

## NYSP2I Supports DeRuyter Big M with Reducing Environmental Footprint

DeRuyter Big M has been in business for approximately 44 years serving customers in DeRuyter, NY and the surrounding area. Locally owned and operated, DeRuyter Big M offers a variety of cut to order meats, a full service deli and bakery, and custom platters and cakes, all from a friendly and knowledgeable staff.

### CHALLENGE

Big M Supermarkets strive to provide the highest quality products and services at the most competitive prices in a welcoming environment. In its commitment to the community, DeRuyter Big M wanted to identify and prioritize opportunities to reduce their cost and environmental impacts.

The goal was to identify cost effective solutions to conserve water, reduce toxic and hazardous materials such as cleaning products, and manage organic and food waste, to improve the environmental footprint of the State.

### SOLUTION

New York State Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP2I) at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) conducted an on-site environmental assessment at the DeRuyter Big M as part of their Sustainable Grocer Pilot. This program analyzes and assists with managing supply chain and food waste to reduce environmental impacts and operating costs to improve the footprint of the New York State (NYS) grocery industry.

Prior to NYSP2I's assessment, DeRuyter Big M completed an environmental checklist to identify opportunity areas where the supermarket can improve and provided guidance for NYSP2I during the assessment. NYSP2I reviewed DeRuyter Big M's environmental checklist, performed an on-site assessment, and identified cost effective solutions to conserve water, reduce toxins and hazardous materials such as cleaning products, and manage organic and food waste.

### RESULTS

Results from the assessment show that DeRuyter Big M has practices in place to minimize water use, food waste, electricity use, waste cooking oil, and recycling of bottles, cans and cardboard.

To conserve water it is recommended that DeRuyter Big M verify the kitchen pre-rinse spray nozzle is low flow and add low flow aerators to the sink faucets in the restrooms. Low-flow nozzles and low-flow aerators reduce the amount of water used while still allowing efficient water flow.

NYSP2I suggested replacing cleaning products with environmentally preferable alternatives. Current cleaning products used contain ingredients, which may cause skin burns and eye damage and are potentially hazardous to the environment once rinsed down the drain. NYSP2I suggests the sanitizer be replaced with a more environmentally friendly alternative. Replacing traditional cleaning products with eco-friendly products would greatly improve the day-to-day environmental impact.

### CHALLENGE

- Identify cost effective solutions to conserve water, reduce toxic and hazardous materials such as cleaning products, and manage organic and food waste, to improve the environmental footprint of the State

### SOLUTION

- NYSP2I conducted an on-site environmental assessment at the DeRuyter Big M as part of their Sustainable Grocer Pilot
- DeRuyter Big M completed an environmental checklist prior NYSP2I's assessment, identifying opportunity areas

### RESULTS

- DeRuyter Big M has practices in place to minimize water use, food waste, electricity use, waste cooking oil, and recycling of bottles, cans and cardboard
- Conserve water by verifying the kitchen pre-rinse spray nozzle is low flow and adding low flow aerators to the sink faucets in restrooms
- Replace cleaning products with environmentally preferable alternatives and replace the sanitizers with a more environmentally friendly alternative
- To extend the life of produce and reduce the amount of food waste sent to the landfill, use ethylene absorbing products
- Increase energy efficiency by switching to more energy efficient hand dryers
- Replace styrofoam packaging
- Formalize a sustainability plan



To extend the life of produce and reduce the amount of food waste sent to the landfill, it was recommended to use ethylene absorbing products. As fresh fruits and vegetables ripen, they release ethylene gas which accelerates ripening and leads to quick spoilage. Ethylene absorbing products inserted into produce packaging will absorb the gas and thus extend the shelf life of produce without compromising product quality.

NYSP2I's recommends increasing energy efficiency by switching to more energy efficient hand dryers. DeRuyter Big M has the potential to increase energy savings, water efficiency, reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and improve indoor environmental quality through installing Eco-friendly hand dryers in the restrooms.

The use of biodegradable packaging such as plant based plastics, plant fiber clamshells, or paper serving trays instead of Styrofoam packaging would allow the material to be recyclable after contact with food.

Lastly, formalizing their sustainability program with a written plan will provide a road-map for future environmental initiatives and shows staff and customers their strong commitment to the environment.



## NYSP2I PARTNERS



New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership

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