



As part of our vision to be a positive force for change, we've produced a series of factsheets to help our customers better understand sustainability issues, and what we're doing about them.

Overview

'Carbon footprint' is the term given to the total amount of greenhouse gases (GHG) that are produced by an organisation, directly and indirectly. For simplicity, all these different gases are collectively referred to as 'carbon emissions' and measured in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), so that we have a convenient single unit of measurement. A carbon footprint is made up of 3 different 'scopes':

SCOPE 1 ('Direct') – Emissions that are directly controlled within operations (diesel, gas, refrigerants etc.)

SCOPE 2 ('Indirect') – Emissions arising from the production of grid electricity consumed

SCOPE 3 (Everything else) – these are emissions upstream and downstream in the value chain. There are 15 different categories, from purchased goods and services to employee commuting and waste.

Being a food wholesaler, the vast majority of our carbon footprint (circa 94%) is driven by the production of the food we buy on behalf of our customers.

Our Vision

To be the best foodservice provider and a positive force for change because we care about...

- OUR PEOPLE
- OUR PLANET
- OUR CUSTOMERS
- OUR COMMUNITIES
- OUR PRINCIPLES

What's the problem?

Greenhouse gases (GHG) trap warmth and raise global temperatures, which changes our climate, resulting in heatwaves, floods, droughts, extreme heat and cold (due to unstable and changing ocean currents), as well as negative effects on marine life, nature, and so on.

We all need to cut GHG production by all means possible, to keep the planet habitable. Food production requires a stable climate, fertile soil and healthy seas, but also drives climate change, so it's both a driver and victim of the problem.

Useful jargon buster

'Net zero' is a popular but often misunderstood term; it refers to the point in time where an organisation really has minimised all their emissions, then they 'offset' the remaining emissions so that the net effect is zero CO₂e.

If a target is science-based, only a maximum of 10% of emissions can be offset. It's not the same as 'carbon neutral', which is usually achieved via carbon offset schemes (e.g. tree planting, as trees absorb carbon) but this is controversial, as the long term effectiveness of such schemes is debatable.

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Our current position and emissions reduction targets

Annually, we report on our scope 1 and 2 emissions and limited scope 3 categories. However, our entire carbon footprint was mapped in 2019 and is shown below.

Where in chain?	Scope	Source	Emissions (t) CO ₂ e	% of total
Direct operations	Scope 1	Diesel, refrigerants, natural gas	75,619	4%
Indirect operations	Scope 2	Electricity (market based rates)	33,223	2%
Upstream	Scope 3	Purchased goods and services	1,913,287	92%
		Capital goods	22,094	1%
		Fuel-and-energy related activity	24,854	1%
		Upstream logistics	4,145	0.20%
		Waste generated in operations	193	<0.01%
		Business travel	328	<0.01%
		Employee commuting	9,695	0.50%
Downstream	Scope 3	Downstream logistics	20	<0.01%
		End of life treatment of sold products	8	<0.01%

We've set an overall ambition to achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2045: <0.01%

MEDIUM TERM TARGETS (2032):

Reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions by 55% and Scope 3 emissions by 32%, both against a 2019 baseline

LONG TERM TARGET (2045):

Reduce Scope 1,2 and 3 emissions by at least 90%, with the residual emissions offset to achieve net zero.

Find out more

Details as to how we intend to reduce emissions are in our carbon reduction plan, available here: [Our policies | Bidfood UK](#) and our Carbon Reduction Roadmap.



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The calls for climate action are increasing from every stakeholder – customers and employees are keen to see that we are playing our part.

This factsheet aims to explain our carbon footprint and what we're doing to try and minimise it.

What's the problem?

Our net zero ambition has been set in response to the climate crisis and the excessive intensity of global atmospheric greenhouse gases. All stakeholders want to see us taking action; our customers want a supplier that is active in decarbonisation and our employees want us to play our part.

Our targets and plans

We've set an overall ambition to achieve net zero GHG emissions by 2045. Please refer to the Carbon Footprint factsheet for a breakdown of these targets into interim milestones across each scope.

SCOPE 1:

Diesel: We've established an Alternative Fuels working group to closely follow EV and hydrogen developments.

Refrigerants: We've mapped out our use of refrigerants and are creating a plan for phasing out high GWP (Global Warming Potential) refrigerants.

SCOPE 2:

We've been running a solar project for some time, which has resulted to date in 5 of our depots having solar panels installed, and 17 further sites are up for review, subject to practical and legal restrictions.

SCOPE 3:

The most challenging and significant element of our carbon footprint. We've started a project with CarbonCloud to measure the carbon footprint of all our products across our range, with three objectives:

- To give customers better data at product level (expected late 2024)
- To engage with suppliers on their products, encouraging them to provide us with better carbon data over time, not only measuring it but reducing it
- To enable customers to measure the total scope 3 footprint for the food they buy from us annually



What can you do?

Foods vary a great deal as to their climate impact; most GHG is created by agricultural practices at farm stage. It's well accepted that generally speaking, meat and dairy have the highest climate impact, although the severity of this impact varies a great deal depending on the category and how it's produced.

For this reason, many catering establishments are not only increasing plant-based options but also decreasing the proportion of meat in menus, facilitating flexitarian approaches for people looking for better outcomes for both health and planet, and in some cases, the wallet too, amidst the cost of living crisis.

Whilst we're doing all we can to engage our suppliers in decarbonisation, we're also working on giving you the carbon footprint of all the food you buy from us, to help you measure and reduce the carbon impact of your menus.

