

## Certified Zero-Waste

### THE CHALLENGE

Produce companies reach out to Measure to Improve, LLC for help starting a zero-waste initiative for a variety of reasons:

- **Organic waste** (culls) is a huge proportion of a company's waste and disposal is becoming more difficult and expensive – MTI can help identify new and potentially revenue generating alternatives
- Waste hauling and landfill **costs keep increasing** – MTI can help reduce costs
- A company's **reputation is at risk** from embarrassment (and fines) from the huge volume of waste to landfill including branded packaging – MTI can reduce waste to landfill by identifying recycling or composting alternatives and auditing onsite waste separation
- **Increasing market pressure** from Buyers with sustainability surveys – MTI's approach to zero waste is a low-cost program to get a company started with quick results to report to buyers. And, by going the extra step for Zero Waste certification, companies earn third-party validation and recognition.



Companies on a zero-waste journey continuously strive to reduce, reuse and recycle materials to dramatically decrease waste to landfill. A zero-waste initiative is not an “all or nothing” proposition. By incrementally diverting materials like cardboard, organics, and plastic packaging from landfill, companies are helping to conserve natural resources, decrease greenhouse gas emissions that effect climate change, and reduce air, water and soil pollution from the extraction, manufacturing and disposal of materials.

### IMPACT: MEASURABLE RESULTS

MTI is the produce industry's go-to expert for waste reduction programs and Zero Waste certifications. Collectively, the zero waste initiatives MTI has helped to launch have achieved:

- **Saved over 4 million dollars** from avoided costs and rebates
- **Eliminated 57 million pounds** of materials from landfill
  - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 161,353 megatons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MTCO<sub>2</sub>e)
  - Comparable to the annual emissions from 34,258 passenger cars or saving over 18 million gallons of gasoline
- **Achieved an average 95% diversion rate** for our clients, exceeding the minimum required for zero waste
- **Trained over 2,500 people** on zero waste best practices
- **Completed 5 TRUE Zero Waste Certifications** with our clients



## MEASURE TO IMPROVE'S ROLE

### Comprehensive Data Management:

MTI believes you can only improve what you measure. To achieve Zero Waste, MTI evaluates the client's material management processes, measures the client's baseline material generation (waste), and manages all zero-waste data in a customized Sustainability Dashboard. MTI improves upon current practices to reduce costs, documents efforts in reducing, reusing, recycling, and composting, and prepares clients for Zero Waste certification.

### Streamlined Efforts:

MTI clients streamline data collection and process improvements by creating a collaborative Green Team of key personnel from across the company including operations, purchasing, maintenance, human resources, management, marketing, and more. MTI's produce industry experience helps fast track implementation and capture cost savings, efficiently achieve zero waste certification, and credibly communicate progress both internally and externally.

### A Culture of Sustainability:

While MTI manages and expedites each zero-waste program implementation, they also educate and train green team members, and eventually all staff, so they can take ownership of the program once the project has come to completion or certification is achieved. A Zero Waste program touches everyone in a company, motivating staff to think proactively about waste reduction and building the framework for a culture of sustainability.

## RESULTS

MTI has completed **TRUE Zero Waste Certifications and recertifications for FIVE operations** – Three at the highest level, TRUE Platinum, and two at the TRUE Gold level. All Zero Waste programs have set the groundwork and motivated clients to start new sustainable packaging initiatives to help address key market concerns, especially around plastic packaging in retail.

MTI's Sustainability Dashboard is customized for each operation and provides comprehensive transparency of the data collected and used during the certification process. The Dashboard becomes a **valuable analytical tool** for businesses looking to identify new opportunities to increase efficiency, decrease costs, substantiate technology purchases, and credibly communicate the impact of their zero-waste program. MTI creates the Zero Waste program foundation and processes so clients can continue independently to maintain and improve for years to come.

### ABOUT MTI

Founded in 2014, Measure to Improve's mission is to help produce companies measure, improve, and credibly promote their sustainability efforts. Our clients include produce growers, packers, shippers, and industry associations across the United States. Our staff has a proven track record of helping companies identify and implement strategies to increase efficiency. By supporting clients in setting ambitious, but attainable, sustainability goals, MTI encourages progress that can be validated and marketed. MTI's projects address a variety of sustainability challenges, including water, energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and waste.