



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

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.

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?

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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