There's a lot more to food production than its carbon footprint, but hopefully this information will equip you to reduce your organisation's carbon footprint, which you can report to investors, employees, wider stakeholders and your customers.

Find out more

To find out more, check out [our blogs](#) and [podcasts](#) on climate friendlier menus and food waste reduction

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Labelling requirements on food and menus have increased steadily over time – recent additions have included improvements to allergen labelling as well as calorie information for large catering establishments. A growing number of foodservice and hospitality outlets now require carbon information on the products they buy from us – so that they can either provide this data on menus and/or calculate the carbon footprint of their total annual food purchasing from us.

We're working hard on providing this information – read on to find out more.



What's the problem?

As the climate and nature crisis accelerates, there's growing awareness that industrial scale food production drives a lot of negative impacts. From land use change (e.g. the cutting down of native forests to create cropland or pasture for livestock – known as 'deforestation') to agricultural processes, fertilisers, methane production, transportation and storage, the food we eat has a hefty carbon footprint.

That's before we've even cooked it, disposed of the packaging or created any waste food. But not all food is equal, and there are a lot of misunderstandings about what drives the carbon footprint. So we need to support customers with better information – so that they can better measure and reduce their own footprint – as well as enabling them to give consumers the information they need for more responsible choices.

Jargon busting

Did you know that food transport related emissions make up typically only 10% of the carbon footprint?

Lots of people love the idea of local food (and with good reason!) but it's generally far better (environmentally speaking) to buy food from where it's grown seasonally, then transported to UK, than to buy food from heated greenhouses in the UK, which are usually powered by fossil fuels.

There's also a lot more to food sustainability than just its carbon footprint. From fair pay to workers, water consumption to animal welfare and more, the carbon footprint is just one aspect of sustainability.

What can you do?

You don't need carbon footprint data to start making a difference. Meat and dairy are typically high impact foods, so reducing the proportion of these on a plate will almost always result in a reduction in the climate impact. This can be achieved creatively by swapping in different ingredients (veg, lentils, meat substitutes, nuts etc.) without compromising on taste.

Many caterers have already adopted meat reduction targets (some without even communicating it) and this can have benefits for health and your bottom line too.

Our targets and plans

We're working in partnership with CarbonCloud to provide carbon footprint data for all products in our consumable product range. CarbonCloud is a SaaS platform that uses AI to calculate, report and improve the carbon footprint of food companies. A project overview is below:

STEP 1:

We use the Carbon Cloud platform to provide fairly generic carbon footprint data for all our products, which gives customers an initial reference point for understanding the different carbon impacts of the various food categories. (We will inevitably have better quality data on own brand products as we hold a greater level of product specific / recipe related information.)

STEP 2:

We engage our suppliers in this initiative, explaining our approach to carbon footprinting. This gives suppliers a clear signal that our customers are interested in measuring and reducing the climate impact of the food they're buying from us.

STEP 3:

We give suppliers the chance to input product/supplier specific data into the process, enabling the accuracy of calculations to be improved. This gives suppliers the chance to understand more about the climate impacts of the food they're producing, as well as an opportunity to differentiate themselves in the marketplace, by innovating (in the cultivation and/or processing and/or transportation of the product) to lower the carbon impact.

STEP 4:

By this point, we aim to have driven greater momentum in the decarbonisation of global food supply, contributing to a lower scope 3 carbon footprint for our customers, their customers and ourselves.

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Food waste is one of hidden environmental impacts of the food industry, at every step of the food chain. In recognition of this, WRAP has established the [Food Waste Reduction Roadmap](#), which we're proud to support; we publicly report on our progress in food waste reduction as part of this commitment.

We also publicise WRAP's [Guardians of Grub](#) to our customers, as this campaign provides free training and resources to all sorts of foodservice outlets wanting to reduce food waste.



What's the problem?

Food waste accounts for approximately 6% of global greenhouse gas emissions (Our World in Data, 2021).

Staggeringly, about a quarter of the food globally produced ends up in the bin, which is a shocking waste of resources, not to mention a moral challenge given that many people globally suffer from food poverty. When that wasted food rots in landfill, it produces methane, which further contributes to climate change.

There are many factors impacting food waste which are beyond our control as a foodservice wholesaler, but we aim to play our part in overall waste reduction. Our targets and plans are below.

Our targets and plans

In 2021, we set a target to reduce our food waste by 63% between 2020 and 2030.

We report annually on progress against this in our sustainability report, but at the time of writing, we've achieved 33% reduction so far.

We've achieved this by:

- Maximising food waste avoidance by donating to FareShare
- Improving demand and supply forecasting
- Working on a project to reduce waste incurred via stock damage

In 2024, we were awarded Leading Food Partner status by FareShare for the third year running, in recognition of the food waste volumes donated. All of our local depots also have local or regional charities that they support i.e. through City Harvest, local food banks and soup kitchens. We also support a charity in Moldova 'Hope4' who provide food and drink to refugees from Ukraine.

As a business we're focused on reducing our product damages, by improving our handling and storage, and working with our suppliers to improve their product packaging. We also review how we sell products and reducing the amount of products we 'split' from outer case.

What can you do?

Use free resources and tools available to help you:

Check out www.guardiansofgrub.com

Join WRAP's Food waste reduction roadmap:

[Food Waste Reduction Roadmap | WRAP](#)

Target, measure and act:

It's easy to assume you haven't got a problem, if you haven't measured or you don't know what's going on in your business. Why not have a campaign and focus on measuring waste at all stages in your operations (storage, kitchen waste, plate waste) and see where it can be tackled?

