

Food and Energy: Parallel Pyramids?

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I am a huge proponent of eating your vegetables. Numerous studies show that getting adequate nutrition through plant-based foods can ease or reverse so many physiological aches and pains – as well as keep your hair, skin, nails, and teeth looking better; reduce your risk of heart disease – the list goes on.

When my fiancé and I first began dating, he had a hard time keeping up with my habits. This meat-and-potatoes guy suddenly found himself preparing and eating regular meals with a long-time vegetarian, and there were definitely some hurdles relating to produce that had landed on his “untouchables” list over the years.

For him, eating his vegetables was do-able, but he wanted to do it his own way. Rather than choking down a spinach and sprout smoothie, it was easier for him to bring a small variety of cut, raw vegetables with him to work each day and slowly gnaw at them until they were gone. He would skip the veggies on his “ick” list, but try to include a variety of others. The more he worked at it, the more open he was to trying new things and now, nearly four years later, almost nothing is off the table. In fact, he even has to convince me sometimes that sneaking some kale into our juicer is not going to kill me.

Much like improving your health is a series of small steps, improving the health of your organization can be similar.

This year’s 3-part series on energy efficiency – the [Energy Intelligence Report](#) [2] – kicks off with the same survey we’ve sent out to our readers for the past four years. In this survey, we ask them what they’ve been up to. Have they been investing in new equipment? If so, what kinds — and how much was the decision based on the energy efficiency of this product?

We were also determined to find out whether IMPO readers were looking towards the next six months with an eye to purchase energy efficient equipment. The response was not an overwhelming yes, however, many respondents expressed a continued focus in this area; most of the hesitation tended to be based around budgetary issues that seem to ebb and flow. The overall feeling I got from the data as I reviewed it was that manufacturers understood that this was an important area of focus, and were taking whatever incremental steps made the most sense based on their circumstances.

I’ve never been one to agree with the sentiment that it’s not worth doing something at all if you don’t do it “right.” If my fiancé had gone straight from zero to brussels sprouts, he may have never gotten off the ground. Similarly, doing what you can, when you can, is so much better than throwing your hands in the air and saying,

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“forget it!” If you start small, and understand the benefits, you can do great things.

Luckily — when it comes to energy efficiency, there is a strong business case as it relates to the payback: Keep your eyes peeled for the September issue, where we’ll include our annual Incentive Guide, which details available tax rebates, credits, and utility-based financial incentives to help manufacturers invest in energy efficient or green products and alternative energies. The great part about these types of incentives is that they can provide the increased cash flow (through reduced energy costs) to further invest in equipment that curbs usage and cost. Once you get the ball rolling, there may be no stopping you.

So whether its carrots or compressors at the top of your list, the small steps count — so start chewing.

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