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JANUARY 10, 2018

## Manomet Helps Grocers Save Energy Expenses With Low-Cost Measures

By Mike Berger

The Manomet Grocery Stewardship Certification Program (GSC) recently partnered with the New Hampshire Grocers Association, Associated Grocers of New England and Hannaford-supplied independent markets to help grocers reduce energy waste costs.

Also supporting the energy effort was the New Hampshire Small Business Development Center and Jane's Trust Fund, which financed the \$60,000 project. The energy program benefited 21 grocery stores.

Leading the effort for Manomet was Peter Cooke, program development manager, who said the overall goal is for the store operators to increase energy efficiency and sustainability and to communicate these efforts to store employees.

Since launching in 2012, the GSC has enrolled more than 800 grocery stores in the U.S. and Canada. GSC works with grocers to engage employees on operational sustainability measures and review store-level practices and equipment with an eye to increasing energy efficiency, boosting revenue and lowering costs.

Manomet's GSC expands into employee practices and procedures to engage all stores within a chain.

According to Cooke, the three most easily identifiable energy-saving measures in grocery stores are closing open refrigerated cases; installing more efficient walk-in coolers; and turning off appliances when they are not in use.

Cooke said the key message for the 21 independent store owners who benefited from the program was this: "You operate with a lot less profit margin. You can't afford not to be energy inefficient."

Cooke said there are no-cost efforts that can save an owner \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year.

He suggested use of invisible air curtains would keep more energy within open refrigerators. Walk-in chest doors should be properly sealed so that the coolers are not sucking in warm air. Doors should be shut when not in use. Unblocked air curtains could save an operator \$2,000 per year; sealed chest doors could save \$1,500 per door annually, and shutting doors when not in use could save an operator \$4,100 per door annually. Just those three steps could save an operator \$7,600 annually.

Manomet charges companies for energy-saving audits on a sliding scale, depending on the size of the company. For example, a company with 200 stores would be charged \$175 per store or a cost of \$35,000. The audits also include training sessions for employees.

ShopRite in Brooklawn, New Jersey, recently gained Manomet Grocery Stewardship Certification, which recognizes the company's commitment to operational best practices that reduce a store's environmental impact. This certification covers ShopRite stores located in Somers Point, Hammonton, Hillsborough Township, Livingston and Chatham Township in New Jersey.

"We have learned a lot working with GSC and have worked hard to get this certification," said David Deets, Brooklawn ShopRite owner. "Our associates are really becoming engaged on sustainability practices and making a big difference in each of our participating stores when it comes to reducing our energy use, conserving water and minimizing food waste."

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DECEMBER 5, 2017

## Sprouts Enrolls Dozens of SW Stores in Sustainability Program

To deepen its commitment to sustainability, natural and organic grocer Sprouts Farmers Market is enrolling all Colorado and Utah stores, along with five Phoenix-area stores, in what is said to be the country's only grocery sustainability certification program.

The stores are joining Manomet's Grocery Stewardship Certification (GSC) program, whose purpose is to substantially reduce environmental impacts of grocery stores, supply chains and consumers, in such areas as:

- » Waste practices
- » Stormwater
- » Lighting practices
- » Energy, refrigeration and HVAC
- » Greenhouse gas emissions (CO2 equivalent)
- » Shipping area
- » Sustainable products
- » Green chemical management
- » Sustainable administrative practices
- » Employee engagement
- » Sustainability communication

The total number of stores joining the program are 32 in Colorado, five in Utah, five in the Phoenix area, and six in Texas. Added to the 36 Texas stores already enrolled, this totals 84 Sprouts stores that now are a part of the GSC program

With 750-plus stores participating, GSC has worked with grocers since its founding in 2012 to engage staff on operational sustainability concepts and review store-level practices and equipment to increase energy efficiency, boost revenue and lower costs. Its creator, Plymouth, Mass.-based Manomet, is a not-for-profit organization of scientists seeking to take action to sustain the world. By applying science and engaging people, the group provides practical ways to act where people live and work, focusing on four major life-supporting systems: natural, forest, food and economic.

“We’re proud to strengthen our sustainability efforts through ongoing team member education and engagement using the GSC,” said Carlos Rojas, deputy general counsel and head of sustainability at Phoenix-based Sprouts. “The program will help Sprouts assess savings in energy, water and waste that can be passed along to our customers. It’s a win-win for our community.”