Check out our resources:

Our Unlock Your menu campaign contains lots of useful advice around cutting waste and saving costs - [Food Menu Engineering Tips | Unlock Your Menu | Bidfood](#)

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The first fully synthetic plastic, Bakelite, was created in 1907, quickly followed by a range of different materials with the world's most abundant plastic, polyethylene, being created in 1932. There are thousands of different types of plastic, grouped into 7 different categories, which have different properties and uses.

Plastic is extremely versatile and has been particularly useful in the food industry to extend shelf life, protect products and improve portability. Although there are other alternatives for plastic packaging, like cardboard, glass, and metal, the benefits of plastic packaging usually outweigh those of alternatives, making it difficult to switch away from.



What's the problem?

Plastic is created from fossil fuels (excluding bio-plastics), and large amounts of greenhouse gases are emitted during extraction of these fuels, and manufacture of plastic. This causes air pollution and contributes to climate change – see our factsheets 1 and 2 for more information on this area. Alongside this, large amounts of plastic ends up in our environment and waterways, which can harm wildlife and damage the ecosystem. Plastics take hundreds of years to decompose, and turn into microplastics, often consumed by animals which build up in the food chain and have been linked to toxic and physical effects on living organisms.

Most plastic can be recycled two or three times, and by reusing these products their environmental impact is then vastly reduced. However in 2021, only 44% of plastic packaging was recycled in the UK.

Bioplastics are plastics made from renewable materials such as corn starch and potatoes, and they typically have a lower carbon footprint and biodegrade more quickly than other types of plastic. However they can be difficult to recycle – needing industrial composting, which has limited availability in the UK. Consumers may also be confused about how to dispose of them, causing contamination in current recycling streams.

Switching from plastic packaging can only be done with suitable alternatives for manufacturers to switch to. However current alternatives such as paper, glass or aluminium are not straightforward swaps. Plastic is great at protecting things, keeping them airtight, watertight and hygienic - essential for meeting health and safety standards and keeping food fresh (Cucumbers last an amazing 15 days longer when shrink-wrapped). It also prevents damages during transport and storage. Both properties in turn reduce food waste. Plastic is lighter than other packaging options which reduces carbon emissions during transport. It can be made into any shape, it's not fragile like glass or paper, and it's easy to print usage and warning labels on. The unfortunate reality, therefore, is that plastic can do things that other materials can't – for the moment, at least.

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Our targets and plans

We're aligned to the Objectives of the [UK Plastics Pact](#), and are working to 4 targets, which are detailed below, along with an update on our progress against them

TARGET 1 – eliminate problematic or unnecessary single-use packaging: We've removed all polystyrene and PVC, plastic straws and stirrers, and black / non detectable plastics

TARGET 2 - 100% reusable, recyclable or compostable packaging: 97.3% of all packaging is now recyclable. Mono materials options are being evaluated to remove complex laminates and mixed materials components

TARGET 3 - 70% of plastic packaging effectively recycled or composted: Currently 83% of our plastics are recyclable; we aim to influence, but can't control what happens to waste one we've delivered it to customers

TARGET 4 - 30% average recycled content in plastic packaging: This has been the most challenging target as post-consumer recycled content plastic has limited availability, particularly plastic which is food contact safe. We are continuing to work with industry on this area.

What can you do?

Make sure you recycle all plastic where possible. Review your operations to identify any areas where plastic isn't recycled and address any concerns this highlights. Often companies notice cleaners merging all waste together – check the reason for this and provide training if required. Ensure you have the appropriate bins and signage throughout your business (your account manager will be able to explain Bidfood's range if required) and speak with your waste contractor to ensure they have appropriate recycling facilities for your waste materials. Reducing the amount of plastic you use will also help – can you bulk buy any products, or switch to ones using less plastic? WRAP has a lot of information in this area and you could consider joining their Plastics Pact for further help and support.



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Soya is the main source of protein in our global food supply. Soya bean crops and the products derived from them feature in our food chain as an ingredient in products like tofu, soy sauce and meat substitutes.

More significantly however, over 70% of soya is used in animal feed and therefore an embedded, hidden ingredient in the supply chain for meat, eggs and dairy.



What's the problem?

Soya bean meal is the main source of protein in the livestock industry and as populations have grown, so has the demand for diets to include more meat.

As a result, the demand and production of soya is also increasing around the world. However, it has now been recognised that this expansion in soya production is a key driver of deforestation and habitat conversion in producing countries, with impacts on both the environment and local communities.

Our targets and plans

In our own brand products, we expect to use 100% deforestation and conversion free (DCF) soya by the end of 2030.

Our Action Plan to 2030 includes:

- By 2026 we aim to have in place a strategy and roadmap to DCF soya with each supplier of products containing soya or ADI (Animal Derived Ingredients)
- By 2030 we aim to have implemented all roadmaps and achieved DCF soya in our targeted products

However new legislation has been announced in both the UK and EU which affects and potentially supersedes our policy. At the time of writing we are waiting on more details and timelines to be provided by the UK government.

Useful to know

SOYA BEAN, SOYA OR SOY?

The term 'soya' and 'soy' are used interchangeably but the terms refer to the same product. Bidfood refers to all soya/soy products as soya.

