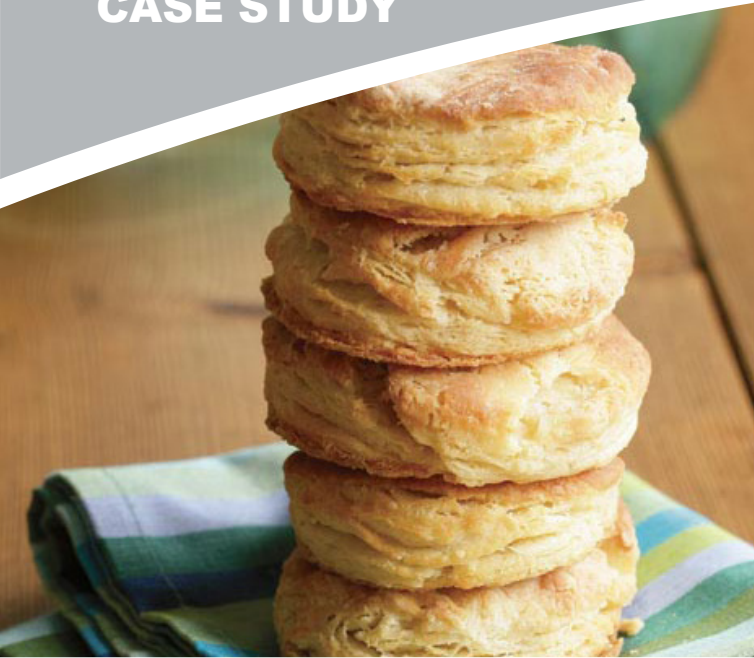


CASE STUDY



Bama Companies

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE BE SUCCESSFUL™

THE PERFECT RECIPE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

You might not know the name The Bama Companies, Inc. (Bama) but you've probably eaten one of its biscuits, hand-held pies or pizza dough at leading restaurants across the country. Supplying oven-ready products to customers in over 20 countries utilizing facilities based in the U.S., China and Poland, Bama has grown to become a leading innovator of wholesome bakery products, catering to some of the largest and most well-known restaurant chains in the world.

From its beginnings in the 1920s, Bama, headquartered in Tulsa, OK, has built a manufacturing organization dedicated to innovation and quality. A key component of this dedication is the vision, drive and commitment from Bama's Owner/CEO, Paula Marshall – to be engaged as a company in continual improvement and minimizing waste – even before the practices of recycling and reusing materials became established elements of successful sustainability programs. Over time, Bama has been able to repurpose its food waste for animal feed and has evaluated and improved the packaging of its own products and that of its vendors and suppliers.

"It's just the right thing to do," said J.K. Evicks, Bama's Environmental Manager. "But even as we worked with employees and our partners, we still found we had almost five percent of our waste that could not be recycled or reused, making it challenging to reach our goal of zero waste-to-landfill by 2017."

THE PARTNERSHIP BEGINS

"We were really pleased to be asked to work with Bama on their journey to zero waste," said Jennifer Minney, Solutions Sales Manager for Covanta Environmental Solutions. "From visiting their sites we knew that they had a good plan and we made recommendations to help get them over the hump and out of landfills. Our business is waste and it's our job to find options and deliver long-term sustainable solutions for our customers."

And find options they did. Within eight months of an initial waste audit, Bama started sending its compacted waste to Covanta's Tulsa Energy-from-Waste facility. Once at Covanta Tulsa, the waste is used as fuel to create electricity and steam used by neighboring Tulsa businesses. "What's great about working with Covanta is that they value partnerships as much as we do," said Evicks. "For example, we wanted recycling options for bulk vegetable oil. Although not part of our scope of work with Covanta, they partnered with us to find a sustainable option, furthering our zero waste-to-landfill mission. Covanta listens and provides consultation and ideas." Thanks to Paula Marshall's vision, Bama officially achieved zero waste-to-landfill in 2014.

Jennifer Minney
sporting her pink hard
hat and vest.

"We had almost 5% of our waste that couldn't be recycled or reused, making it challenging to reach our goal of zero waste-to-landfill by 2017."

J.K. Evicks, Bama's
Environmental Manager





GENERATING EXCITEMENT AND SUPPORT AMONG EMPLOYEES

Reflecting on their zero waste journey, Terral Eichelberger, Bama’s Shipping and Receiving Manager, explained, “Identifying the waste and what to do it with it was painful at times. However, the experience made us aware of the impact waste had on our community and the environment. It took some time but eventually we understood it was the right thing to do.”

Eichelberger credits Evicks for explaining the value of recycling and keeping it top-of-mind with employees throughout the journey. “He often spoke to us about reuse and that became a very important aspect of the program for employees. Many on the team began to look not just at what we did, but what our vendors and suppliers were sending and made suggestions to those businesses about how they could improve.”

Evicks agrees that one of the secrets to Bama’s success is continual reinforcement of the purpose and benefits of such a sustainability program.

“Having a champion – a leader that is driving the recycling/sustainability initiative – is one of the first things I would tell other businesses to do if they are looking to get to zero landfill. But you also need to know what waste you have. You need to get in there and ‘dumpster dive’ to get a full picture of the opportunities as you engage employees and get them excited about making significant changes.”

J.K. Evicks
Bama Companies
Environmental Manager

The hard work to generate support internally did not go unnoticed by customers or the community. In fact, Bama received several awards and recognition for their efforts including the Environmental Federation of Oklahoma’s Frank Condon Award in 2013. “We’ve been recognized for what we’ve been able to accomplish and that’s important for the teams and the community but the real value is in being able to share our best practices and help others on the sustainability journey,” said Evicks.

Frank Condon Award given to Bama in 2013

