

Climate for Community



Profile: Veritable Vegetable

Veritable Vegetable is an organic produce distributor in San Francisco. The company invested in measures that are paying back handsomely by lowering their operating costs. With lighting and refrigeration efficiency improvements, repowering a diesel truck with natural gas, adopting comprehensive recycling and composting practices, and on-site electricity generation, Veritable Vegetable achieved greater than 7% average annual growth and avoided 400 tons of greenhouse gas emissions while expanding into a second warehouse and adding a third shift.



Employees	100
Customers	350, including neighborhood grocery stores, food co-ops and five-star restaurants
Facilities	Two warehouses with 350,000 cubic feet of refrigeration; 20 trucks
Emissions Reduction Measures	Photovoltaic electricity generation; lighting and refrigeration energy efficiency; natural gas trucks; increased waste diversion

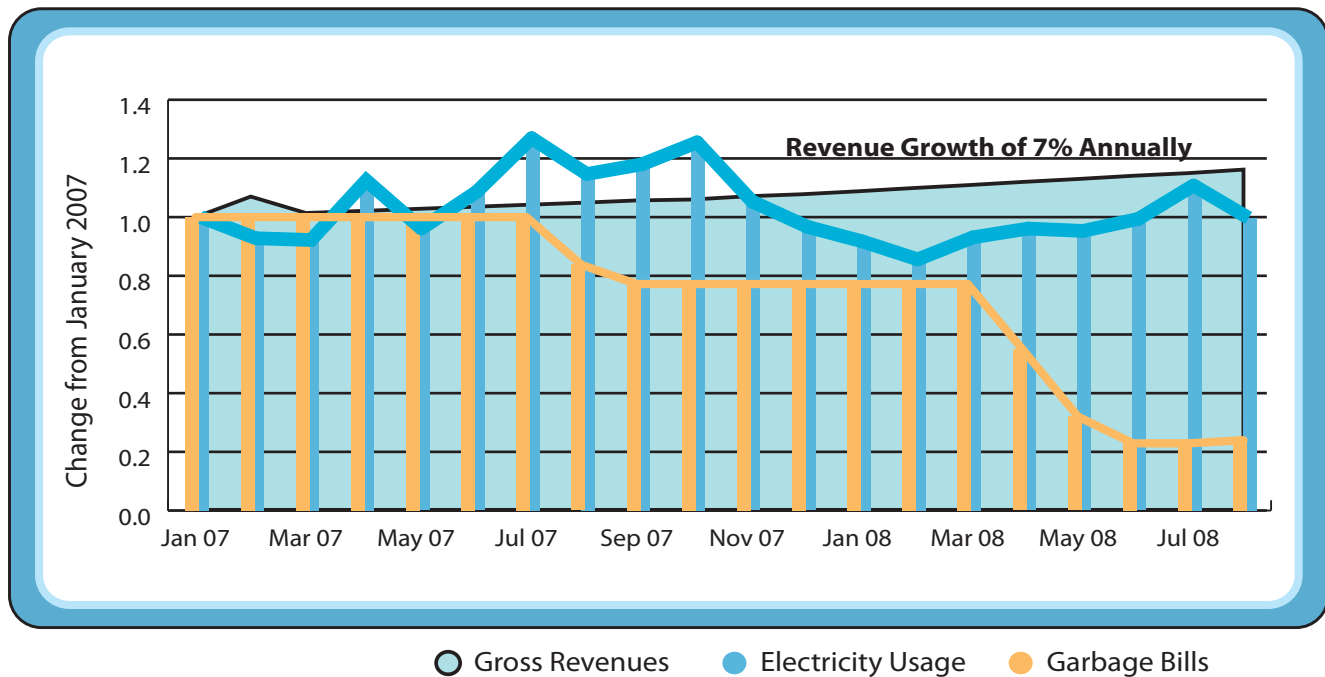
Green Elements

- **Zero Waste** – Veritable Vegetable diverts 99% of their waste from landfill, lowering their monthly garbage bill from more than \$3,000 to just \$800 over one year.
- **Smart Refrigeration** – Better temperature control technology and thicker strip doors ensure that food stays fresh without overcooling and excess electricity use.
- **Efficient Lighting** – An investment of \$2,000 in lighting improvements paid for itself in a few months of energy bill savings. Switching to energy efficient ballasts, fixtures, and bulbs, and adding motion and lumen sensors that detect natural daylight save 150,000 kilowatts and prevent about 70 tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually.
- **Solar power** - Veritable Vegetable has installed a 106-kW photovoltaic solar power system that will produce 150,000 kWh of electricity every year. With federal tax credits and state rebates, the system's cost will be recouped in four years of bill savings, and 90 tons of greenhouse gas emissions will be avoided each year for the up to a half-century life of the panels.

Less Waste Means More Profit

Veritable's waste diversion rate was at 32% in 2006, but grew to more than 99%. Currently, recycling and composting avoid more than 200 tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually.

Revenues Grow While Electricity Usage and Garbage Bills Decline



Next Steps

Window Tinting – Veritable Vegetable's old, single-pane windows provide poor insulation during the winter and allow too much heat and sunlight to enter in the summer. Customized window tinting can deflect sunlight in the summer and trap heat in the winter to provide for a more comfortable work environment without turning on heating or air conditioning.

Cleaner Vehicles – Converting their beloved "Bug Truck" to compressed natural gas reduced emissions by about 15 tons last year and saved roughly \$10,000 in fueling expenses. Nine of the fleet trucks are equipped with diesel particulate filters that capture emissions of toxic particulate matter that exacerbates the effects of global warming. The remainder of the company's truck fleet can be converted to flexible fuels and eventually replaced with hybrid engines.

Statewide Potential

Veritable Vegetable is typical of California's 24,000 commercial businesses generating over half the state's solid waste. Recycling and composting 50% of commercial waste could reduce greenhouse gas emissions by seven million tons annually.

Further Veritable Vegetable exemplifies thousands of businesses that rely on refrigeration. Commercial refrigeration systems are typically cooled using gases with thousands of times more global warming potential than carbon dioxide. These systems are poorly maintained, prone to leaks, and consume excessive amounts of energy. Repairing, retrofitting, or replacing this equipment would result in substantial energy savings and 15 million tons of greenhouse gas emission reductions.

Climate for Community: Good for the environment, families and small businesses.

Online at: www.edf.org/C4C and www.sfpower.org

Profiles produced by Environmental Defense Fund in collaboration with San Francisco Community Power. EDF and SF Power have partnered with households and small businesses to implement cost-effective greenhouse gas reductions and support green collar jobs in vulnerable communities.