



Facilities Operations and Development

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DATE: December 2012
TO: AASHE STARS
FROM: Corey Hawkey, Sustainability Coordinator
RE: Zero Waste at Ohio Stadium

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to endorse The Ohio State University's *Zero Waste at Ohio Stadium* program as a fulfillment for AASHE STARS Innovation Credit. The program was initiated for the 2011 football season for all home games. The project continued thru the 2012 football season and is now seen as an ongoing endeavor.

Zero Waste is defined as a 90 percent diversion rate of materials such as food, paper products and plastics away from landfills. This initiative continues Ohio State's effort to control the 60 tons of materials that is generated from each season and move toward minimization, recycling or reuse.

The program has been a team effort from day one bringing together a team from the office of sustainability, Department of Athletics, students, food vendor, sports marketing, local compost facility, regional hauler, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections, and the Vera Institute of Justice. Funded in part by an internal grant of \$50,000 from the President's and Provost's Council on Sustainability and from sponsorships acquired because of the program, the program will continue in the years to come.

Ohio Stadium is the largest stadium in the country to attempt zero waste. Official stadium seating capacity is 102,329. In 2011, Ohio State had a 61.2% reduction in stadium trash compared to 2010. The highest diversion rate for the 2011 season was 82.4% for the Indiana game. During the 2012 season, the program achieved its highest success rate with a diversion of 98.2% of the game day materials from the Illinois game. Only 447 pounds (0.004 lbs per person) were sent to the landfill.

Ohio State has been recognized in many publications and media outlets as a leader in collegiate sports recycling. The Ohio State University was declared the Diversion Rate Champion winner of the 2012 Game Day Challenge out performing much smaller venues.

The *Zero Waste at Ohio Stadium* program is considered the foundation to expand Zero Waste across one of the largest campuses in the world by 2030. But, this program has never been only about Ohio State, from the beginning Ohio State wanted to help others reach their goals too. During the 2012 season, Ohio State welcomed guests from thirteen other institutions to observe the program and met with representatives from all over the country.

Ohio State has demonstrated innovation in achieving such high diversion rates at such a large venue, accomplishing the goal with unprecedented partnerships, and through sharing our experience so others can achieve similar success.

With over seven years of experience in sustainability in higher education I can say with certainty that this program will be viewed as a turning point for collegiate sport recycling programs.



Corey Hawkey
Sustainability Coordinator

Reference:

<http://sustainability.osu.edu/zerowaste>

<http://gamedaychallenge.org/results/>