

# Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company: Setting a High Standard for Coffee Roasters Everywhere

by Lori Hill

I first heard about [Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company](#) (CBRC) just over 3 years ago when I was helping the [Chesapeake Climate Action Network](#) (CCAN) plan their annual [Keep Winter Cold Polar Bear Plunge](#). Since CCAN's mission is to fight climate change, their event needed to be sustainable and it was my job to make this happen. Everything from food and beverages, cups and napkins and the way we disposed of our waste needed to be earth friendly. When it came to coffee, we wanted fair trade, organic coffee, ideally provided by a local roaster. In my mind, it would have been bad PR if an organization that cared about the environment used a



mainstream coffee company that had little concern for sustainability or the health and well-being of its workers! Since that year's plunge was in Annapolis, I asked Lynne Forsman, co-founder of [Annapolis Green Drinks](#), and now the co-founder of [Annapolis Green](#), for suggestions. She suggested I contact Rick Erber, Food Service Sales Manager and Partner at CBRC. Rick and his team generously provided the most *delicious* coffee for the Plunge and have continued to do so for 3 more Plunges. I've been a fan of the coffee – and the company – ever since.

## A Commitment to Sustainability

Roasting Fair Trade Organic coffee isn't CBRC's only sign of its commitment to environmental sustainability. First of all, they use a Sirocco roaster, a natural gas powered hybrid roaster that uses 78% less energy and reduces emissions by 80% over traditional roasters in use today. There are only a few in use throughout the country and CBRC's is the *only* one of its kind in the region. Next, once their coffee is roasted, it is packaged in a steel can – the number one sustainable packaging material. The can is 100% recyclable and reusable as opposed to non-recyclable, non-compostable bags, and ensures freshness. On top of all this, CBRC purchases 100% wind power energy offsets.

## Giving Back to the Community

But that's not all. CBRC founded the H2O Initiative which gives 2% of sales to organizations across the Chesapeake Bay Watershed that clean up, protect and preserve clean water — our most precious resource (*we all* need to protect and preserve our water). You know, that's what green companies do: they operate sustainably, they provide an earth-friendly product AND they give back to protect the environment. Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company is the real deal!



**Lori Hill and Rick Erber**

### **Growing, Growing, Growing**

Since I met Rick Erber 3 years ago, I've seen the company grow by noticing their expanded presence at not only earth friendly grocery stores, but also mainstream food outlets, too. Whenever I'm in a different grocery store from my usual one and I see their familiar cans, I pump my fist and say, "Yeah!" in celebration of a great company that is doing great things.

Others are taking notice and hopping on the CBRC bandwagon. The company now serves

more than 300 food service clients and can be found in more than 125 grocery and specialty food markets. Some of their many partners include campus dining and healthcare organizations, coffee cafes, restaurants, grocery accounts and dozens of independent retailers.

Recently, CBRC announced that their coffees are now available throughout the entire Whole Foods' Mid-Atlantic region, including 40 stores across 8 states. In addition to Whole Foods Markets, the coffee can be found in retailers including Safeway, Giant Foods, Wegmans and Fresh Market.

### **Taste It For Yourself**

If you haven't yet tried coffee from Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company, I encourage you to do so today. Just visit their [website](#) to find out where you can purchase their coffee or you can buy it [online](#).

*Bethesda Green gratefully acknowledges sponsor CBRC for keeping us well-stocked with coffee.*

*Lori Hill is a renowned green event producer and sustainable lifestyle consultant. Visit her [blog](#) for more green lifestyle tips.*