It's an annual legume of the pea family (Fabaceae) and its edible seed. It's economically the most important bean in the world, providing vegetable protein for millions of people and ingredients for hundreds of chemical products.

What can you do?

- Support sustainable soya production by also looking to source products containing verified deforestation and habitat conversion free soya
- Create a sustainable soya policy and start to have conversations with other suppliers around whether their soya is free from deforestation
- The more customer demand there is for this area, the greater the drive will be to move to a more sustainable supply chain
- Join roundtables and events created by Efecsa and other organisations to understand this area in more detail
- Consider buying certificates or credits through 'book and claim' trading to cover the soya in your supply chain. This can help support the shift to sustainable soya as the money goes to farms engaged in certified sustainable agriculture and can be a stepping stone to a verified sustainable soya supply chain

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Overview

Palm oil is the world's most widely used and versatile vegetable oil. It's grown mostly in Indonesia and Malaysia, who supply 85% of the world, however palm trees are grown in 44 countries in total, and their oil can be found in 50% of packaged products.

Oil palm trees produce up to ten times more oil per hectare of land than other oil crops such as sunflower, rapeseed and soya.

Palm plantations help to create employment in rural areas where other employment is scarce and therefore help to alleviate poverty. Palm also helps to promote rural development.



What's the problem?

As the world's population continues to grow, the global demand for palm oil also grows. This has caused it to be a major driver of deforestation and habitat conversion, endangering the orang-utan, pygmy elephant and Sumatran rhino and producing millions of tonnes of greenhouse gases.

Carbon rich peatlands are often cleared and drained to plant palm, which in particular releases huge volumes of carbon emissions.

There are also some human rights issues within palm production, including worker exploitation and child labour. When palm oil is produced in a non-sustainable way, it has a substantial impact on deforestation, loss of peatland, climate change and biodiversity loss.

Our targets and plans

In our own brand products, we set a target to use 100% certified sustainable palm oil and its derivatives by the end of 2023.

We have now achieved this policy, however new legislation in the EU and UK requiring companies to address deforestation across key commodities, including palm, in their supply chains may impact our next steps.

Useful to know

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil:

Sustainability scheme for palm oil production and supply. RSPO standards are developed through multi-stakeholder input and are supported by Production and Supply Chain (chain of custody) certification. They are the main certification body for palm used in the UK.

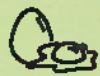
What can you do?

- Support sustainable palm production by also looking to source products containing deforestation free palm products
- Create a sustainable palm policy and start to have conversations with other suppliers around whether their palm is free from deforestation. The more customer demand there is for this area, the greater the drive will be to move to a more sustainable supply chain
- Join roundtables and events created by Efeca and other organisations to understand this area in more detail
- Consider buying RSPO credits. An RSPO Credit is proof that one tonne of certified palm oil was produced by an RSPO certified company or independent producer, and has entered the global palm oil supply chain. By purchasing credits, buyers encourage the production of certified sustainable palm oil.

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Overview

There has been a growing demand for cage-free eggs in the UK following a petition set up by a 14-year-old girl to Tesco, asking them to stop selling caged eggs.

Tesco made a commitment to do so, which was shortly followed by more retailers, foodservice companies, manufacturers and other food businesses who recognised the need for better systems for laying hens and the rising demand from the public who were buying free range eggs.



What's the problem?

After World War 2 when food was scarce, food producers were encouraged to find ways to produce more food as quickly as possible. Egg farmers met this demand by increasing stocking densities, made possible by putting hens into cages which prevented injuries from crushing, aggression or panic.

This had the downside of impacting the hens' welfare, through restricting their natural behaviour and movement. In 2012 battery cages were banned. These held around 5 hens all with less space than a piece of A4 paper. With no clear guidance of what systems to move to, egg producers moved to enriched colony systems, which are still classed as caged systems, but with around 80 birds in each cage, 20% more room for each bird, a small perch, litter and a nest.

However this still didn't address the welfare issues facing laying hens in that they are unable to express their natural behaviour – there aren't enough perches for all birds, they're unable to form the natural hierarchies they need to be able to avoid aggression and bullying, and they're unable to wing flap or dust bathe.

Welfare organisations reviewed research of these systems and realising they are not meeting hens welfare requirements, began campaigning for these systems to also be banned.

Cage-free laying hen systems allow hens more room to roam and the ability to express their natural behaviours such as dust bathing, wing flapping and perching on different levels. This means the birds are less stressed and enjoy a better quality of life, areas which are important to consumers and also contribute to better quality egg production.

Our targets and plans

We're fully committed to the move towards cage-free eggs by 2025. This includes branded and own label shell and liquid eggs, and own brand products containing eggs as an ingredient.

We are working with suppliers to source cage free eggs, as well as speaking to customers to understand whether they would like to move to barn or free range eggs in the future.

What can you do?

If you are currently sourcing caged eggs, please speak with your account manager to discuss whether you would like to move to barn or free range eggs in the future.

Useful to know

Battery eggs:

These are eggs produced from hens kept within small cages, and are now illegal in the UK and EU.

Colony/enriched eggs:

These are still from caged hens, however the cages are larger and contain more birds, as well as having nest boxes, perches and litter.

Barn eggs:

These are produced from hens that are free to roam throughout the barn. They may all be on one level, or more commonly have 'aviary systems' which allow birds to perch on multiple levels throughout the barn.

Free range eggs:

These have the same types of houses as barn eggs, but they are also able to go outside, which for our UK lion coded eggs is for a minimum of 8 hours a day. They also must have at least an acre for every 1000 hens.

