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HANNAFORD REMAINS DEDICATED TO REDUCING FUEL, EMISSIONS

The numbers speak for themselves. In 2010, Hannaford Trucking Co., the wholesale delivery fleet for Hannaford Supermarkets, reduced its consumption of diesel fuel by 137,000 gals. By 2014, the company anticipates cutting its fleet's fuel use by a total of 460,000 gals.

Based in Scarborough, ME, Hannaford, part of Brussels-based Delhaize Group, operates 177 stores in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. The Hannaford fleet of 100 tractors and 360 trailers covers 11.5 million mi. annually from distribution centers in South Portland and Winthrop, Maine, and Schodack Landing, NY.

“Since 2005, when we became a partner in the EPA SmartWay program, we have continued to improve the efficiency of our fleet with effective equipment upgrades and changes,” says Chris Huff, director of transportation. “Some of our early success came from purchasing tractors with improved aerodynamics and specifications that improved efficiency, and many of those things are still standard on our fleet.”

The latest equipment and specification choices for the Hannaford fleet call for Freightliner Cascadia tractors with Detroit Diesel DD15 engines and Eaton automated manual transmissions. In addition, on Great Dane Classic refrigerated trailers, the company has added electric standby refrigeration units manufactured by Thermo King and Carrier, automatic tire inflation systems, and wide-base single tires.

Improved mpg and lower costs for the Hannaford fleet are being realized through a tractor lifecycle program that calls for turning over equipment at 500,000 mi. or after about 48 months of service. “In the past, we operated tractors for seven years or 700,000 mi.,” Huff explains, “but after 500,000 mi. our maintenance cost per mile began to trend upward. Even considering the higher initial cost of new engine technology, a thorough analysis determined we could reduce our cost by 2 to 4 cents per mile while newer equipment would also provide improved fuel efficiency.”

LEASING BENEFIT

That analysis, done by Hannaford and validated by Fleet Advantage, a provider of truck fleet leasing and information technology services, also led the company to initiate a leasing program to replace tractors every 48 months. Currently, about 75% of the fleet is leased through the company.

“Fleet Advantage is also the provider of a Clean Air Program that identifies technologies and methodologies we need to field an environmentally and economically sustainable tractor fleet,” Huff states.

An effective maintenance program has helped to reduce costs, Huff notes, and in this case one thing has

not changed. "Our fleet is maintained by Kris-Way Truck Leasing, a third-party maintenance provider that has served the company for 30 years," he says.

Hannaford has also been able to reduce mileage, fuel use and pollutants emitted by making operational changes. For example, the company saved over 83,000 gals. of fuel by switching to the use of 48-ft. doubles on the New York State Thruway and the Massachusetts Turnpike. Reduced fleet mileage was also realized by adjusting delivery schedules to optimize loads and stops per load.

Driver performance as an efficiency factor is not overlooked at Hannaford either. Using information from on-board systems, the company routinely works with its drivers to manage and improve their performance. "We share a lot of information through daily performance postings, group discussions and one-on-one counseling," Huff says.

"Conservation is extremely important to us," Huff adds. "In addition to lowering our operating costs, in the past two years our equipment, operations and driver programs have significantly reduced fuel use and emissions, and we're looking forward to even greater savings over the next three years."

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