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THE EMERALD CITY SPARKLES AS A BEACON OF SUSTAINABILITY

Seattle's First Green Festival Draws Over 30,000 Attendees

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Event Showcases All Facets of Local Initiatives; Sets Precedent for Greening of Events Industry

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[Learn more about the Green Festival](#)

Seattle, WA (April 24, 2008) – Green Festival, a joint project of Global Exchange and Co-op America, celebrated sustainability at its first Seattle event with an attendance over 30,000. Now in its seventh year and in four cities nationwide, the world's largest and most authentic green living show held its Pacific Northwest debut on April 12th – 13th at the Washington State Convention & Trade Center.

The event played host to over 150 visionary speakers, 300 local and national green businesses, and dozens of community and non-profit groups. The Seattle Host Committee of nearly 200 community leaders helped design the event for local focus.

The weekend began with an official welcome of traditional song and dance from local First Nations groups and with opening remarks from Seattle's Mayor Gregory J. Nickels and King County Council Chair Julia Patterson.

For two days, Green Festival attendees explored the latest in clean technology, green building, socially responsible investing, eco-fashion, renewable energy, green careers and green collar jobs, natural foods, groundbreaking films, eco-tourism, green building, and more. The wide selection of workshops, speakers and panelists covered topics ranging from "Green Home Remodeling 101" and the "DIY Energy Audit," to "Building the Green Economy" and "Grassroots Solutions to Climate Change."

"In the biodiversity of strategies it takes to create a movement and solve social and environmental problems, many kinds of activities, action networks and gathering places are required," says Alisa Gravitz, Co-op America Executive Director. "Some need to get people excited and motivated to take new steps, others need to encourage people to be reflective and bring forth the wisdom that they already have. We need all components to accelerate the movement, and that is the purpose Green Festival aims to serve."

Seattle residents engaged with city's and county's environmental representatives at City of Seattle and King County interactive education pavilions where experts provided tips and demonstrations on all aspects of urban green living – from local transportation and volunteering, to greening your garden and exploring local foods.

"There are a million beautiful ways that people are working together to improve the health and ecosystems of our region, to strengthen communities and build an enduring infrastructure," says Green Festival Seattle regional director Jenny Heins. "Green Festival was the perfect place to bring them together for a weekend of joy and celebration and to congratulate and support one another."

While the event and tradeshow industries are notoriously wasteful, utilizing excessive energy, dumping tons of waste into landfills, and "leaving crater-sized environmental footprints,"* Green Festival is an exemplary model of environmental responsibility. In each locale, Green Festival demonstrates its commitment to walking its green talk, and the first Seattle Green Festival was no exception. Through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and meticulous sorting procedures to reuse, recycle and compost, 97% of all show waste was recovered, translating into only 3% of waste going into landfills. Many festival goers also pedaled their way to a reduced carbon footprint; arriving by

bicycle meant reduced admission costs and free "valet parking."

Efforts taken to reduce the event's environmental impact include:

- * Dozens of "resource recovery stations" were placed throughout the space to encourage proper sorting of waste into recycling, composting and landfill categories.
- * 400 "Green team" volunteers were on hand to help attendees choose the appropriate waste receptacle.
- * Event organizers worked directly with exhibitors to identify opportunities for material re-use, recycled and energy efficient fixtures, carbon emissions neutralizing and overall conversion to eco-friendly practices.
- * Plates and utensils used in the food pavilion were compostable.
- * Rather than selling expensive and wasteful bottled water, water stations allowed people to fill up their reusable water bottles for free.

Now in its seventh year, Green Festival's circuit includes San Francisco, Chicago and Washington, DC and saw combined attendance of over 100,000 in 2007. The next festival will take place in Chicago in May 17-18, 2008 with Washington, DC and San Francisco to follow in November 2008.

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Post-scriptum :

Email:

[Becky Wisdom](#)

[Katie Hunsberger](#)