# Tahoe embraces food service products made from plants

**By Kathryn Reed**

Just as businesses were getting accustomed to recycling and using recycled products, compostable is a word and practice that is being thrown at them.

C&M Food Distributors in Reno is helping Lake Tahoe businesses make the switch.

“We show small businesses they can do what big businesses do. It can be done and it can be profitable, too, for everybody,” Tee Branch of C&M said of using compostable products.



Compostable products from C&M Foods that Embassy Suites Lake Tahoe uses. Photo/Provided

Branch, who lives in the South Lake Tahoe, is the sales rep handling the entire basin and Truckee for C&M.

They have 37 items to choose from and the list keeps growing. Toilet paper and facial tissue are the two most popular items. Branch said this is because every business needs them and the

cost is comparable to other brands.

All of C&M's compostable products are from plant material.

Branch said C&M has stayed away from products made from corn and sugar because of how they are traded on the commodity market and therefore subject to price fluctuations.

It used to be that Sacramento tomato processing plants burned their natural waste to get rid of it. Now it's turned into plates, cups, flatware and other items that businesses can use.

Traditional paper products are made from petroleum. When the consumer is done with the plate or flatware it ends up in their trash and eventually hauled to a landfill.

Using the items made of plant matter or other compostable products means it will be turned into a soil amendment. It's part of the cradle-to-gravel movement where what happens at the end of a product's life is just as important as its birth, or how it was manufactured. Composting is also part of the zero waste movement – meaning nothing ends up in the garbage. It is either recycled or composted.

Kirkwood Mountain Resort and Embassy Suites South Lake Tahoe are two of Branch's biggest buyers of the compostable products.

"We use their cups, a lot of their paper goods and their food trays," said Kelly Groover, food and beverage administrative manager at Kirkwood. "I think it's very important now to people. To a lot of homeowners out here it's important to them."

That's the other thing businesses are finding; their customers are asking what they are doing to be green.

The ski resort separates its compostable products into a dumpster that ACES Waste Services picks up.

C&M has a mix of small and large customers in the Lake Tahoe area. Some of the other businesses using compostable products are Granlibakken, McP's Pub, Driftwood Café, Fresh Ketch, Lakeside Inn and Casino, and Stateline Brewery.

Branch said he talking to many other businesses, including the school districts and Barton Memorial Hospital.

"C&M Foods is the cheapest. As we get more businesses on board is will lower all of our costs," said David Hansen with Embassy Suites.

His hotel has been using the products for more than a year. With breakfast served each morning and a cocktail hour in the evening, plenty of plates, cups, napkins and other food service products are used each day.

Having worked in kitchens most of his life, Branch understands the cost issues as well as the need to educate workers about composting. He said the only item that hasn't successfully been developed is a coffee lid from plant matter. Coffee cups are OK. The problem is the lid then needs to go in one bin and the cup in another.

The other thing C&M boasts about is 98 percent of its compostable products are made in the United States. This then reduces the carbon footprint even more. However, no one in the States is making compostable plates or to-go containers.

**Publisher's note:** ***On March 31 read Lake Tahoe News to find out what Full Circle Compost is all about.***

# Nevada may charge drivers for miles traveled

**By Jeff Delong, Reno Gazette-Journal**

Every time Luiz Garcia fills up his car in Washoe County, he pays nearly 60 cents per gallon in taxes.

That’s money the Sparks resident contributes toward state and local projects to repave cracked and aging streets, widen freeways, build bridges.

It isn’t enough.

By 2016, Nevada could be up to $6 billion short of the money required for its transportation needs. The state isn’t alone. According to a 2008 estimate, the country was $140 billion short in highway funding, with the problem growing as gasoline taxes increasingly fail to cover mounting demand for money.

**Read the whole story**

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# K’s Kitchen: Schussing in search of French fries



**By Kathryn Reed**

We all have food issues. You know, trigger foods. Foods to make us happy. Cravings. Compulsions. Something where one isn't enough.

French fries. They are my problem. I think an order can qualify as a meal. When I've been alone in a drive-through I have ordered two helpings of fries – for myself.

People who ski with me know my lunch on the slopes is usually a beer and fries. Lecture me all you want about how unhealthy this is. It will fall on deaf ears. I'm not saying this is good nutrition. I'm just saying I really like my fries when I ski.

This season I have skied at five resorts and had fries at all but Squaw. That was only because it was early season and the on-mountain restaurant that serves French fries was not open.

Those skiing with me this season were subjected to rating the fries. (I was sharing those days.) This is so unscientific and not all the tasters were at each resort. And like all food, it is fairly subjective.

Nonetheless, the favorite of others and mine are the sweet potato fries at Sierra-at-Tahoe. They are a must have at the top of Grandview. And they are only $2.95 for a decent portion.

