

UNILEVER'S POSITION ON SUSTAINABLE SOURCING



Background

The world's population will increase to reach more than 9 billion by 2050 which means that a 50% increase of food production is needed by 2030. Currently almost 1 billion people are chronically undernourished. What's more, demand from the energy market (including biofuels) has the potential to change the fundamentals of agricultural market systems.

Context

Unsustainable farming practices, water scarcity and changing weather patterns all have a serious impact on food security, the environment and farming communities. As such, pressure is increasing from governments and campaigning organisations for greater transparency on where food comes from and how it is grown.

Unilever's position

Our supply chain network includes farmers and plantation owners as well as processors, refiners and traders of raw materials. We will work closely with all of them to transform farming practices and encourage a wider move towards sustainable sourcing.

We will focus first on our top ten agricultural raw material groups, which account for around two thirds of our volume. These are palm oil, paper and board, soy, sugar, tea, fruit and vegetables, sunflower oil, rapeseed oil, dairy ingredients and cocoa.

We want to achieve sustainable sourcing without adding a cost burden for our customers and consumers. We are setting industry-leading standards for ourselves and our suppliers.

In 2015 we sourced 60% of our agricultural raw materials sustainably, having made significant progress towards our target of 100% by 2020. We have already achieved the interim milestone of 50% for 2015 which we have set ourselves in 2010 when we launched the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan.





By 2020 we will engage with at least 500,000 smallholder farmers and 75,000 small-scale distributors in our supply network in order to improve their practices and livelihoods.

We have been working on our Sustainable Agriculture Programme for 15 years, and we continue to embed these sustainability principles throughout our supply chains.

We will continue to work together with public authorities, our private sector partners and nongovernmental organisations to achieve our wider objectives.

We are also developing plans to source our non-agricultural (mainly chemical) raw materials in a more responsible way taking into account the environmental and social impact.

