

Measuring & Communicating (Beyond) Organic Benefits

A Business Perspective

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Framing the Discussion

- **Direct /Intrinsic Benefits**
 - Health, Nutrition, Environmental
- **Associated Benefits**
 - Sustainability, Social Responsibility
- **Why are associated benefits relevant?**
 - Sustain organic farming and business
 - Honor our values and stakeholders' trust
- **Why Communicate?**
 - Create and own organic messaging
 - Drive leading practices, build the movement

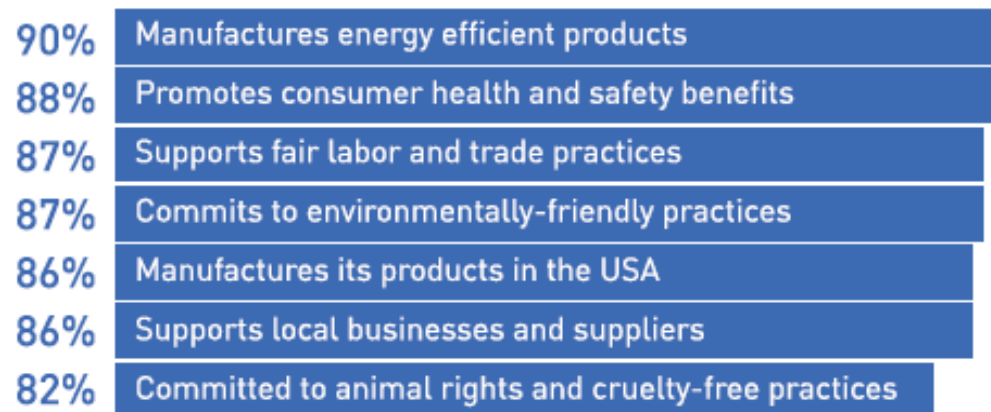


Stakeholder Perspective

Consumer Values

- 93% feel businesses are obligated to improve their impact

Desired Company Practices:



- 51%-61% avoid unethical brands/products
- 65% would recommend responsible brands and pay more
- 79% of *employees* want employers with aligned values
- 85% of *investors* prefer socially responsible companies

Measurement Landscape

Principles — Framework

- Organic, Permaculture, Natural Step



Protocol — “How To”

- FTSLA Member Kit
- Natural Step (ABCD)
- Greenhouse Gas Protocol



Standard – Set of Criteria

- USDA Organic
- Sustainable Ag Standard, Fair Trade, Rainforest Alliance, ISO 40001



Measurement Landscape

Metrics — Accounting

- Global Reporting Initiative
- FTSLA
- Stewardship Index for Specialty Crops



Tools — Calculators

- Still a developing area—choose carefully
- On-line, Software, Climate Registries, Spreadsheets



Research and Collaboration

- OFRF, Organic Center, OTA, E-Newsletters, Forums



Example: FTSLA Metrics

- Organics
- Distribution
- Energy
- Climate change
- Water
- Waste
- Packaging
- Labor
- Animal rights
- Consumer education
- Governance



Example: FTSLA Metrics

Energy / Electric

- Annual Electric Usage – kwh purchased; if possible include energy sources if possible including coal, nuclear, geothermal, wind, hydro, etc.
- Electricity Usage and Efficiency-kwh per square foot of space.
- Electricity Usage and Efficiency-kwh per pound of production.



Product Packaging

- Amount of Packaging Avoided Due to Conservation/Efficiency–pounds.
- Volume of Packaging used per year – pounds.
- Amount of Reusable Packaging - % of total packaging
- Amount of Recycled Content of Packaging -% of packaging materials



Ethical Sourcing

- Provide vendor statements on their labor practices.
- List fair trade or other ethical sourcing certifications.
- Sales of fair trade % of total sales by \$ or weight.



Example: FTSLA Member Results

- Packaging

- Nature's Path: "EnviroBoxes, Saved 144 tons of paperboard via 10% packaging reduction



- Water

- SunOpta: Saved > 85 million gals. of water via upgrades, improvements, conservation



- Waste/Composting

- Heath and Lejeune cut waste 25% annually, Amy's Kitchen diverts 743 tons from landfills monthly



Communications Best Practices

Use an Integrated, Comprehensive Approach

- Product
- Packaging
- Media
- Events
- Website
- E-Newsletters
- CSR/Sustainability Report
 - FTSLA Member: Organic Valley Annual Report



Communications Best Practices

Connect With Your Audience

- Keep all stakeholders in mind
- Honor diversity
- Highlight personal and shared benefits
- Use down to earth language
- Tap market research: Hartmann Group, Natural Marketing Institute, OTA, Grocery Manufacturer's Association



Communications Best Practices

To Thine Own Self Be True

- Tie to brand/product
- Reference wider commitment
- Don't overstate or greenwash (FTC Green Guides)
- Prove it
 - 3rd party logos
 - Cite relevant research
 - Share metrics



Communications Best Practices

Accentuate the Positive

- Highlight how organic adds value, not just what's “left out”
- Sew seeds of truth to counter the weeds of misinformation

Use Sustainable Messaging

- Transcend Trends
- Speak to basic, lasting values



Example: OTA's "Organic, It's Worth It"

- Highlights key benefits, personal/local & global
- Media outreach and communications materials
- Viral marketing through membership
- Taps social media

Organic. It's worth it.



When you choose organic, you do more than help yourself. You're making a difference for your family, the home in which you live and the environment around us. You're also investing in your future. It's worth it.