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Portland Press Herald

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## If shoppers take note, grocers might try harder to be green

By Christine Burns Rudalevige

Peter Cooke is a numbers guy. So it's no surprise he's taught his children to count supermarket floor tiles and calculate how much more sustainable the store could be.

Most open refrigerated display cases have air curtains, barriers of forced air flowing between vents lining the lower edge of the case and vents running along its upper edge. An air curtain helps keep cold air inside the case. When anything physical – say a customer's arm reaching in to grab a package of bacon – breaks the curtain's plane, refrigerated air escapes.

Easy customer access is the point of any open display case in a grocery store, so that particular instance of cold air escaping is, well, inescapable. But many times, packages of bacon get jostled during the selection process and fall onto the case's bottom vent, disrupting the curtain for however long the package sits there.

While grocery shopping with their parents, Cooke's kids walk along the cases and count how many air curtain disruptions they find. Since they know that every foot of disrupted air curtain flow results in 27 cents per day in wasted energy, if they count 10 tiles worth of blocked air curtain, they can deduce the store has lost \$2.70 in wasted energy costs that day. They also understand that pushing any merchandise out of the way of the air curtain's flow is the right thing to do, both in terms of fostering a greener environment and helping the store's bottom line.

Cooke explains that since grocery profit margins are so tight (the average American supermarket that pulls in \$18 million in sales annually makes a slim \$370,000 profit), a store must sell \$17 worth of merchandise to make up every dollar wasted on inefficient energy use.

When he's not teaching his own kids about the prospect of a more sustainable grocery store, Cooke works for Manomet, a science-based, nonprofit organization that works on practical applications of sustainability principles across business sectors; he works out of Manomet's Brunswick office as program manager for its Grocery Stewardship Certification initiative.

Those hard numbers have helped Cooke convince managers in 700 grocery stores across 15 supermarket chains nationally, including Hannaford, Stop & Shop and Whole Foods, to identify ways to curtail storewide energy waste; promote recycling; divert food waste from landfills and incinerators; and give local and organic products recognizable, systematic placement on their shelves.

Typically, designated green captains in each store seeking certification work with a Manomet representative to fill out a 260-question survey that explores how well an individual facility and its procedures address two dozen areas of sustainability. When a grocery store chain certifies a pilot number of stores, Manomet staff goes on site to educate and engage employees in the process as well as verify survey answers. If a chain chooses to then certify all of its stores, Manomet audits a representative sample of the survey results. Stores must achieve 150 out of a possible 285 points to earn Manomet's certification.

I walked with Cooke through Hannaford's Forest Avenue store in Portland, which he says is one of the highest scoring certified stores in the country, to learn what to look for.

It starts in the parking lot. Do signs remind customers to bring their reusable bags into the store?

Once you enter the store, are you immediately presented with opportunities to recycle plastic bags, glass bottles and metal cans? When you look up, do you notice energy-efficient spot lighting and ceiling fans redistributing warm air collected from the compressors that are keeping the refrigerator cases cold?

In addition to checking to see if display case air curtains are intact as the Cooke children do, also look at the tops of the vegetable display cases for the metal handles of mesh curtains that can be pulled down when the store closes. Cooke says each curtain saves \$35 per year in energy costs and helps maintain moisture levels, keeping produce fresher longer and reducing overall food waste.

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## 5 ShopRite Stores Earn Grocery Stewardship Certification

Five ShopRite locations operated by Springfield, N.J.-based Village Super Market Inc. have received Manomet's Grocery Stewardship Certification (GSC) in recognition of their commitment to operational best practices that lower a store's environmental impact and save resources. The newly certified stores, in Somers Point, Hammonton, Hillsborough Township, Livingston and Chatham Township, N.J., are reducing food waste by 350 tons while conserving more than 650,000 gallons of water annually.

"We have learned a lot working with the GSC and have worked hard to get this certification," said Amanda Fischer, Village Super Market's director of business relations. "Our associates are really becoming engaged on sustainability practices and making a big difference in each of our participating stores when it comes to reducing our energy use, conserving water and minimizing food waste. By adopting these efficiency measures, we are able to save money and pass along more savings to our customers."

"The team at Village Super Market is saving money, energy and water and reducing waste through effective sustainability initiatives in place at these stores," noted Peter Cooke, GSC program manager at Manomet, a Plymouth, Mass.-based nonprofit organization. "The corporate staff and store-level employees truly stepped up to make real improvements in the way they operate their business. We are proud of our work with Village Super Markets, ShopRite and Wakefern and look forward to working with them on their sustainability initiatives in coming years."