"They taste healthy," Sue said.

I'll vouch for that sentiment, but not how factual her belief is.

(Get the $2.95 onion petals, too, to ensure you hit your grease quotient for the month.)



Sierra's Mountain of Fries

The Mountain of Fries ($5.95) at the Sierra Pub and Deli are an excellent value. I’m not a big fan of crinkled fries, but Sue is OK with them. These fries suffice and are worth ordering, but they aren’t the “oh my gosh I want seconds” like Sierra’s sweet potato fries are.

The least favorite were the overcooked spuds at the California Lodge at Heavenly Mountain Resort. Save your $4 for something else.

“They are nasty. They are cooked in old fried grease,” Brenda said. “Being an ex-fast food worker I can tell when grease is old.”

At Northstar-at-Tahoe the chili fries really did seem like a sufficient meal. At $7.75 they are super filling. The chili comes with meat or vegetarian. They are messy. A fork is definitely needed.

With something like this, it’s really more about the chili than the fries. The veggie chili was great. The portion was so generous I couldn’t find a plain fry to sample.

The other French fry experience this season was at Whistler. The sweet potato fries were $4.95 and regular ones were $3.95. And the Canadian and U.S. dollars are one-to-one, so no deal this year.

At the on-mountain lodge they interchanged the words sweet

potato and yam. But the vegetables aren’t the same even though people in the States and Canada think they are. So, I don’t really know which I had when I was in Canada.

The sweet potato was the best of these two, but it wasn’t anything compared to the ones Sierra serves. But Whistler did have the best dipping sauce. A spicy dip came with the sweet/yam taters.

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# Sierra Conservancy promoting sustainable development

**By Ashley Archibald, Union Democrat**

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is proposing a broad-based policy aimed at promoting sustainable development and bringing jobs to the Sierra Nevada.

The policy, called the Sustainable Sierra Nevada Initiative, outlines general goals including protecting water, creating jobs, reducing pollutants emitted by catastrophic fires, providing habitats for threatened and endangered species and maximizing carbon entrapment by area forests.

To do so, it proposes coordination between federal, state and local agencies to identify policies and investment opportunities for public and private resources for both water quality and the use of sustainable wood products and biomass energy.

**Read the whole story**

# LTUSD bond committee tour of new facilities

The next meeting of the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee is March 31 at 6pm at South Tahoe High School, 1735 Lake Tahoe Blvd.

This meeting is open to the public, similar to Board of Education meetings, and the public is invited to attend.

Joe Stewart of SMC Construction and Steve Morales, Lake Tahoe Unified School District director of facilities, will lead the committee, staff members, and public on a tour of the Construction, Arts and Transportation Academy and Stadium View. The CAT Academy is scheduled to begin classes April 19.

For more information, click here.

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# Kirkwood introduces pass without blackout dates

It was 20 years ago when Kirkwood Mountain Resort introduced the concept of low prices season passes to the skiing world, offering a full season of midweek skiing for $199.

To celebrate what has now become common place throughout the nation, Kirkwood introduces its all-new No Blackout pass for the 2010-11 season. Prices are $349 for the new 7 Wood, valid every day, and $249 for the new 6 Wood, valid six days a week;

both passes include all holiday periods typically blacked out at most major resorts.

Kirkwood Season Passes can be purchased on-line at Kirkwood.com, in person at the resort seven days a week, or by calling (209) 258.PASS.

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# V Day Tahoe event

HONK is April 14 from 5-7pm at the Y in South Lake Tahoe.

The annual event is to bring attention to V Day Tahoe, which is about stopping violence.

Meet in the old Mikasa parking lot.

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# Lake Tahoe ski report, March 29



Wind may be a problem as a storm rolls into the Lake Tahoe Basin. Mount Rose is closed because of the winds. Here is the ski report from Curtis Fong, the Guy from Tahoe.

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# Anderson wins Mammoth slopestyle

**By World Snowboard Guide**

The 6Star Roxy Chicken Jam slopestyle and halfpipe finals both went down Sunday under sunny skies at Mammoth Mountain in California.

The day began with slopestyle finals in the morning under the blazing California sunshine making the course a little bit slow, but the ladies powered through the slush and put on a great showing. The slopestyle course is larger than in years past and the riders were loving the setup that consisted of a 65-foot jump, 55-foot jump, a rail section, pole jam and finished with a 50-foot kicker. It was South Lake Tahoe rider, Jamie Anderson, who had the speed and style on the course and was able to throw down a run that included a backside 540, switch backside 540 and a Cab 540 mute to take the top spot of the day.

**Read the whole story**

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# Sonicbloom at Divided Sky

Sonicbloom is at Divided Sky in Meyers on April 2 at 10pm.