

# Kansas Green Teams

## Friday Facts

[www.kansasgreenteams.org](http://www.kansasgreenteams.org)



### Cork Recycling

#### From corks to footwear and a few more things



Natural cork, the kind used in wine closures, is a perfect choice for recycling. It's 100% natural, biodegradable and renewable. There is no reason natural wine corks should end up as garbage when recycled cork can become industrial safety mats, boat decking, flooring tiles, building insulation, automotive gaskets, craft materials, soil conditioner and sports equipment. Because of a worldwide interest in sustainable agriculture and natural products like cork, an alliance of concerned businesses, individuals, and ecological organizations has been formed to address the opportunities to recycle natural cork closures.



#### A cork recycling program

Through the simple act of cork recycling you can redirect natural corks that end up in the garbage each year to new and exciting applications. The ReCork program is linked to a global initiative to save and protect over 6 million acres of cork forests that dot the Mediterranean Basin.



**ReCORK** by **Amorim** (previously ReCORK America) is a natural wine cork recycling program sponsored by Amorim of Portugal, the world's largest producer of natural cork wine closures, and **SOLE**, a leading manufacturer of footwear products. The goal is to recycle corks and to educate and inform our audiences. After the corks are used in a bottle they are recycled. The recycled corks are ground up and used to make SOLE footwear products. Recycled corks are used to replace petroleum-based material in SOLE's footwear products and packaging. Each year, an estimated **30 tons of corks** are collected and recycled. More than 50 percent of cork bark goes into stoppers along with small corks for other uses

#### What you can do

ReCORK needs your cork— start your cork recycling today! Since Kansas does not have a **Public Collection Partner** why not be the first, or you can ship your corks directly to ReCORK. They do ask that you send at least 15 pounds at a time, that's around 1,650 corks, or one big cardboard box. Fill your cardboard box with corks, and **contact ReCORK** for a call tag (per-paid shipping label). ReCORK will pay for shipping 15 pound boxes.

#### Just for fun

Where does cork come from...Cork Oak Trees.

The oldest and largest productive cork tree in the world is the '**Whistler Tree**', so called because of the numerous songbirds that occupy it. This tree was planted in 1783 near the town of Aguas de Moura in the Alentejo region of Portugal. It was five years old when the first English settler arrived in Australia and six years old when the French Revolution began in 1789. Bottles of wine sealed with cork in the same year, 1789, were discovered 40 years ago in a French cellar, with both the wines and corks in good condition, proof of the long life and superb sealing abilities of natural cork.



In 1991 the Whistler Tree harvest produced 1200 kilograms or 2,645.5 pounds of bark, more than most trees yield in a lifetime. The single harvest was enough for more than 100,000 wine corks.



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