Since it began in 2012, the GSC has enrolled more than 700 grocery stores in the United States and Canada. The program works with grocers to engage employees on operational sustainability strategies and to review store-level practices and equipment with an eye to boosting energy efficiency and revenue and reducing costs. The GSC is so far the only certification program to address employee practices and procedures to engage all stores within a chain.

For several years, the program has worked with the ShopRite banner to reduce store environmental footprints and save money for customers by introducing more sustainable practices. Other retailers to adopt the program include Giant Eagle, Hannaford, Safeway and Weis Markets.

Village Super Market, which operates a total of 29 ShopRite supermarkets in northern, central and southern New Jersey; Maryland; and Pennsylvania, is part of Keasbey, N.J.-based Wakefern Food Corp, the nation's largest retailer-owned cooperative. Wakefern comprises 50 members that independently own and operate 343 supermarkets, mostly under the ShopRite banner, in New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Virginia.

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**Mainebiz**  
MAINE'S BUSINESS NEWS SOURCE

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## Grocers cut waste, but does it earn them customers?

By Lori Valigra

Environmental scientist Peter Cooke nods approvingly as he browses the aisles of Freeport's Bow Street Market with the store's general manager, Jim Frey, pointing to the community bulletin board and seating area by the front door, the blackboard above the meat case noting where its locally sourced contents come from and the LEDs that replaced fluorescent lights in refrigerator cases.

"Those are all points that add up," says Cooke, program manager of sustainable economies at Manomet Inc., a Plymouth, Mass.-based nonprofit that initiated the nation's first Grocery Stewardship Certification in 2012. Cooke, who works in the nonprofit's Brunswick office, assesses grocers, assigning them points for conservation, community interaction and use of new or clean technology. Smaller grocers must get 100 or more points to get initial certification, while larger grocers must tally 150 or more. They're expected to improve to get more points when reevaluated in three years.

"We assess lighting, operational features and quantify what those mean for sustainability," Cooke says. "Most of the [37,000 U.S.] grocers don't know what quantifiable value means to the store [in energy, waste and operational savings]. They sometimes don't realize their role in the community. Americans go to the grocery store twice a week, so stores can demonstrate sustainability."

Cooke says Manomet chose grocery stores to measure because they are among the top businesses impacting the planet, and thus can benefit from sustainability measures. LEDs, for example, can help cut costs. Manomet already has 700 stores in its certificate program, including Hannaford Bros.' 189 stores. Each store saves an average of \$70,000 annually on energy and waste. Another \$20,000 can be had in inexpensive-to-implement operational efficiencies, he says. Of the 700 stores, 500 have earned certificates and the rest are in the process of doing so.

In addition to savings, such good business stewardship also attracts increasingly sophisticated consumers looking for stores with environmentally and community friendly missions. Research by Cone Communications of Boston found that 71% of millennials and 63% of overall Americans hope businesses will take the lead to drive social and environmental change going forward in the absence of government regulation. Globally, that number rises to 91% of consumers expecting companies to do more than make a profit.

### Rallying the troops

Corporate and social responsibility measures translate to employees as well, attracting some to work at such companies or staying with them and working more efficiently. Cooke points to a Gallup report finding that stores engaging their employees in sustainability measures are 18% more profitable and 18% more productive.

"We give employee engagement more points than energy installation," he says of Manomet's rating system.

Frey says Bow Street sends emails to its teams to communicate what the store has achieved in sustainability measures. Bow Street has about \$15 million in revenue and is profitable, he adds. It has 109 employees in 15,000 square feet of space. LED lighting and other measures are helping improve profitability in what is a cut-throat competitive market with narrow margins vying for consumers.

Bow Street uses low-energy LEDs for all of its track lighting, and has replaced the fluorescent lights in its 55 refrigerator cases with LEDs. The latter translated into a \$40 savings per door per year to total \$2,200 saved annually. With those LEDs already in place, Bow Street is in the process of putting LED lamps in the 18 overhead lights in the store. It will cost a total of \$5,200, including parts and labor, to replace all the lamps, but that will result in \$1,000

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in electricity cost savings annually, making the payback about five years, Frey says. He adds that the fluorescent bulbs are easy to swap out with LEDs, which can last more than 60,000 hours versus the twice a year swap-out of fluorescents.

