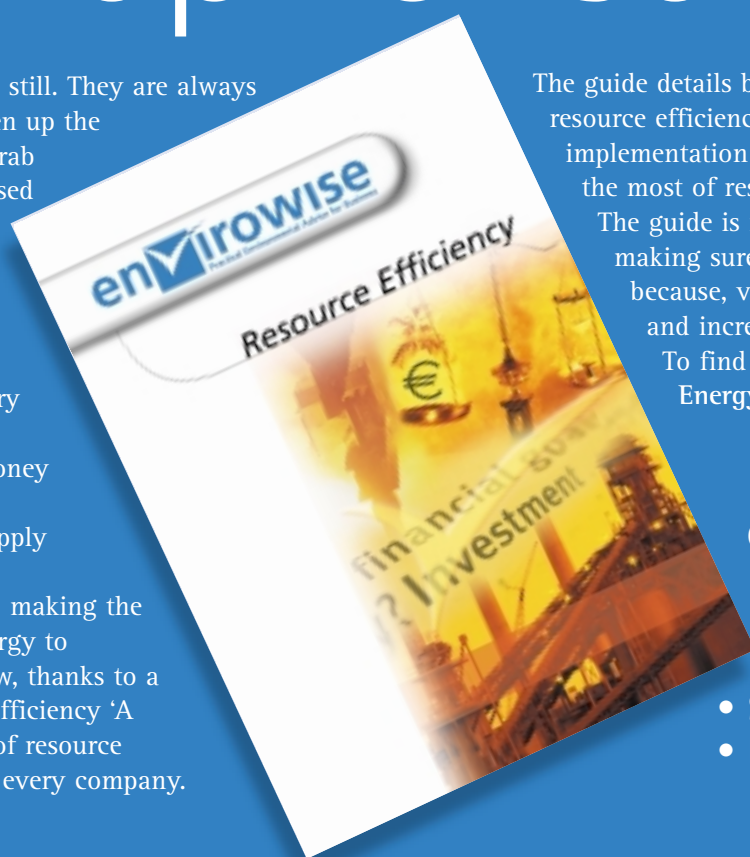
- "Water Minimisation & Self Sustainability" entered by specialist label printer J&A (International) Ltd.
- "Water and Process Efficiency" entered by Paragon Laundry Group.
- "Water Minimisation in a Factory Environment" entered by fish merchants F. Smales & Son.
- "Water and Waste Minimisation" entered by Voyager Foods Ltd.
- "Ham Shower Project" entered by Walkers Midshire Foods.

Find out who the winners are in the next issue of Update. News will also be posted on the Envirowise website: www.envirowise.gov.uk

Shape up for success

Successful companies never stand still. They are always on the lookout for ways to sharpen up the business, to boost revenues and grab competitive edge. They have realised that in highly competitive markets success is based as much on innovation in production and delivery, as in product design. That means developing production and delivery systems that make the most of production resources – to save money and time and to build profitable relationships right through the supply chain.

It's all about resource efficiency – making the best use of raw materials and energy to maximise output and profits. Now, thanks to a free Envirowise guide; Resource Efficiency 'A management guide', the benefits of resource efficiency are within the reach of every company.



The guide details best practice and takes a first look at measures that maximise resource efficiency. It provides practical advice on the evaluation and implementation of processes that have enabled successful companies to make the most of resources and gain crucial competitive edge.

The guide is not packed full of complicated ideas or jargon. It's about making sure the obvious resource saving measures are not overlooked because, very often, the simplest change produces the greatest reward, and increased profits and efficiency are within easy reach.

To find out more or to order the guide call the Environment and Energy Helpline on 0800 585794 or visit www.envirowise.gov.uk

Order the guide today and:

- **Boost competitiveness**
- **Convert more turnover into profit**
- **Eliminate hidden costs**
- **Save £1000 per employee per year**
- **No cost/low cost measures**

Events Diary 2001

- 12th Nov**
Water and Chemical Waste in Metal Finishing. Workshop, Belfast
- 13th Nov**
Engineering for profit from waste - Designing processes and products to minimise waste produced. Seminar, London
- 13th Nov**
NI Energy and Environment Management Exhibition. Exhibition, Belfast
- 14th Nov**
Launch of the SEA's Code of Practice. Seminar, Birmingham
- 15th Nov**
IdeasUK Awards dinner 2001. Exhibition, Chester
- 16th Nov**
EEF Environmental Update Seminar. Birmingham
- 16th Nov**
Waste Minimisation in the Engineering Industry. Workshop, Birmingham
- 22nd Nov**
Profiting from Reducing Packaging Costs. Workshop, Llandudno, N.Wales
- 23rd Nov**
Helping you help companies cut costs. Workshop, Llandudno, N.Wales
- 27th Nov**
Metal Working Fluids and Swarf Management. Workshop, Newcastle upon Tyne

- 28th Nov**
Cleaner Design Dismantling Workshop. Swaffham
- 28th Nov**
REDUCE WASTE, SAVE MONEY. Seminar, Exminster
- 6th Dec**
Engaging SMEs: Sharing and Learning from Experience Seminar, Birmingham
- 7th Dec**
Helping you help companies cut costs. Workshop, South Wales
- For a full list of events and booking information, visit www.envirowise.gov.uk or contact the Helpline on 0800 585794**

Questions & answers ...

