

RIO GRANDE

Mexican Restaurant



RIO-cycling Program

**Solid
Waste
Stream**



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graph LR; A[Solid Waste Stream] --> B[Recycling]; A --> C[Composting]; A --> D[Trash]; B --> E[Cardboard]; B --> F[Co-mingled];
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The diagram illustrates the flow of a solid waste stream. It begins with a large box labeled 'Solid Waste Stream'. From this box, three arrows point to 'Recycling', 'Composting', and 'Trash'. The 'Recycling' box further branches into 'Cardboard' and 'Co-mingled'. The entire process is set against a background of a green field and a black horizon line.

Recycling

Cardboard

Co-mingled

Composting

Trash



We began composting in 2006

Started with our pre-consumer – kitchen scraps & paper towels



3 – 50 gallon bins,
3 x per week

Issue – Contamination

**Solution – Education /
Involvement**

30 employees

Steps To Behavioral Change

1) Color Coded Bins

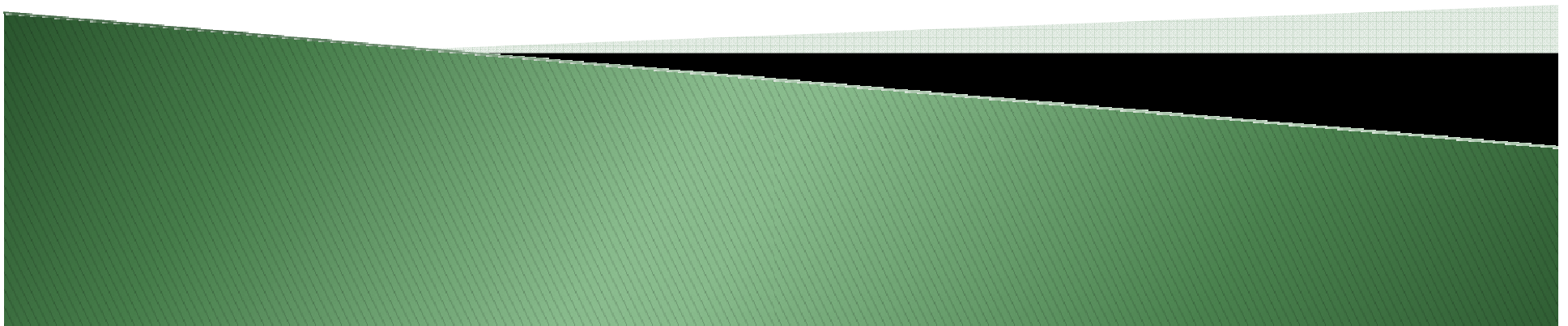
- Gray = recycling
- Blue = organic matter
- Black = trash