Bow Street also uses iceless seafood displays, which can save \$5,000 in energy compared to ice and 100,000 gallons of water a year, Cooke says. Lighting changes pay back the quickest, Cooke says, adding “every \$1 in energy efficiency is like putting \$18 into the revenue stream.” That includes keeping seals tight on freezers and meat coolers so they don’t leak and require extra energy to keep cool. Each leaky door, he says, can cost the store \$2 to \$5 a day.

## Scoring above 100

In the end, Bow Street scored 102, more than the 100 required for a small store.

“What stood out is their conscious effort to design the store to use as a community gathering center,” Cooke said. “There are seats and tables when you come into the store, and the locally sourced meat is right there when you walk in, and is highlighted [on a blackboard].”

Bow Street moved into its current facility in May 2011, with the Nappi family owners aiming for an appealing, open environment.

“Some people shop here to four times a day, coming in for coffee, lunch and shopping,” Frey says. “We are designed as a community market where neighbors meet neighbors while going up and down the aisles.”

Cooke looks for different things as he strolls the aisles: organic items, easily accessible displays, clearly marked foods, especially those sourced locally. An environmental scientist by training, he formerly worked for the Maine Department of Environmental Protection and developed the Maine Green Lodging Certification Program. Meadowmere Resort and Beachmere Inn, both in Ogunquit, have the certificate.

Manomet’s grocery operation is a fee-for-service program. Manomet is funded through grants, donors and founda-

tions. Hannaford became the first chain to have all of its stores certified, followed by Weis Supermarkets, which is based in Sunbury, Pa., and has 200 supermarkets, and Giant Eagle, which is based in Pittsburgh and has 232 supermarkets and 195 convenience stores. Locally, three independent stores in addition to Bow Street have been certified: Rising Tide Community Market in Damariscotta, Royal River Natural Foods in Freeport and Lois’ Natural Marketplace in Scarborough. Whole Foods in Portland also is certified.

Grocers aiming to get Manomet Grocery Stewardship Certification typically pay \$1,500 per store. There are some grants to cover the cost. Bow Street’s entire fee was covered by Jane’s Trust in Boston, which has supported up to 20 independent grocers in Maine and New Hampshire.

Cooke works from a checklist of questions typically filled in by the store manager before his arrival. They include how many pull-down shades are in open store refrigerated cases, how much ice is used for product displays and which departments divert food waste or donate food to food banks and other organizations.

There also is a workbook with 400 to 500 points for other things, like whether the refrigerant used to cool the store and its various cases is non-ozone depleting like Bow Street’s use of 40AA and whether there is a refrigeration heat recovery system for hot water to wash dishes and other items in the store.

The certification lasts for three years. The store will then need to recertify, going through the review process again, but needing to up its point total to 130, showing improved sustainability measures, Cooke says.

For all that work, Frey says Bow will get a sticker for its front door and post its certification on Facebook. And that, he says, will help educate consumers about the store’s commitment to sustainability.

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APRIL 26, 2017

## Giant Eagle gets chainwide sustainability certification

By Keith Loria

### Dive Brief:

- » Giant Eagle has implemented its Grocery Stewardship Certification program chain wide, which incorporates operational sustainability best practices in all of its stores, according to Progressive Grocer.
- » Launched five years ago, the GSC is still the only certification program to focus on both high-performance buildings and employee practices and procedures in regards to sustainability.
- » Giant Eagle's sustainability achievements were recognized by the EPA's GreenChill, Energy Star and the Green Power Partnership programs. Additionally, it received the 2014 Clean Fuels of Ohio Certified Three-Star Green Fleets Award and certificate of commendation for environmentally friendly contributions.

### Dive Insight:

Pittsburgh-based Giant Eagle first made a commitment to sustainability in 2015, and it has worked hard to lower its environmental impact and save resources in all of its stores and company headquarters. Giant Eagle is the first chain to successfully certify all of its participating investment they have put into the GSC.

Thanks to its efforts, the retailer saves nearly 6,000 tons of waste from going to landfills annually, conserves more than 45 million gallons of water and prevents nearly 260,000 tons of greenhouse gas from being released.

Grocery stores can be some of the largest corporate energy users. According to statistics from Energy Star and cited by the Alliance to Save Energy, average-sized grocery stores not using sustainability measures can spend more than \$200,000 on energy and release 1,900 tons of carbon emissions. So sustainability measures can impact stores' bottom line as well.

Consumers have shown a preference for shopping in stores that focus on sustainability and care about the environment. Retailers are learning that it's a growing necessity for success. Having this kind of certification, which shows grocers how to optimize their energy, waste and water costs and processes, can help a store stand out in a crowded market, putting more commitment behind sustainability promises. According to Manomet, which operates the program, nearly 700 stores participate — a small minority of the nation's stores. There is certainly room for more stores to join the trend.