Q How would I go about producing an environmental policy for a construction company?

A Steps to consider in producing a policy, are as follows:

- Review company activities and look at their direct and indirect environmental effects
- Draft the policy according to management commitment to environmental issues. Best policies use targets to promote continuous environmental improvement
- Don't let your policy commit you to unachievable goals.
- Decide how your policy should be communicated both inside the company and externally.
- Once your company accepts the policy, you will probably need to make changes to make it happen.
- The changes should include setting targets; defining a programme to reach the targets; allocation of resources and responsibilities

Collecting examples of environmental policies from companies with similar business interests can be useful; these could be competitors, customers or suppliers. You can get a list of EMAS accredited companies (which therefore have a publicly available policy and environmental statement), from the UK Competent Body for EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme - a European Union environmental standard), which is the Institute of Environmental Assessment (Tel: 01522 540069). A good website to look at is <http://www.cbpp.org.uk>

Consider consulting interested parties both within and external to the organisation (e.g., neighbours, local council etc). This helps to make the policy more relevant and promotes good business relationships.

Q My company imports yarn from Italy on pallets we then re-use these pallets. Does this constitute packaging waste? I would like some clarification as to whether I am obligated under the Packaging Regulations. We have a turnover in excess of £2million but we are unsure what we need to include within our 50 tonnes of packaging.

A UK packaging waste regulations aim to implement the targets set by Directive 94/62/EC by ensuring that sufficient UK post-consumer packaging waste, (which otherwise would have gone to landfill), is recovered and recycled in a useful way. Then the net amount of new raw material flowing into the packaging chain is reduced. Ultimately, packaging will be disposed to landfill site or incinerated, with or without heat recovery. Reuse of the packaging item, or recycling of the paper fibre into a new packaging product, saves the world's resources but merely delays the disposal event for that particular packaging. So packaging items that are intended to be reused, or packaging materials that have been designed to be easily recycled, must still confer a single obligation on those responsible for launching it on to the marketplace. Similarly, those that import packaging into the UK will accrue a single obligation within the UK for that packaging, irrespective of whether the packaging will be reused in the UK many times before disposal. The only exception to this arises when packaging is exported, so will not have to be landfilled or incinerated in the UK.

Assigning the obligations, ownership and agents

Producer obligations are assigned to the relevant company by determining the ownership of the packaging at the time of the packaging activity.

Obligations on imported packaging

An importer has obligations for packaging around imported goods and imported new packaging that it owns on entry into the UK. The obligations cover all the producer activities that have been carried out on the packaging before entry into this country. So a company picks up all of the obligations (100 %) for the weight of imported transit packaging that it opens itself and which becomes waste within its premises, or that is opened by one of their customers.

Reusable containers

The obligation for a reusable container relates solely to the first use of a new container. There is no obligation on subsequent uses. Where a box, tray or pallet is used on a second occasion, it is freed of a further packer/filler or seller obligation. This concession relates solely to the user of the reusable packaging, not to the manufacturer of it.

Latest publications

Looking for information specific to your industry? With Envirowise, help is at hand! Most of our Case-Studies, Good Practice and Benchmarking Guides can be downloaded from the internet at www.envirowise.gov.uk, or ordered through the [Environment and Energy Helpline](http://www.envirowise.gov.uk) on 0800 585794, completely free of charge. Latest releases include:

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| <p>CS307 Team Saves Waste And Money at Leading Office Seating Company
<i>This Case-Study from Envirowise describes how an in-house team of operators and managers at Giroflex identified and implemented several low-cost initiatives with significant cost and environmental benefits.</i></p> | <p>GG283 Reducing IPA Use: Industry Examples
<i>This new Guide describes how eight offset lithographic printing companies have achieved cost and environmental benefits by reducing or eliminating isopropyl alcohol (IPA) use on their presses.</i></p> | <p>GG294 Cleaner Product Design: an Introduction for Industry
<i>This new Guide explains how companies can incorporate cleaner design into their operations and realise the many business benefits that result.</i></p> | <p>GG303 Reducing Water and Effluent Costs in PCB Manufacture
<i>This Envirowise Good Practice Guide describes a range of cost-effective measures to help companies of all sizes to save money whilst maintaining quality standards.</i></p> |
| <p>EN315 Support for the Paper and Board Industry
<i>This six-page leaflet identifies the publications available from Envirowise to help the paper and board industry save money through a systematic waste minimisation programme.</i></p> | <p>GG289 Furniture Essentials: Environmental Information for Furniture Manufacturers
<i>This Guide provides an introduction to the major environmental issues facing the furniture industry and what steps can be taken to address them.</i></p> | <p>GG295 Cleaner Product Design: Examples from Industry
<i>The ways in which nine well-known companies have adopted cleaner design and the benefits they have achieved are described in this good practice guide from Envirowise.</i></p> | <p>IT313 WasteWise: Increased Profits at your Fingertips
<i>WasteWise is an interactive CD-ROM that brings together all the essential information companies need to minimise waste and save money, including tools to help identify waste minimisation opportunities and to measure potential savings.</i></p> |
| | <p>GG296 Cleaner Product Design: a Practical Approach
<i>A practical introduction to cleaner product design is provided in this Good Practice Guide.</i></p> | | |

