

The Wendy's Company Celebrates the New Year by Reporting on Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability Progress

January 3, 2017 10:36 AM ET

Company updates on key initiatives and announces brand purpose: To Create Joy and Opportunity through Food, Family and Community

DUBLIN, Ohio, Jan. 3, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, The Wendy's® Company released a 2016 annual update on significant Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and announced plans for continued progress in 2017.

Since 1969, Wendy's has worked to be a best-in-class company that is socially responsible, transparent, and committed to sustainable business practices. In 2016, the Company continued this journey, reaffirming past commitments, creating new goals in the areas of environmental and social responsibility, and embracing a brand purpose for all Wendy's restaurants and teams around the world.

"Forty-seven years after Dave Thomas founded Wendy's, we remain passionately committed to his ideals and values," said President & CEO Todd Penegor, who assumed the Company's top leadership position in 2016. "We came together strongly with our employees and franchisees in 2016 to bring Dave's vision to life: to serve food we are proud of, provide thousands of people with employment opportunities, and raise funds and awareness to help the 130,000 children waiting in foster care find their forever families through adoption."

"We embrace our role as a responsible corporate citizen and believe that the purpose of Wendy's is, *To Create Joy and Opportunity through Food, Family and Community.*' And it is through this lens that we will continue to communicate regularly and transparently to our customers about the topics that matter to all of us."

In 2016, the Company made significant strides, including:

- **Food**

- **IMPLEMENTS A SUPPLIER CODE OF CONDUCT.** The Wendy's Supplier [Code of Conduct](#) was rolled out in early 2016 to the nearly 300 suppliers that provide food, paper and packaging to the Wendy's U.S. system, and includes suppliers based in the U.S. and internationally. Wendy's achieved 100% acknowledgement of the Code by May 2016 and requires an annual reaffirmation. **Looking ahead:** the Company will continue to expand the Supplier Code of Conduct to incorporate evolving best practices in the U.S. and internationally related to environmental and social responsibility, and to include additional categories of suppliers such as professional service providers.
- **STRENGTHENS ANTIBIOTICS POLICY.** Building on a multi-year effort to encourage the responsible use of antibiotics in its supply chain, Wendy's made a [commitment](#) to remove antibiotics important to human health from its chicken supply by the end of 2017, while remaining committed to the necessary [treatment](#) of sick animals. To date, 50% of the Wendy's U.S. chicken supply is raised without medically important antibiotics. **Looking ahead:** the Company will transition 100% of its chicken supply to be raised without medically important antibiotics, and will announce specific commitments for pork and beef in 2017.
- **CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF INDUSTRY-LEADING ANIMAL WELFARE COUNCIL.** In 2001, Wendy's formed its [Animal Welfare](#) Advisory Council to review and strengthen standards and expectations for animal handling, transport and care from suppliers. Throughout the years, many aspects of those standards were shared and adopted industry wide. To date, Wendy's has conducted more than 1,300 audits and celebrated the Council's 15th year in 2016. Also in 2016, Quality Supply Chain Co-op, Inc., Wendy's independent cooperative, which conducts all food, paper and packaging purchasing for Wendy's restaurants in North America, welcomed Dr. Henry Zerby to its leadership team. Dr. Zerby was formerly the Chair of the Department of Animal Sciences at Ohio State University and an external advisor to the Wendy's Animal Welfare Council. **Looking ahead:** Wendy's intends to continue to strengthen the scope and technical

expertise of its Animal Welfare Council. Wendy's partners with academic and industry experts who share in the same conviction and commitment to the well-being of farm animals and in 2017 will deepen their participation in ongoing animal welfare programs, quarterly welfare council meetings and future initiatives.