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Fish and seafood are popular products which are versatile and nutritious. Bidfood supplies an extensive range of both wild-caught and farmed fish and seafood options. However the way fish are caught and managed faces a number of sustainability issues, including overfishing, habitat damage, pollution, bycatch, disease and welfare. Responsible sourcing results in fish populations remaining healthy, with minimal impacts on the environment, ensuring supplies are safeguarded for future generations.



What's the problem?

Overfishing is considered a significant threat to both marine wildlife and habitats.

In 2022 the UN estimated 35% of the fish stocks it monitors were overfished, which means too many adults are caught leaving too few to replace the population.

There are also further impacts on the environment from fishing, including lost fishing nets entangling wildlife and equipment damaging the seabed.

Farming fish is not a solution to these issues, as fish need to be fed whilst being farmed and are often fed wild caught fish. Farmed fish also have issues with welfare, sea lice and water quality.

Useful to know

Marine Conservation Society (MCS) Good Fish Guide (GFG):

The Good Fish Guide is a consumer-friendly guide to assess the environmental impact of seafood. Both farmed and wild-caught seafood are rated with scores from 1 (best choice) to 5 (avoid). For farmed seafood, one rating is applied to each species farmed by a specific method in a specific area, assessing fish feed, environmental impact, fish welfare, and management. For wild-caught seafood, one rating is applied for each fishery (a fishery is a species of fish or shellfish from a specific area caught in a specific way). Stock status, management, and capture (or fishing) method impacts are the three main aspects assessed. GFG ratings are formally updated by the MCS twice a year in April and October.

What can you do?

Look to buy seafood which is rated 1-2, and try to buy a wide range of seafood rather than just popular products (cod, haddock, salmon, tuna, prawns) where fish stocks are under most pressure. If buying farmed fish, consider buying omnivorous fish such as pangasius (basa) that have less requirements for fish in their feed.

Our targets and plans

Our purchasing decision for both wild caught, and farmed fish (aquaculture), is based on risk assessment.

We've classified products rated as 1-2 as low risk, 3, 4 and 4.5 as medium risk, and 5 as high risk, based on the Marine Conservation Societies Good Fish Guide.

We aim to source low risk products (GFG rated 1-2), however this is not always possible. Where products are categorised medium or high risk (GFG rated 3, 4, 4.5 or 5), we'll only source medium and high risk products where fisheries are enrolled within a comprehensive credible Fishery Improvement Project (FIP), where appropriate progress is being made.

We require suppliers to source farmed seafood that has been independently certified to internationally recognised GSSI (Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative) standards such as Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) (minimum 2*), the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), and Global Gap certification, and hold full chain of custody certification, where applicable.

All suppliers of Bidfood own brand farmed fish and seafood, and those which supply as a significant ingredient must have a documented fish welfare policy and environmental management system for farms, which must be routinely audited.

We're a proud member of the Sustainable Seafood Coalition (SSC), a progressive partnership of businesses cooperating to address important issues in fish and seafood sustainability.

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Overview

Work on salt reduction in key foods has been ongoing in industry since 2004, after a report from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) was published in 2003 stating that recommended population average salt intakes should be reduced to 6g per day to reduce the risk of high blood pressure and hence cardiovascular disease (CVD)¹. Salt intakes in adults is estimated to be 40% higher than the government recommended maximum of 6g per day. In the latter part of 2020, Public Health England (PHE) issued the government's fifth set of voluntary salt reduction targets for industry to achieve by 2024. These targets are based around the 2017 targets with revisions made where it is believed that there is further scope for reducing salt.

The salt reduction programme challenges all sectors of the food industry to reduce the salt content in foods across more than 100 food groups that contribute most to people's salt intakes. Work on salt reduction in key foods has been ongoing in industry since 2004, after a report from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) was published in 2003 stating that recommended population average salt intakes should be reduced to 6g per day to reduce the risk of high blood pressure and hence cardiovascular disease (CVD)¹. Salt intakes in adults is estimated to be 40% higher than the government recommended maximum of 6g per day. In the latter part of 2020, Public Health England (PHE) issued the government's fifth set of voluntary salt reduction targets for industry to achieve by 2024. These targets are based around the 2017 targets with revisions made where it is believed that there is further scope for reducing salt.

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What's the problem?

Eating too much salt can cause high blood pressure, which increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Around three quarters of the salt we eat comes from packaged and everyday foods we buy, such as bread, breakfast cereals, meat products and ready meals. Due to this consumers may not be aware of the amount of salt they are eating, adding to the high levels of salt intake.

What can you do?

Review your product range to see which of the products you are purchasing has the highest salt levels, and consider whether you can swap these for products containing less salt. Consider offering less processed products which contain high levels of salt, and reduce the amount of salt used in your menus if possible.



Our targets and plans

At Bidfood, we recognise that achieving the public health goal of consuming no more than 6g of salt per person per day will necessitate further action across the whole industry, government, NonGovernment Organisations (NGOs) and individuals.

As a result Bidfood will strive to achieve the new salt reduction targets by 2024 across the own brand portfolio.

Our policy is to reduce the saltiness of own brand products without the use of potassium-based sodium replacers. However, Bidfood allows the use of sodium replacers for functional purposes, such as a raising agent, and not to substitute the taste profile of the product.

Jargon buster

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN):

This committee advises the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) and other UK government organisations on nutrition and health related matters.

