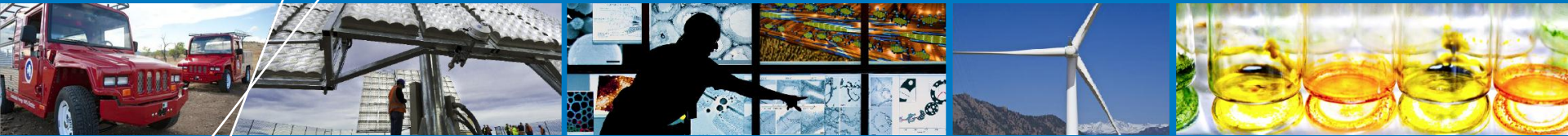


Made with Renewable Energy: Consumer Product Labeling



Lori Bird, NREL
Renewable Energy Markets Conference
September 24-26, 2012
Washington, DC

Background

- ***Made with Renewable Energy: How and Why Companies are Labeling Consumer Products***

<http://apps3.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/pdfs/53764.pdf>

- Authors: Deborah Brannan, Jenny Heeter, and Lori Bird
- Explores experience with products labeled as “made with renewable energy”
- Based on interviews with 20 companies
- Identifies motivations, challenges, and opportunities

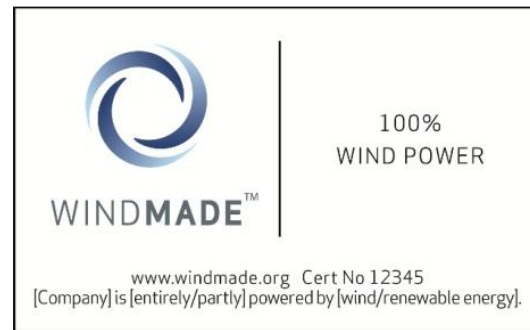
Nearly 50 Companies Involved

- **Scope varies**
 - Single product (e.g. Ziploc Evolve)
 - Product line (e.g. Cascades Tissue Group's North River Brand)
 - All products (e.g. Intelligent Nutrients)
- **Business-to-business and business-to-consumer**
- **Focus on products designed for the environmentally conscious consumer**



Communicating the Use of Renewables

- On-product messaging
 - Imagery and statements
 - Logos



Why Promote Products as Made with RE?

- **Communicate to the consumer and enhance the image of the brand**
 - Chuck Bennett of Aveda stated that the intention is “not to enhance sales specifically but rather to reinforce the overall environmental commitment of the brand.”
- **Product differentiation**
 - Important for business-to-consumer sector, but some business-to-business labeling as well (e.g. Cascades Tissue Group)

Motivations (continued)

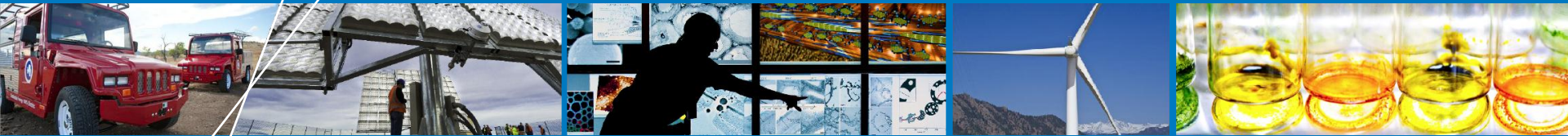
- **Targeting environmentally conscious consumers**
 - Companies may already be targeting “green” consumers
- **Following an existing industry trend**
 - Companies interviews stated they were trendsetters, not followers
- **Price premium**
 - Products did not earn a price premium

Challenges with Product Labeling and Claims

- **Competing uses of product real estate**
 - Including too many competing messages can inundate and confuse the consumer, potentially diluting the brand and affecting sales.
- **Language and content**
 - Imagery is an important component
 - Language can be difficult to keep up with (e.g. New Belgium Brewing)
- **Consumer recognition and understanding**
 - Difficult to assess; some companies less concerned with consumer understanding

Challenges (continued)

- **Product packaging costs (minor)**
 - Changes typically made in conjunction with other product/packaging changes
- **Cost of certification and program requirements**
 - Minor challenge for most companies, though depends on how fees are structured
- **Products marketed internationally**
 - Reduction in product real estate if text is in multiple languages



Lori Bird
National Renewable Energy Laboratory
Golden, CO
lori.bird@nrel.gov