- **FURTHERS PROGRESS ON CAGE-FREE EGG COMMITMENT.** In January 2016, Wendy's announced plans to [switch to a 100% cage-free](#) housing environment for eggs by 2020. *Looking ahead:* In 2017, Wendy's will continue the journey toward 100% cage-free egg purchasing and will evaluate other evolving best practices for poultry housing.
- **JOINS THE U.S. ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE BEEF.** With a commitment to serve only [fresh, never frozen* North American beef](#), Wendy's has long partnered with innovators and leaders throughout the beef industry to advance responsible practices in animal production, health and welfare. In 2016, Wendy's joined the U.S. Roundtable for Sustainable Beef to continue to serve as a thought leader with an active voice in discussions about the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the U.S. beef industry. *Looking ahead:* Wendy's will serve as an active [member of the Roundtable](#) and will report regularly on efforts to advance sustainability efforts throughout the U.S. beef supply chain.
- **ISSUES INITIAL REPORTING ON PALM OIL USAGE.** In August 2015, Wendy's became a [member of the Roundtable](#) for Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and in 2016 reported its domestic Palm Oil use to the RSPO and the World Wildlife Fund. The Company has set a goal to [use only certified sustainable palm oil](#) in its North American food products by 2022. *Looking ahead:* the Company will announce a plan by the end of 2017 for sourcing certified sustainable palm oil in international operations.

- **Family**

- **LAUNCHES THE SQUARE DEAL™ BLOG.** Wendy's created a space dedicated to giving customers [The Square Deal](#) – Wendy's views on food, quality, animal welfare, foster care adoption, and doing their best to make Dave proud. Several posts a month are included on the blog with an opportunity for the public to share feedback and suggest future topics of discussion. *Looking ahead:* Editors of The Square Deal plan to expand beyond a blog format and continue to provide opportunities for feedback and engagement with members of the public.
- **CELEBRATES THE TOP 200 GENERAL MANAGERS IN THE WENDY'S FAMILY:** For the first time, Wendy's celebrated [the best-of-the-best](#) when it comes to those who lead in and delight the customers who visit their restaurants. Hosted at their Restaurant Support Center in Dublin, Ohio, [these outstanding leaders](#) were celebrated by Company leadership and recognized for their achievements. *Looking ahead:* In 2017, Wendy's will continue to promote the Top GMs across the Wendy's Family by recognizing top performance in customer service and building 5-star teams.
- **SUPPORTS CONTINUED EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYEES.** In late 2016, Wendy's partnered with GetSchooled, a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to empower and engage learners with the tools they need to succeed. Wendy's and GetSchooled have developed a platform that provides Company and franchise employees and their families with free access to academic advisors and coaches to assist with starting or going back to school, planning for college and finding financial resources. *Looking ahead:* The Company will share the GetSchooled resources with its U.S. franchisees. Wendy's has also worked with Rosetta Stone to make virtual English as a Second Language (ESL) resources available in 2017 in Company restaurants and participating franchise restaurants.
- **DEVELOPS AND EXPANDS EMPLOYEE NETWORKS.** Women of Wendy's (WOW) began in 2014 to promote female leadership within The Wendy's Company. Since then, Wendy's has expanded its networks, with the goal of promoting a safe, inclusive and supportive workplace environment. Wendy's supports its young professionals, the LGBT community and military personnel and families through WenGen, WeQual and the Wendy's Military Support Network (WMSN). *Looking ahead:* The Company will continue to partner with the networks to support employee connection, personal and professional development and community engagement.

- **Community**

- **CONTINUES THE WORK TO FIND EVERY CHILD...ALL 130,000 WHO ARE WAITING...IN THE NORTH AMERICAN FOSTER CARE SYSTEM A HOME.** Since 1992 [Wendy's signature charitable cause](#)

has been foster care adoption as Wendy's has taken on the responsibility to raise funds and awareness for the children who do not have a place to call home or people to call mom and dad. This year, Wendy's worked especially hard to rally its customers around the cause, including:

