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Oldest U.S. Furniture Manufacturing Company is Certified Green Plus™

(Cleveland, Ohio) The Taylor Companies, the oldest furniture manufacturer in the United States, is the first Ohio company to be Certified Green Plus™ by the Institute for Sustainable Development. Taylor Companies was founded in 1816 and is recognized in the Smithsonian Institute as the oldest U.S. furniture company. The firm was recently featured in Business Week article “When Going Green Isn’t About Marketing” for its efforts to approach zero waste in its manufacturing operations.

“Taylor Companies demonstrates that the concepts of sustainability and long-term competitiveness are becoming one and the same,” said Chris Carmody, Director of the Institute for Sustainable Development. “Taylor Companies provides a great example for any small business of how efficient management coupled with sustainable environmental and community practices improve both a company’s bottom line and the world around it,” Carmody concluded.

Green Plus™ is a small business sustainability education and certification program developed by the North Carolina Research Triangle based Institute for Sustainable Development. Green Plus™ has been adopted as the official small and medium sized enterprise sustainability program of the American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE). The program is available at a substantial discount through participating chambers of commerce throughout the U.S. and Canada in the 1,300 chamber ACCE network. Beginning October 1, Green Plus will be available to Ohio companies at a discount through the Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE).

“One of the fundamental values of Green Plus is its ability to both help assess sustainability efforts and connect small business owners to the education and resources they need to take the next step in sustainability,” said Steve Millard, President and Executive Director of COSE. “Jeff is a tremendous example of someone who understands the value of sustainability to both the community and his own bottom line—what he has accomplished at Taylor is really impressive.”

Taylor CEO Jeff Baldassari said, “We believe that Green Plus™ adds value to our Company in three areas. First it has opened our eyes to new sustainable practices that we had not previously considered. Second, it has motivated our company to achieve additional sustainable practices that we are not currently employing. Finally, Green Plus™ lends an objective standard to the field of sustainability and by doing so, credible practices are recognized and green washing is not accepted,” Baldassari concluded.

In 2005, the Taylor Companies invested \$6 million in revitalizing a 50 acre industrial brown field that had been abandoned since 1987. The firm consolidated its operations in a new, efficient building that saves it \$80,000 in annual energy costs. Taylor has reduced its collective consumption of natural gas, electricity and water by 58.8% since consolidating its operations. In its operations, the Taylor Companies has reduced its waste by 90% through recycling, upcycling and composting. Its annual net waste hauling costs are less than \$1,000. Taylor Companies aggressively documents both its cost reductions and environmental impact as continually looks for efficiencies that will both save money and have a positive environmental and community impact. The company

- streamlined its inbound shipping of some raw materials to reduce costs by \$6,000 annually
- upcycles 2 ½ tons of leather scraps to purse manufacturers, saving \$5,000 in annual hauling costs
- saves \$4,000 in hauling costs per year by donating 76,000 pounds of saw dust to area farms
- redirects a large portion of wood scrap back into production: unusable wood scrap is used for thermo energy and upcycled into consumer products saving \$6,000 in annual hauling costs

Taylor scored very high on the People section of the Green Plus Certification as well. Internally, the company provides good wages, health care and retirement benefits to its workforce and engages them actively in the success of the company and in sustainability efforts. Externally, the company is an active charitable contributor to its local school system.

“At Taylor, we have learned that sustainable practices are a business opportunity,” said Jeff Baldassari. “By embracing and implementing them, we have made a measurable difference for our community, the quality of life and working conditions for our employees and the operating performance of our company through significant cost savings,” Baldassari concluded.

More information on Green Plus can be found at www.gogreenplus.org.