



Dear Friend,

We invite you to participate in the **"Got Your Bags, Maine?"** campaign – a public education and outreach effort aimed at encouraging Mainers to use more reusable bags for shopping and decrease the use of single use paper and plastic bags.

This campaign seeks to positively change consumer behavior by working with retailers, non-profit, community and government organizations to promote the "three R's" as they relate to bags – reduce, reuse, and recycle!

Participation is flexible and voluntary, so your participation can be tailored to your level of interest. Please take a look at the accompanying "Partnership Packet" of materials. By participating in this program you are not only helping educate consumers about responsible bag use, but demonstrating your commitment to Maine's environment.

Current campaign partners include Maine Grocers Association, Maine Merchants Association, Hannaford Supermarkets, Wal-Mart, Rite Aid, the Natural Resources Council of Maine, Maine State Planning Office, the Maine Chamber of Commerce, and the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, among others.

We hope you will join us in this important initiative to help keep *"Maine the way life should be."* We ask that you please confirm your participation by filling out and returning the enclosed form. We will be following up with you to determine interest and next steps.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Got Your Bags, Maine?
Alex Steed
Grassroots Coordinator
alexsteed@gmail.com
207-939-6188



Campaign Overview

The **Got Your Bags, Maine?** campaign is a public education and outreach effort aimed at increasing Mainers use of reusable bags and decreasing the use of single-use paper and plastic checkout bags

Got Your Bags, Maine? is launching this campaign statewide by uniting businesses, community, nonprofit and government organizations around the common goal of promoting the three R's as they relate to bags – reduce, reuse, and recycle.

- **Reduce:** Encouraging more Maine grocers and retailers to provide reusable bags, educating shoppers to bring their own reusable bags to more than just the grocery store or even decline a bag at checkout (is a bag really necessary for one small item?). Can you train your store clerks to ask customers if they brought their reusable bags with them? Can you place signs at checkout counters, on doorways or in your parking lot?
- **Reuse:** If you do use a paper or plastic bag, how many different uses can you think of? How about as a trash liner? Pick up pet waste or wrap wet winter shoes. In fact, more than 90 percent of consumers reuse their bags at home for a number of other uses.
- **Recycle:** Did you know that Maine has a law that requires retailers to set up plastic bag recycling bins within 20 feet of your store entrance so Mainers can return shopping bags, dry-cleaning bags, bread bags, and other plastic wraps for recycling? Recycling these bags and wraps allows them to have a second life as new products including backyard fencing and decking, building and construction products, shopping carts, and of course, new bags. How does your community recycle the returned plastic and what are the ways to make it easier for you?

There are many ways to help.

Why become a “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign partner?

- **Help Keep Maine The Way Life Should Be.** We all play an important role in reducing waste, preventing litter and putting the three R's to use! By participating in this campaign, your business is doing its part to keep Maine the way life should be.
- **Become recognized as an environmentally responsive community leader.** We will help promote your participation to the public. We will also provide educational materials for use with your customers, employees and others.

• **Economic Benefits:** How much money would you save if you reduced your paper or plastic bag expense by 33%? Encouraging more reusable bag use affects your bottom line in a good way.

How can you participate?

Got Your Bags, Maine? has developed a menu of ways you can participate. The campaign is designed to be flexible to best meet your needs. For maximum, long-term impact, we encourage you to participate year-round. Below are examples of how you can participate:

- Post reminder signs at entry doors, checkout registers and where reusable bags are sold. (Insert sample ad)
- Post web banner ads, which link to Got Your Bags, Maine?'s web site for more information.
- Use the official **Got Your Bags, Maine?** logo to help brand the campaign. Be identified with the official statewide campaign.
- Distribute educational materials such as tip cards and fact sheets
- Use it as a tool for promotion of your store or community.
- Conduct in-store events and giveaway activities.
- Connect with your school or community organizations to use reusable bags as fundraisers. Each bag sale can support a worthy endeavor.
- Distribute campaign information via newsletters, email promotions, mailing inserts, radio, tv and print advertising.
- Partner with other businesses in your community to recycle plastic and paper bags.

Educational Materials

The “**Got Your Bags, Maine?**” campaign is developing a variety of educational materials and best practices to help inform Mainers about reusable bags, the recyclability of plastic bags and the availability of recycling locations.

These materials can be used in a number of ways. They can be placed near check-out areas, in the front entrances of stores or offices, or anywhere customers, members, employees are able to see them.

Sample materials can be downloaded on our website gotyourbagsmaine.org. Let us know if you have ideas for additional materials and Got Your Bags, Maine? will consider developing them for your use.

• **Stencils and Signs:** Got Your Bags, Maine? has our logo available at gotyourbagsmaine.org, which can be printed and turned into entry door signs, checkout register signs, signs where reusable bags are sold or anywhere else you think customers might see them. Retailers can also turn the “**Got Your Bags, Maine?**” logo into a parking lot or sidewalk stencil as an excellent way to remind shoppers about their reusable bags before they get to the store.

• **Buttons:** Employees and staff can wear “**Got Your Bags, Maine?**” buttons or stickers to remind customers and visitors to bring their plastic bags to the store for recycling and to encourage the use of reusable bags.

• **In Store Announcements:** The campaign has 15 and 30 second scripts available for stores to incorporate into their in-store announcing system.



