



excellence in
GREEN

Garten Services, Wildwood/Mahonia and Spring Valley Dairy win Marion County's Green Awards

Beth Casper Special to Salem Statesman Journal | USA TODAY NETWORK

Garten Services, Wildwood/Mahonia and Spring Valley Dairy took home prestigious Green Awards at the first-ever Sustainability Luncheon in February.

Marion County's Green Awards recognize organizations that excel in eco-friendly practices. These three longtime Salem businesses showcase how sustainability enhances business, creates new opportunities and saves money.

Each of them has been certified EarthWISE through Marion County, but their eco-friendly practices extend far beyond the program's parameters. The EarthWISE program is a free business environmental assistance program of Marion County. EarthWISE staff helps businesses recycle, save energy, reduce waste and much more.

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"We love to help businesses that use Oregon-grown agricultural products."

John Miller
President and founder of Wildwood/Mahonia

Garten offers refurbished computers, monitors, and computing odds and ends at their electronics outlet. PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

Wildwood Mahonia performs a rescue relocation of an at-risk species, the Oregon white oak.

By plugging Spring Valley's refrigerated trucks up to an electrical source instead of letting them idle, they save over 2,500 gallons of diesel fuel each year.

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Garten Services

"Garten Services epitomizes what it means to be a sustainable business because they take so seriously the three Es of sustainability: environmental stewardship, social equity and economic vitality," Marion County waste reduction coordinator Bailey Payne said as he presented the Nonprofit of the Year Green Award.

Garten provides jobs to hundreds of people with disabilities in recycling, commercial laundry, mail services, packaging and assembly, custodial services and secure document destruction. Its daybreak program in Dallas and South Salem provides day activities and other enrichment activities to another 250 people with disabilities.

In its recycling operation, Garten has discovered several new opportunities that have expanded job opportunities as well as helped the environment.

In the electronics recycling area, a team of workers refurbishes computers to be sold in Garten's store or on eBay. For general recycling, workers are trained to notice still-good items and pull them off the conveyor belt. Workers have gleaned paper, file folders and metal file cabinets.

The Garten Electronics and Reuse Store has been so successful that it opens its doors twice as often as it did in the past.

Wildwood/Mahonia

Similarly, Wildwood/Mahonia has found that sustainability makes for great business.

Wildwood/Mahonia is a family of companies whose holdings include a plant nursery and sustainable vineyard.



Wildwood Mahonia's Bill Lucas, John Miller and Deb Cozzie, receive a 2018 EarthWISE Green Award.

PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

innovative green buildings rented to local environmentally-minded businesses and community efforts such as an annual literary and arts publication that honors watershed restoration. In each endeavor, the company incorporates community service.

Wildwood/Mahonia took home the Small EarthWISE Business of the Year Green Award.

Its businesses include Woodscape Glen, the first-of-its-kind sustainable residential development; Mahonia Vineyard, which is certified by two different eco-friendly certification companies; Mahonia Nursery, where rare white oaks are grown after being rescued from development sites; and developments such as the East Pringle Innovation Center, a 12-acre development with a solar thermal hot water system, solar panels and energy-efficient lighting and HVAC systems designed to be a hub for food processing and agriculture-related businesses.

"We love to help businesses that use Oregon-grown agricultural products grow and prosper," said John Miller, president and founder of Wildwood/Mahonia. "Energy efficiency improves their bottom line and their 'green' practices help them in the marketplace."



Gaelen McAllister and Tim Rocak accept a 2018 EarthWISE Green Award for Sustainable Non-Profit of the Year.



Stephanie Hoy and her parents, Jayne and Gordy Hoy, received a 2018 EarthWISE Green Award for Sustainable Large Business of the Year.

Spring Valley Dairy

The third winner of a 2018 Green Award, Spring Valley Dairy, underscores the fact that businesses can go green and also save money. Spring Valley Dairy received the Large EarthWISE Business of the Year Green Award.

Spring Valley Dairy, which keeps restaurants and coffee shops supplied with fresh dairy products, examines all of its resource use to find ways to reduce waste.

"Spring Valley Dairy has also done a lot to reduce paper waste," Payne said. "By going digital, they now save 8,400 reams of paper a year ... We feel lucky to have a business like Spring Valley Dairy here in Marion County."

The switch also means money saved due to accuracy — inventory is rarely lost now that the handheld computers scan and track everything.

The company is so deliberate about its waste-not mentality that it is even paying attention to how many paper checks it sends to its employees. Spring Valley's goal is 100 percent direct deposit and it has almost reached its goal.

For a company that needs to deliver fresh products to customers in a timely

manner, a fleet of trucks is a priority. But it isn't a drain on the environment for Spring Valley Dairy.

The trucks themselves have been overhauled to meet the green standards at the dairy. Of the 50-truck fleet, 16 of them are equipped with plug-ins to run on electricity when not being driven. This is important for a dairy that relies on cold temperatures in the truck container overnight to preserve its product until the drivers arrive to deliver along their routes.

By hooking these trucks up to an electrical source instead of letting them idle, Spring Valley Dairy saves 2,500 gallons of diesel fuel each year. Even the ones that don't plug in are on an automated start-stop switch so that they are not running constantly.

"A lot of the time, being more environmentally friendly completely coincides with saving money," said Stephanie Hoy of Spring Valley Dairy. "A lot of the time, the best cost savings is the cleanest, greenest way to do things."

For more information, go to garten.org, wildwoodco.com, or springvalleydairy.com. To learn about the EarthWISE program, visit mcEarthWISE.org or call 503 365-3188.