*Organic.
It's worth it.*

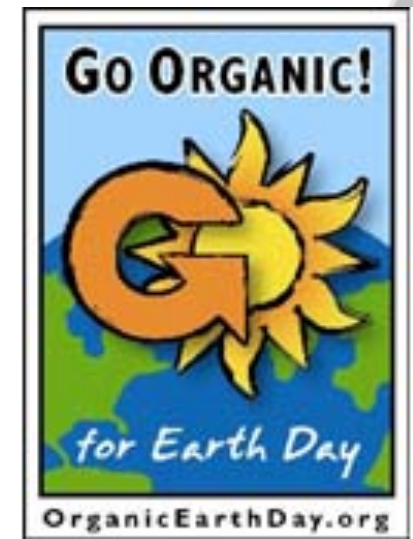


Example: Go Organic for Earth Day

- Fully integrated marketing
- Clearly defines organic and its benefits
- Broad partnership
- Taps social media, provides incentives and tools



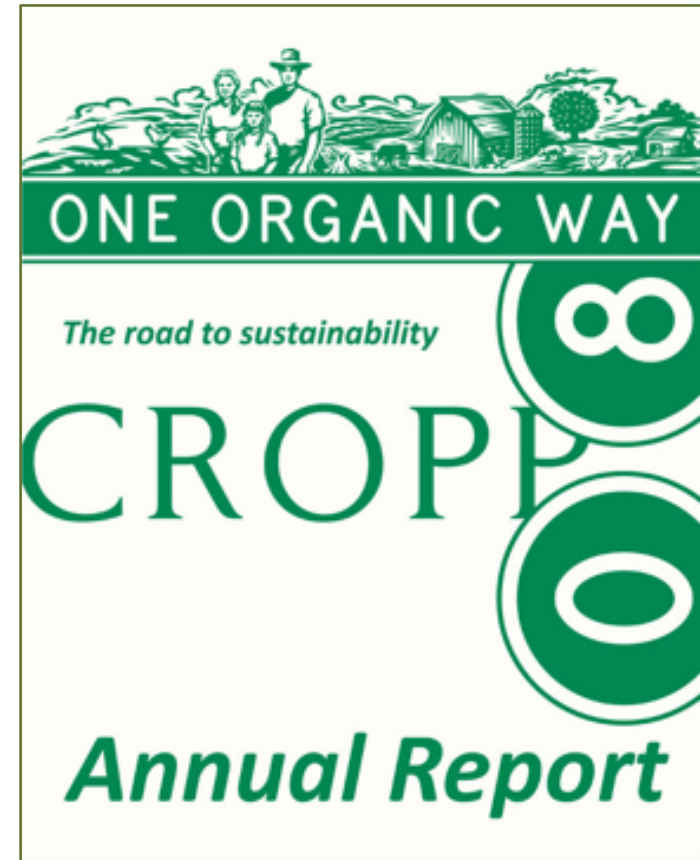
The screenshot shows the homepage of the "Go Organic! for earth day" website. At the top left is the logo, which consists of a stylized orange and yellow sun with a large letter 'G' in the center. To the right of the logo, the text "GO ORGANIC!" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, with "for earth day" in a smaller, cursive font below it. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a photograph of a green field under a blue sky with white clouds. To the right of the photo is the heading "Go Organic! for Earth Day" followed by a dotted line and a paragraph of introductory text. Below this is a section titled "Why should you Go Organic?" with three sub-sections: "For Health!", "For the Planet!", and "It's Easy!". The right column contains a vertical navigation menu with links for "Home", "Organic 101", "Our Favorite Organic Brands", "Find a Grocery Store Near You", "Quick and Easy Organic Recipes", "Meet Our Spokespeople!", "Go Organic! Sweepstakes", "Home", "Media", and "About Us".



Example: FTSLA Members

Organic Valley

- Annual Report theme: “Road to Sustainability”
- Integrates relevant goals and results throughout
- Communicates sustainability as business foundation

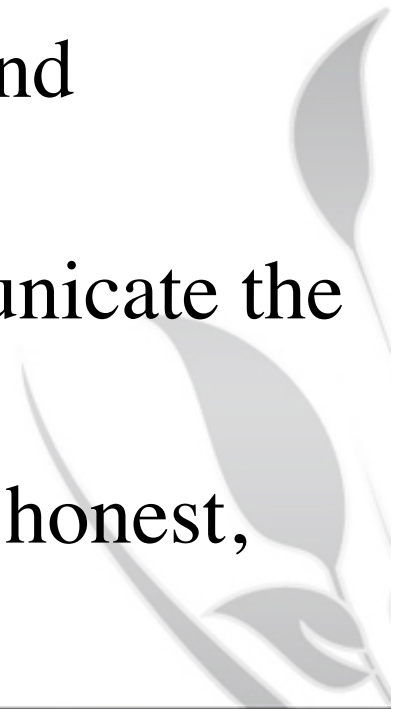


FTSLA member websites



Summary Points

- We need to go beyond organic and embrace sustainability as an operating framework
- True sustainability has wide-ranging benefits
- We must lead, raise the bar and drive wider change
- Ongoing self-assessment, improvement and collaboration are vital for success
- It's essential to be transparent and communicate the benefits of organics and sustainability
- When communicating, be clear, relevant, honest, authentic and positive



Resources & References

- Organizations and Research: [FTSLA](#), [Organic Center](#), [OFRF](#), [OTA](#)
- E-Media with Research, Communications insights: [Greener World Media](#), [Sustainable Life Media](#), [Grist](#)
- BBMG: Conscious Consumers Are Changing the Rules of Marketing. Are You Ready? (2007)
- Deloitte/GMA: Finding the Green in Today's Shoppers (2009)
- Hartmann Group: Marketing Sustainability in an Economic Downturn (2009)
- Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship: Global Pulse Study (2008)
- TNS: Global Shades of Green (2008)
- Yankelovich: Conscience at the Cash Register, Going Green (2007)

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