- **Banner Ads:** Banner ads can be placed on your web site and in emails to customers, members and employees, or be displayed in other creative ways. These ads link directly to the “**Got Your Bags, Maine?**” campaign web site where visitors can access more information.
- **Tip Cards, Sample Flyers and other Marketing Materials:** Tip cards include useful information on the how-to’s of bag reuse and recycling. They can be distributed in a number of ways, from bag stuffers to mailing inserts. Got Your Bags, Maine? will sample text on our website that can be printed via cards, window clings, on print receipts, flyers or other materials.
- **Window Clings:** Thanks to the Maine Merchants Association and the Maine Grocers Association, the “**Got Your Bags, Maine?**” campaign will offer two sizes of window clings/decals for use in cars and on business entrance/exit doors and windows. Contact us to request some.

Community Participation Form

Thank you for joining the “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign. Please complete and return this form as soon as possible.

YES! We are interested in participating in the “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign to share reduce, reuse and recycle messages!

Organization _____

Contact _____

Title _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

We are interested in participating in the “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign via the following activities (check each box that applies):

- Distribute educational materials
- Participate in promotional and media events
- Post campaign web banner ads and other marketing materials in your newsletter, on your website and through communications to your members
- Recruit other Community Partners and Retailers to join the campaign
- Other

If other, please indicate your ideas or suggestions in the space provided below.

Please email, mail or fax the completed participation form to:

Alex Steed, Grassroots Coordinator
alexsteed@gmail.com
207-939-6188
c/o Maine Merchants Association
PO Box 5060
Augusta, ME 04332

Grocer/Retailer Participation Form

Thank you for joining the “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign. Please complete and return this form as soon as possible.

YES! We are interested in participating in the “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign to share reduce, reuse and recycle messages!

Organization _____

Contact _____

Title _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

We are interested in participating in the “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign via the following activities (check each box that applies):

Display “Got Your Bags, Maine?” logo via on sidewalk/parking lot stencils and/or entry door signs, checkout register signs and signs where you distribute reusable bags

Allow front-end employees to wear “Got Your Bags, Maine?” buttons and train them to deliver reusable bags marketing slogans

Keep visible supply of reusable bags near checkout counter

Conduct free reusable bag giveaways on occasion

Feature campaign messages via in-store PA announcements

Distribute bag reuse and recycling tips to shoppers via cards, window clings, on print receipts or other materials

Include bag reuse, recycling and reusable bag messaging on print receipts, coupons, flyers and other marketing materials

Recruit other Retailers and Community Partners to join the campaign

Place plastic bag recycle bins in front of stores with prominent signage encouraging recycling

Assist in collecting data to measure progress on “Got Your Bags, Maine?” campaign

If other, please indicate your ideas or suggestions in the space provided below.

Please circle Yes or No

Are you a current member of Maine Merchants Association or Maine Grocers Association? Yes No

How did you hear about this campaign? Check all that apply:

Direct communication from Maine Merchants or Maine Grocers

Facebook / Twitter / other social media

Print, Radio, TV

Grassroots outreach

Other: _____

What are you already doing to promote the “three R’s” – reduce, reuse, recycle?

Please email, mail or fax the completed participation form to the following at your earliest convenience:

Alex Steed, Grassroots Coordinator
alexsteed@gmail.com
207-939-6188
c/o Maine Merchants Association
PO Box 5060
Augusta, ME 04332

Tip Sheet

Reduce by Using Reusable Bags

- Add to your collection of inexpensive reusable bags. Often retailers run special promotions to giveaway FREE bags.
- Leave your reusable bag in the front seat of your vehicle for easy use. Often people put the bags in the trunk and forget them once they get to the store.
- Decline bags for smaller purchases.

Remember: Reusable bags only serve their intended purpose if you remember to bring them with you on your shopping trips!

Reuse (In this case – repurpose!)

There are many ways to reuse plastic carryout bags for other purposes all throughout your home. This extends the use of the bag at least once before it gets recycled or disposed:

- Hand protectors – place them over your hands to handle messes indoors and out
- Kitchen clean-up – place them under the cutting board for quick scrap removal
- Trash can liners – use them in bathrooms and other household waste baskets
- Doggie duty – bring them on dog walks to collect and dispose of pet waste
- Wet umbrella or shoe covers – keep items in your bag dry on wet days
- Dirty clothes – Headed to the gym for a workout or swim. Keep a bag or two handy for wet, smelly clothes.

You can recycle bags if they are clean and dry after you repurpose them in these ways:

Recycle

State law requires retailers to set up recycling bins so every Mainer can return plastic shopping bags for recycling. In most stores, bag collection bins are located at the front entrance or in checkout areas. Grocery bags aren't the only things that can be recycled; the bins also accept all bags labeled #2 or #4, including the following items:

- Dry-cleaning bags (remove paper and hangers)
- Bread bags
- Produce bags
- Wraps from paper towels, bathroom tissue, napkins, and diapers
- Plastic newspaper bags
- Mattress bags
- Zip lock bags (remove hard components)
- Cereal box liners
- Plastic shipping envelopes (remove labels)
- Case wrap (e.g., snacks, water bottles)
- Furniture and electronic wrap

Receipts, debris, and other contaminants may prevent bags from being recycled properly, so make sure all bags and wraps are clean, empty, and have not been in any direct contact with food or material that has been painted or glued.

Storing plastic bags and product wraps in a plastic bag offers neat, convenient storage. Simply knot the handles when you're ready to drop them off at your local grocer or retailer. Recycling these bags and wraps allows them to have a second life as new products including backyard fencing and decking, building and construction products, shopping carts, and of course, new bags.