

## **From waste to resources: FIFCO leads sustainable management in its industry**

### **Waste recovery indicators are supported by strategic alliance work.**

The concept of extended producer responsibility throughout the product life cycle is key to develop comprehensive sustainability strategies.

FIFCO, as a reference company in Corporate Responsibility and Governance (ESG) in Costa Rica, has set the standard in this topic and maintains specific actions through its Post-Consumer Packaging Recycling Program.

With this program, the company was able to recover 19% more than the total amount of plastic packaging it placed on the market in 2022. In other words, for every 100 bottles that FIFCO delivered to stores, it recovered 119 containers.

The company also achieved the recovery of 91% of materials other than plastic through this post-consumer packaging collection program, including aluminum cans, tinplate and poly laminated packaging.

According to data from the Ministry of Health, Costa Rica produces around 4,000 tons of waste daily, equivalent to the weight of 300 collection trucks. It is vital for companies to play a leading role in mitigating the impact of this indicator.

How did FIFCO achieve these results? According to Carlos Morales Vargas, Communication Manager, during 2022 the company recovered non-returnable post-consumer packaging directly with its own reverse logistics and through various suppliers, all of them authorized managers to whom the company applies audits to verify compliance with legal standards.

"The Recycling Program maintains 4 collection routes of its own, 8 collection centers of its own and several packaging suppliers for the Program, among which stand out large and small recyclers, municipalities, foundations and associations dedicated to waste management. In this period, a total of 8,007 metric tons of non-returnable post-consumer packaging was recovered, that is, 1,860 metric tons more than in 2021, an increase of 21%", explained Morales.

Thanks to strategic alliances, FIFCO has managed to capture a volume of material that previously ended up being managed in a dispersed manner through other channels or ended up in landfills or even in the environment as a result of inadequate waste management.

These synergies include an alliance for recycling among companies in the beverage and food sector, as well as the strengthening of commercial relations with Costa Rican entrepreneurs who seek to give added value to post-consumer containers recovered by FIFCO, as was the case of initiatives for the manufacture of plastic corners for fruit exports and the manufacture of plastic tiles for the local and export markets.

### **Committed management.**

As Morales explains, FIFCO's commitment to its waste management is widely extended in the operation, for this reason, Distribuidora La Florida presents a recovery of over 99% of its internal or post-industrial waste. In 2022, it was the fourth consecutive year that the Retail operation did not report sending waste to the landfill, which makes the company hold the Zero Waste To Landfill certification from the Carbon Trust, one of the strictest British certifications at global level in terms of waste management.

In addition, FIFCO continues working on an agenda to increase the use of sustainable packaging, which allows 75 out of every 100 packages used by FIFCO to be different from plastic.

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## **A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM**

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The Post-Consumer Container Recycling Program is considered one of the most successful in Costa Rica due to its trajectory since 1995 and its integral approach that includes preventive initiatives for the eco-design of containers that include lightweighting, 100% recycled resin. This commitment comes from the Board of Directors, which guides and supports compliance, as well as the management and operational personnel, who carry out the tasks from a Waste Valorization department dedicated to seeking solutions, planning and executing actions for continuous improvement. Program resources include:

- One collection route for the GMA
- Three routes for rural areas of Costa Rica
- Eight collection centers equipped to handle recyclable material

For more information visit [www.fifco.com](http://www.fifco.com)

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## **ABOUT FIFCO**

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FIFCO is a beverage and food company with 115 years of history, and operations in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, and the United States, 7 manufacturing plants and 15 distribution centers. It has 3 business divisions in Costa Rica: “*Distribuidora La Florida*” (food and beverages), “*Florida Hospitality*” (real estate and hospitality sectors) and “*Florida Retail*” (retail sales under the Musi and Musmanni formats). It exports to 18 countries around the world and has a portfolio of 1,500 products.