Public Health England (PHE):

Public Health England was an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care which existed to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. This has now been replaced by UK Health Security Agency and Office for Health Improvement and Disparities.

Share your feedback

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As part of our vision to be a positive force for change, we've produced a series of factsheets to help our customers better understand sustainability issues, and what we're doing about them.

Overview

Modern slavery is the umbrella term used to encompass the offences of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking.

The term extends to slavery-like practices such as debt bondage, sale and exploitation of children and forced or servile marriage. It exists in every region and every type of economy; industrialised, developing or in transition.

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), a staggering 28 million people were in forced labour in 2021; the number of people in modern slavery has risen significantly in the last five years.

Modern slavery occurs in almost every country in the world, and cuts across ethnic, cultural and religious lines. 52% of all forced labour can be found in upper middle income or high-income countries, with migrant workers being more than three times more likely to be in forced labour than non-migrant adult workers.

What's the problem?

Victims of modern slavery might face violence or threats, be forced into inescapable debt, or have their passport taken away and face being threatened with deportation.

Many people have fallen into this trap because they were trying to escape poverty or insecurity, improve their lives and support their families.

Jargon buster

Sedex:

Supplier Ethical Data Exchange is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving global supply chains.

They are one of the largest collaborative platforms sharing ethical supply chain data which allows businesses to manage and mitigate ethical risks across their global supply chains and ensure responsible business practises.

What can you do?

Look at how you can integrate Sedex into your business practices and review your processes and procedures to assess the level of risk of modern slavery and exploitation within your operations.

Also, consider watching this clip to understand better how to spot signs of exploitation amongst your own workforce - [Modern Slavery - Do the Right Thing - GLAA produced video \(7 minutes\) \(youtube.com\)](#) - your employees' eyes and ears are a powerful tool.



Our targets and plans

At Bidfood, we recognise that modern slavery is a crime that can take many forms; we have a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery within our own business, with our suppliers of agency labour and in our dealings with our food and non-food product suppliers.

We're committed to putting effective systems and controls in place to safeguard against any form of modern slavery within our business or our supply chains. We have policies in place along with guidelines and our 24 hour whistleblowing hotline which are given to employees during their induction.

We provide training to all employees to help them identify signs of modern slavery and remind them of the number to call if they have a concern, and we also provide more in-depth training to our employees who are in contact with our supply chain.

For our supply chain, in June 2019, we became AB members of Sedex, indicating our status as both a buyer and supplier.

We're connecting all our own brand suppliers onto the Sedex platform and require them to complete the self-assessment questionnaire which covers information on the four pillars:

- Labour rights
- Health and safety
- The environment
- Business ethics

Using the Sedex radar tool, we have identified suppliers that are higher risk and require them to provide further information and an action plan will be put in place if required.

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Overview

Regenerative agriculture has been a buzzword in sustainability for a couple of years, as it's seen as a lever for improving environmental outcomes in a number of areas.

As the name suggests, it's about regenerating the soil, land and biodiversity, so that the planet can continue to produce enough food for growing global population.

It incorporates the following key principles:

- Minimise soil disturbance, tilling as little as possible
- Integrate grazing livestock, as a key part of the carbon cycle
- protect the soil surface, for example by planting cover crops in winter
- Encourage plant diversity – so that there is greater resilience to pests and disease
- Maintain living root systems, aiding water retention and storage, improving soil structure

This holistic approach to nature's interconnected systems leads to greater resilience (to extreme weather events, pests and climate change).

What's the problem?

There's increasing recognition that conventional intensive farming degrades soil quality and quantity, minimises crop diversity (making crops more vulnerable to pests and disease, and over-reliant on pesticides), destroys habitats (by destroying hedgerows) – therefore damaging the balance of ecosystems, as well as being impactful in terms of local water quality and water quantity required for irrigation.

Conventional methods also mean that carbon sequestration (the natural storage of carbon within soils) isn't leveraged as much as it could be, so greenhouse gas emissions are higher within mainstream farming methods.

A significant challenge is that farmers can't transition to regenerative farming overnight; they need the support and understanding of customers (food manufacturers) in making this change, as the transition period can cause a drop in yields, so financial and commercial arrangements need to allow for this.

The benefit for manufacturers however, is that if they are truly partnered with their suppliers, they're likely to reap the benefits of a more resilient supplier as climate change intensifies.

Our targets and plans

We haven't set any specific targets in this area, as it's so poorly defined at present, but we're going to be sending out questionnaires to our top 50 suppliers to understand their commitments relating to biodiversity and water management as a starting point, and this questionnaire will include a question on regenerative principles.



What can you do?

You can learn more about this by reading our blogs and listening to podcasts on [our website](#). Simply search for 'regenerative' to find them.

There's also lots of information online – there is more and more activity going on in this space, in terms of growing interest in regenerative practices, and commercial partnerships between customers and suppliers.

Do let us know that you're interested in sourcing from suppliers that use regenerative principles and we'll do our best to help you.

Useful to know

A key challenge of regenerative agriculture is that at present, there's no 'standard' or accreditation, in the way that exists for Fairtrade or Organic.

Principles can be implemented partially or inconsistently, so there is a huge potential for greenwash, as food suppliers are keen to exploit the growing interest in regenerative agriculture. This space is evolving continually however, so this is unlikely to stay the case for long.