- Explaining why Wendy's cares so much about [foster care adoption](#).
 - Inviting a few of these families to share their [adoption stories](#) on their blog.
 - Detailing the important work of [Wendy's Wonderful Kids® Recruiters](#).
 - Hosting the first-ever [National Adoption Night](#) at Wendy's restaurants.
 - Using [Wendy's beverage cups](#) to share the drawings of three special Wendy's Wonderful Kids who were adopted by loving families.
 - Joining with The Coca-Cola Company and Dr Pepper/Seven-Up, Inc. to donate each time someone [shared their love of adoption](#) on social media. Thanks to this collaboration and customer participation, \$500,000 was donated to the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption.
 - And finally, selling [Frosty Coupon Books and Frosty Key Tags](#) as special fundraisers in local restaurants. The Frosty Key Tag program went viral this year reaching 15.8 million people across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and the Key Tags will continue to be sold at participating restaurants until January 31. The Frosty Coupon Books raised more than \$2.1 million dollars for the Foundation.
 - **Looking ahead:** There are still children in foster care who are waiting to find a loving home. Until each and every one has found a forever family, Wendy's will remain a leading voice by raising funds and awareness for foster care adoption.
- **HONORS MORE THAN 30,000 OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLAR-ATHLETES.** Started by Dave Thomas in 1994, [Wendy's High School Heisman®](#) has recognized more than 630,000 seniors across the country who excel in athletics, academics and community leadership. This year, the program celebrated another milestone by becoming a [scholarship for students](#) pursuing higher education. **Looking ahead:** In 2017, Wendy's will continue to expand the Wendy's High School Heisman program to even more students by engaging its entire network of franchisees across the country with new digital tools and school outreach resources. The program will grant more than \$120,000 in student college scholarships in 2017.
- **CONTINUES COMMUNITY INVESTMENT THROUGH ITS RESTAURANTS.** In 2011, Wendy's began a journey to reimagine a majority of its North American restaurants into a more contemporary and welcoming dining environment. To date, more than [1,500 restaurants](#) have been remodeled and more than 250 have been newly built by the Company and its franchisees, all of which have created new restaurant jobs and economic growth through construction and development in communities. **Looking ahead:** Wendy's is on a journey to build 1,000 new restaurants by 2020 – each improving their environmental footprint by running with more energy efficient equipment, lighting and building materials and bringing millions of dollars in state and local tax revenue into communities.
- **EMERGES AS ENERGY CONSERVATION CHAMPION.** Wendy's joined the U.S. Department of Energy [Better Buildings Challenge](#) in December 2015, setting a public goal to improve energy efficiency by reducing the amount of energy use per transaction in Company owned and operated restaurants by 20% by 2025. By the end of 2015, Wendy's reduced its energy use by 6% against a 2012 baseline. Wendy's also became the first restaurant company to encourage individual franchisees to join the Better Buildings Challenge. So far, 15 franchisees representing more than 1,000 Wendy's restaurants are part of the Challenge. Further, the Company received [two environmental awards](#) for energy efficiency and joined [EPA's ENERGY STAR](#) program as an ENERGY STAR partner in 2016. **Looking ahead:** With the same goal as the DOE's Better Buildings Challenge, the Company created the Wendy's Energy Challenge. In 2017, while continuing to promote the Better Buildings Challenge to its U.S. franchisees, Wendy's will also promote its own energy challenge to franchisees outside the U.S. to expand and promote energy efficiency throughout its global footprint.

**Fresh beef available in the contiguous U.S., Canada, and Alaska*

The Wendy's High School Heisman is a trademark of Quality Is Our Recipe, LLC. The Heisman name is

a registered trademark of the Heisman Trophy Trust, used with permission.

About Wendy's

The Wendy's Company (NASDAQ: WEN) is the world's third largest quick-service hamburger restaurant chain. The Wendy's system includes more than 6,500 restaurants in 29 countries and U.S. territories. For more information, visit www.wendys.com.

Contact

Bry Roth

Manager, Corporate Social Responsibility & Brand Communications

Bry.roth@wendys.com

O: 614.764.3138

To view the original version on PR Newswire, visit: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/the-wendys-company-celebrates-the-new-year-by-reporting-on-corporate-social-responsibility-and-sustainability-progress-300384673.html>

SOURCE The Wendy's Company