



## 2000 EnviroGuard Company Profile

### Large Business Category

With 2,500 retail stores in 36 states, **Albertson's, Inc.** is one of the largest retail food and drug chains in the U.S. In 1999 Albertson's spearheaded the development of a display-ready, non-wax corrugated container that reduces produce and container waste, increases recycling revenues, and reduces transportation costs and water usage.

Albertson's product innovation promises to have a far-reaching impact on the grocery retail industry. Non-recyclable wax corrugated boxes have been the produce industry standard for decades. Working with the Fibre Box Association (FBA), Albertson's pushed for the development of an environmentally friendly alternative. With support from other FBA members, Albertson's galvanized the association to develop a non wax-coated produce display box that is fully recyclable. Use of the new modular box eliminates the need for an intermediary container in the process of moving product from grower to grocer to consumer. With less handling there is less produce damage. Use of the modular produce box will:

- reduce the amount of produce lost in shipping and handling,
- reduce handling costs and labor in the stores,
- reduce shipping and transportation costs,
- decrease disposal costs and increases recycling revenues,
- promote closed-loop recycling (manufactured from 40-60% recycled paper), and
- reduce water use and storm water run-off due to a major shift to iceless packaging.

In 1999 Albertson's recycled 246,000 tons of corrugated cardboard, yielding \$20.9 million in disposal savings and \$20.4 million in recycling revenues. Quarterly averages of recycled corrugated cardboard have increased from 61,500 tons in 1999 to 72,000 tons in 2000; an 18% increase in recycling volumes. Albertson's projects the following results for use of the box in 2000:

- Savings in avoided waste disposal = \$14.9 million
- Transportation savings = \$1.4 million
- Iceless packaging v. traditional packaging = \$497,500
- Reduction in water usage = 5 million gallons

At full implementation, Albertson's expects 80% of its produce to be received in the modular produce box. The new box and the industry changes associated with it are an outstanding example of innovation in pollution prevention – specifically source reduction, waste minimization and closed-loop recycling.