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Overview

'Circular economy' is a term coined by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, describing a system where we ultimately avoid/minimise waste. We do this by thinking about every stage in the supply chain:

- **Minimise raw material inputs**
by using less in the first place / renewables / recycled inputs / repurposed waste
- **Keeping resources in use longer**
by devising ways of making the most out of resources before they become 'waste'
- **Closing the loop**
instead of the bin / landfill, how can we prevent what would ordinarily become waste, from becoming waste?
- **Regenerating**
how do we replace what we've used / help keep the planet productive and healthy?
- **Technology**
how we use tech to keep track of assets so that they don't get lost in the system and we can keep on using them.

What's the problem?

We're all very used to 'linear' consumption – i.e. a straight line. We extract raw materials, process them, manufacture something, consumers then use it, then usually it becomes waste, or gets recycled (with mixed success and sometimes a drop in quality).

At the start of the supply chain, this is depleting the planet's resources faster than they get regenerated, and at the end of the supply chain it's creating mountains of waste.

And at each stage in between, we're emitting too much greenhouse gas and generating pollution. It's not sustainable. So the challenge is to think about how we can use resources more effectively – i.e. in a more circular way.

Our targets and plans

Food production and consumption will always be essentially a straight line (linear) BUT the good news is that we can introduce circular ways of using resources at all stages of foodservice.

We've been running workshops on circular economy with key teams in the business to upskill employees in this area and help them think differently.

We've already got several examples:

- Redistributing food to Fareshare (we're a Leading Food Partner for the third year running)
- Introducing 4-door cages to eliminate the need for plastic wrap
- Encouraging customers to get their waste cooking oil collected by Olleco, for biofuel
- Aligned to the objectives of the Plastics Pact, so driving greater recyclability in plastics
- We use refurbished parts in our trucks, thanks to the 'Green parts' scheme



Our targets and plans cont'd...

- Harvesting rainwater and using 'grey' water for truck wash, at some of our depots

What can you do?

There are so many areas that can be tackled:

- **Waste streams**
Is guidance clear about how and where to dispose of food-to-go packaging? It's increasingly complex, as plastic should be recycled, Vegware needs its own industrial composting waste stream, biodegradables should go in general waste.
- **Food waste avoidance**
Can you donate (to charity) or resell edible food (e.g. via Too Good to Go apps)
- **Plate waste**
Do you offer customers the chance to take leftovers home?
- **Influencing consumer behaviour**
Can you incentivise the use and return of reusable cups?
- **Avoid over fished species on your menu**
Avoid anything rated 4-5 by MCS, as this means the species is at high risk, due to being fished at a faster rate than it can regenerate
- **Try and buy products with accreditations**
Whether it's produced by a supplier with a B-Corp accreditation, organic, Rainforest Alliance, or many others, an accreditation usually indicates that the product has been produced more sustainably than its non-accredited equivalents

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Overview

Biodiversity is the term given to the wide range of living species – animals, plants, fungi, marine life, and micro-organisms, as well as the ecosystems they inhabit. The 'diversity' angle covers not only the varieties of species that exist, but genetic diversity within species and the diversity of ecosystems themselves. Biodiversity is essential for the health of ecosystems (which are the basis of all life, food and more!) – so its conservation should be a global priority. Biodiversity is absolutely essential, as it provides:

- Ecosystem stability – the more diverse an ecosystem, the more readily it can recover from challenges (e.g. extreme weather, disease, pollution, etc.)
- Ecosystem services – e.g. pollination of crops, clean air, pest control, regulation of climate
- Genetic resources – nature has been, and continues to be a source of material for medicines and biotech innovations
- Economic benefits – of fishing, agriculture, tourism etc.
- Aesthetics and culture – nature is needed for mental health, relaxation, holidays, art, sports etc.

The above are all needed to humans, but all species have a right to exist, so there's a moral obligation too.

What's the problem?

Food production has driven many aspects of biodiversity loss, through:

- **Overfishing**
Many species are overfished and are now threatened, plus fishing methods such as trawling can be very damaging to the seabed and other species
- **Over consumption of meat**
As more land is needed to cultivate the animal feed, and as grazing, so forests and grasslands are converted to farmland, so habitats are lost
- **Destruction of hedgerows**
To create more and more farmland – which destroys habitats
- **Palm oil and soya production**
Driving deforestation, to create farmland
- **Overuse of fertilisers and pesticides**
As farming gets more and more intensive, so our reliance on fertilisers and pesticides grows, and it becomes a vicious cycle as soil degrades.

Regenerative farming aims to address many of the above problems, so why not take a look at our regenerative farming factsheet?



Our targets and plans

Biodiversity is really challenging to measure, as it varies geographically, seasonally and by species characteristic. The rate of biodiversity loss is happening faster than the world's response to it, so this area is by no means as evolved as areas such as carbon emissions, but we have various measures in place:

- **Continuing our active participation in UK Hospitality sustainability expert group in biodiversity**, facilitating dialogues with our suppliers and other food organisations that are active in this area, to try and create some meaningful biodiversity measures for the foodservice sector
- **Continuing our approach of setting product policies in areas where there is known environmental degradation**, for example, overfishing (we have a fish sourcing policy), and deforestation (we have palm and soya policies), where it is commercially possible to do so. Please see other factsheets for details on individual policies and our progress in these areas.
- **Growing our understanding of supplier activity in this area-** we're currently scoping out our approach to this, working with our sister company Bidfresh, to establish best practice

What can you do?

This will depend on your business model and customer base; try to only offer fish that's rated 1-3 by the Marine Conservation Society (4 and 5 ratings are for most threatened species).