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APRIL 21, 2017

## Giant Eagle Deploys Grocery Stewardship Certification Program Chain-wide

Giant Eagle has achieved chain-wide implementation of the Grocery Stewardship Certification program, based on its commitment to incorporating operational sustainability best practices in stores, decreasing its environmental impact and saving resources. The Pittsburgh-based grocer has been working toward this goal since 2015.

Further, having previously received, in a pilot program, certification for a district comprising 25 stores, the supermarket operator has now garnered certification for another 175 locations.

“Giant Eagle has long been dedicated to conserving natural resources through the implementation of environmentally minded business practices and specialized training methods,” said company spokesman Dan Donovan. “The Grocery Stewardship Certification has provided us a unique opportunity to further engage our team members in the company-wide investment in sustainability.”

Plymouth, Mass.-based sustainability nonprofit Manomet, the administrator of GSC, estimates that Giant Eagle annually saves nearly 6,000 tons of waste from going to landfills, more than 45 million gallons of water from being used and about 260,000 tons of greenhouse gas from being released.

“Giant Eagle has set a strong example for other food retailers with their work on sustainability,” noted GSC Program Manager Peter Cooke. “They are the first chain to successfully certify all of their participating investment they have put into the GSC, and other sustainability initiatives will help them operate more efficiently, save money and resources, and ensure a better future for their employees, customers and communities.”

Additional sustainability efforts at Giant Eagle, the 2016 *Progressive Grocer* Retailer of the Year, include recognition by the EPA’s GreenChill, Energy Star and the Green Power Partnership programs, and the 2014 Clean Fuels of Ohio Certified Three-Star Green Fleets Award and Certificate of Commendation from the Ohio Senator for environmentally friendly contributions.

Since its launch in 2012, the GSC, the only certification program to focus not only on high-performance buildings, but also employee practices and procedures to engage all stores within a chain, has worked with more than a dozen retailers in the United States and Canada.

Giant Eagle operates more than 410 multiformat food, fuel and pharmacy stores throughout western Pennsylvania, Ohio, northern West Virginia, Maryland and Indiana.

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environmental  
**LEADER**

OCTOBER 28, 2016

## Environmental Management Saves Grocery Chain \$23 Million

By Jessica Lyons Hardcastle

Hannaford Supermarkets saved more than \$23 million annually, or \$125,000 per store, last year through its environmental sustainability efforts, according to Manomet, the nonprofit that manages the Grocery Stewardship Certification program.

Hannaford is the first food retail chain nationally to use the Grocery Stewardship Certification to benchmark its annual sustainability progress. The program has now enrolled nearly 700 stores and more than a dozen retailers.

“With its large footprint and usage of resources, the grocery sector is one of the most critical sectors to engage in the effort to reduce the effects of climate change,” Manomet’s Danielle Sarmir told Environmental Leader. “Grocery chains across the country have an immensely hard time managing for sustainability. The GSC helps food retailers by providing them with consistency and accountability at the store-level for their sustainability practices, as well as recommending best practices going forward.”

At Hannaford, these practices include:

- » The Hannaford Zero Waste program. Developed by Hannaford, it encourages employee engagement and accountability through internal competition between stores and districts.
- » Installing LEDs throughout the stores and putting doors on dairy coolers.
- » Transitioning to low-flow pre-rinse spray valves in many stores.
- » Implementing more consistency with daily operational sustainability tasks like pulling down nightshades in the produce section.

This and other “little stuff,” Sarmir says, “has big energy efficiency pay-backs and costs nothing.”

As a result of these and other operating practices, Hannaford is annually saving 78,000 tons of waste from going to landfills and nearly 97 million gallons of water from being used. It also prevents more than 261,000 tons of greenhouse gases from being released.

The total value of these sustainability practices in 2015 includes an additional \$5.4 million in savings from newly measurable practices that were not quantified by the GSC in 2014, Manomet says.

“The Grocery Stewardship Certification program provides Hannaford with tools to quantify and benchmark how our stores are saving energy, reducing waste and cutting greenhouse-gas emissions,” said George Parmenter, manager of sustainability for Hannaford in a statement. “We work hard to implement a comprehensive sustainability program in each of our stores and at our corporate headquarters, so that we can minimize our environmental impact. The GSC helps us to do that.”

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