



## GREENING THE SUPPLY CHAIN ORGANIC MILK IN RETURNABLE BOTTLES

CATEGORY: PURCHASING CASE STUDY YEAR: 2007

Polemonium Plantery  
Trimdon Grange

County Durham



<http://www.polemonium.co.uk/bandb.html>

### Description:

Milk purchases can amount to a significant proportion of the waste stream. This is because the waste is plastic and has only limited use and value as a waste product. Local milk suppliers can be encouraged to adopt traditional green practices through the use of returnable bottles and switching to organic milk supplies. Not only has this helped reduced the B&B's waste problems but it serves as an opportunity for a local supplier to establish a delivery system for a wide range of products. Thirty years ago milk deliveries were widespread but nowadays with competition from supermarkets many of these operators have disappeared and traditional electric milk floats are rare sights. Supporting local businesses and helping to maintain traditional good practices with a modern eco message is vital for a sustainable future.



#### Economic

Polemonium Plantery a GOLD award business found a local supplier who could supply organic semi skimmed milk in returnable bottles. This supplier helps the business reduce waste by such a volume as to avoid any commercial waste charges. Plastic Milk cartons can make up to 25% of volume of waste in small operations.

**Cost of Project:** No additional costs

**Savings Made:** Avoids the need for regular travel to supermarkets

**Payback Time:** Immediate



#### Environmental

The savings associated with the avoidance of vehicle use is significant. In addition avoiding purchasing through supermarkets and using local deliveries of farm produce ensures a direct connection with seasonal suppliers and reduces transportation costs. Research carried out by the Government (DEFRA) outlines that locally sourced produce has a carbon emission approximately 5 times less than that of general supermarket produce.



#### Social

Using local suppliers helps to keep money within the local economy and supports local enterprise. Using local delivery organisations helps to establish lower car use and support a more sustainable local production delivery structure. Further social benefits are associated with avoiding landfill associated with single use packaging.

#### WEB

Acorn Dairy: <http://www.acorndairy.co.uk>

Farmarounorth Organic: <http://www.farmarounorth.co.uk>