Our product sourcing policies for palm, soya, fish etc. cover all our own brand products.

For coffee, try to buy products with accreditations (e.g. Rainforest Alliance) and consider decreasing the proportion of animal-derived products in your menus.

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Overview

Water is of relevance to every business. For the hospitality and foodservice sector, it's used for everything – from sanitation, to industrial processes, food irrigation, drinks, cooking, and lots more.

The planet has a fixed supply of water (and only a small proportion of that is freshwater) – and demand upon it is growing. Bidfood is reliant on water in two main ways:

- In our operations (for vehicle washing and office sanitation)
- In our supply chains, for the production and processing of the food we buy

Security of supply in this context is a real commercial – and national – concern for the UK food and drink sector. Suppliers need the means to become more resilient to water pressures. This can mitigate future risks – but also have positive effects.

For example, it is estimated that better water management could boost crop production by 20% globally.

There are also wider risks and opportunities. Food and drink businesses share their water needs with communities and wildlife.

Food and drink businesses are exposed when their supply chains are linked to practices that negatively affect these water resources.

Examples include the spotlight placed on avocado production in Chile, and asparagus production in Peru, and free-range egg production in the UK.

(Source: WRAP Water Roadmap)

What's the problem?

Agricultural supply chains use 70% of global freshwater resources. UN projections are that global demand for fresh water will exceed supply by 40% by 2030.

Water pressures disproportionately affect the food and drink sector because of the importance of water for agriculture.

Climate change will increase pressures on farmers, with more unpredictable weather and the disruption faced from both water scarcity and flooding.

(Source: WRAP, 2024).



Our targets and plans

We need to understand more about water risks in our supply chain, so one of our targets is engage with our top 50 suppliers in CY 2024 and be able to report on their engagement with water use and reduction initiatives by the end of CY 2025.

We'll adopt an approach guided by materiality:

- Prioritising our most significant suppliers, not just in terms of sales volume but in terms of suppliers who are likely to be sourcing from high water-stress areas of the world and/or commodities associated with high water consumption
- We aim to report on the level of supplier engagement with water stewardship initiatives, such as Feeding Ourselves Thirsty, the WWF Water Risk Filter and WRAP's Water Roadmap

We also report annually on our water consumption within our UK operations, not just in terms of mains water used but litres saved due to rainwater harvesting and grey water use in truck washing.

What can you do?

You also can join WRAP's Water Roadmap – you can read more about it here:

<https://wrap.org.uk/taking-action/food-drink/initiatives/courtauld-commitment/courtauld-2030-water-roadmap>

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Overview

Bidfood's commercial fleet (as at May 2024) is made up of diesel powered trucks and vans. We have one electric vehicle based at our Battersea depot, but challenges with its battery range have meant that it's unable to meet the operationally heavy demands we place on our multi-drop, multi-temperature trucks.

We're aware that we need to decarbonise our fleet (i.e. minimise fossil-fuel derived emissions) and are looking at all the options available, as technology is evolving relatively rapidly in this area – we are concentrating on a mix of Electric and Hydrogen Electric vehicles.

At the moment, all large fleet operators are largely in the same position. BEVs (Battery Electric Vehicles) manage to cope with fairly fixed mileage trunking routes (where they can reliably recharge at either end) but this isn't the operating environment for our vehicles, especially with the extra power draw from refrigeration units.

Using Hydrogen Battery Electric Vehicles (HBEV) would give us the operating range where longer distances are an issue.

What's the problem?

Our diesel emissions are the largest contributor to our Scope 1 emissions (i.e. emissions we directly control). With over 1,200 trucks on the UK roads, we're under pressure to decarbonise our fleet, to help minimise climate change.

In 2022, we trialled the use of HVO (Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil) as a drop-in alternative fuel to diesel (this simply means that no vehicle modifications were required for its use) at our Edinburgh depot. This reduced emissions by anywhere between 30% and 90% (depending on the engine manufacturer) but we were also aware of growing concerns around HVO provenance (it's ideally sourced from waste cooking oil, but some sources suggested that insufficient waste cooking oil was driving the use of virgin oil, involving land use change) so we weren't fully convinced that this would be a sustainable alternative. This led us to end the HVO trial.

Recent improvements in the supply of HVO plus certificates of origin for the actual waste oil are now being supplied by major HVO fuel suppliers. The Group Fleet Engineer is investigating this with the aim of relooking at previous decisions and using HVO as a temporary drop in fuel to cut carbon emissions.

More recently, we have trialled aerodynamic kit fitted to our HGVs. This showed a fuel saving of approx. 8.3% and a potential of 2.45t CO2 savings per vehicle per year. We're looking to implement this on new builds coming onto fleet.

Trials have been conducted with BEV 19t vehicles resulting in a tender being published shortly for 6 19t BEVs hopefully being seeded into depots by early next year...



... A similar tender will be published for a number of BEV vans to support both Bidfood and Bidfresh.

We are also arranging for a HBEV to be leased to our Bidfood Slough depot to collate data from on a year-long lease trial.

Our targets and plans

We've created an Alternative Fuels working group, led by our Group Fleet Engineer, to monitor developments in this area and identify possible solutions.

This group sits within our Environmental workstream and reports progress on a quarterly basis to the senior leadership team (our Board).

Whilst we wait for progress in the area of fleet decarbonisation, we've been working on making our routing more efficient, driving lower KMs per litre, and all our deliveries are multi-temperature, which reduces the overall number of deliveries, thanks to consolidation.

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