2) Education through daily mini-meetings

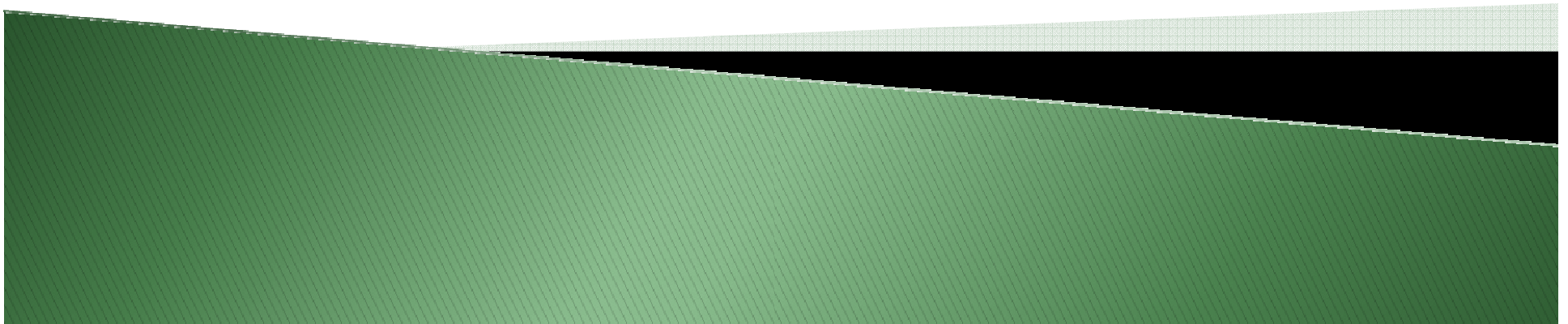
3) Signage around restaurant



- Composting 3,200 lbs per month
- Too much volume – he handled and turned into compost himself
- Contamination continued to be a problem



- Switched to Waste Not Recycling
- One large bin (2 to 2.5 yds) 1 x week
- Processed at A-1 organics – could handle our volume and contamination levels
- Volume around 3,500 lbs per month



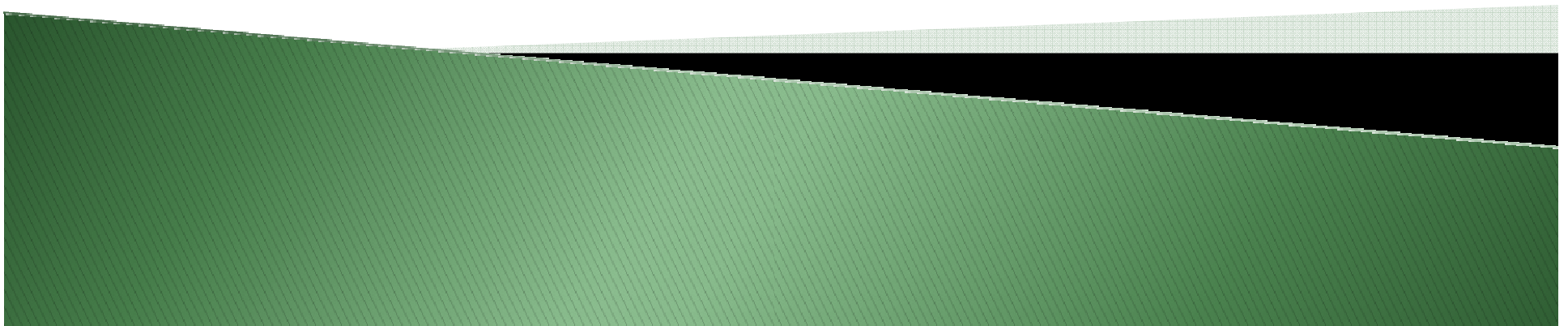
- Switched to Clean Air
- Smaller bins, 3 x 65 gallon bins, 2 x week
- Up to 8 bins, 2 x week
- Processed at A-1 Organics

- Expanded the program to post consumer
- Plate scraps, all the waste out of the dish room
- Larger control group; 115 employees
- Went from 3,500 lbs per month to 18,000 lbs per month
- Cut our trash to the dump by 30%, or 20 cubic yards per month

Overall Recycling Program

- Cardboard recycling = 4,000 lbs per month
 - Co-mingled = 36 yds per month
 - Compost = 18,000 lbs per month
 - Trash = 40 yds per month

Estimate – diverting 240 cubic yards
per month



SUMMARY

Successes

- Diverting up to 18,000 lbs from the dump
- Education and involvement of staff
- Example for the community

Challenges

- Cleanliness
 - Placement of the bins
 - Spillage during transfer
 - Smell in the summertime, particularly with our patio open
- Contamination changing behaviors of 115 employees
- Costs

Goals

- Engage our customers
- Building an overall ethic into our staff
- Look at purchasing

Questions?

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Composting

The Worm Man – John Anderson – www.cowormman.com

Waste Not Recycling

www.waste-not.com – 970-669-9912

Clean Air Compost

www.cleanaircompost.com – 970-224-4732

Waste Management – Cardboard Bailer

www.thinkgreen.com – 970-226-1101