

Wessanen releases Sustainability Report 2016

Every year Wessanen releases its integrated Annual Report including the latest Sustainability Report, highlighting the company's approach to creating environmental and social impact.

"We at Wessanen want to help consumers finding alternatives to mainstream food and contribute to a more sustainable way of living," says Christophe Barnouin, CEO of Wessanen. "We believe in what we do and are proud of actions we have taken during the previous year. 2016 again showed that performance and sustainability can go hand in hand."

Carbon emissions and climate change

Climate change is an issue which cannot be ignored by any business. The agreement of COP21 in Paris was an essential step to bring all actors face to their responsibilities and to take their part in the battle.

Wessanen addresses it through a mainly vegetarian and organic portfolio. Vegetarian diets have lower CO2 emissions than animal based ones and organic agriculture is proven to better trap carbon into the soil than conventional. Furthermore, Wessanen moved electricity consumption to a renewable source and constantly works on optimising goods transportation, reducing waste in the food chain and compensating for its impacts.

Regulatory compliance and labelling

Ensuring regulatory compliance of products is prime focus of Wessanen. This includes providing clear, transparent and responsible information on product labelling. It is also key requirement for Wessanen's suppliers, specified in a dedicated Supplier Quality Booklet, and in raw material and packaging specifications.

Healthy food

Wessanen developed nutritional policies. They address thresholds for salt content on core categories, and foster less refined sugar and cereals. In 2016 86% of Wessanen's nutritional brands complied with the policies.

In 2016 Wessanen benchmarked sweet products of nutritional brands and decided to bring them below the market average for sugar. By 2020 all products will be compliant with the new policy.

Consumer health and safety

Food safety is priority, as it is prerequisite for healthier food. It is covered in the Wessanen Product Quality Charter and the Supplier Quality Booklet. Factories are certified according to GFSI standard.

To avoid possible contamination of food with a group of chemicals referred to as mineral oil hydrocarbons Wessanen set up a workgroup for Mineral Oil Hydrocarbons and established a monitoring plan: First in France and currently rolling out across all of Wessanen. The company actively works on finding solutions to tackle the migration issue: both internally in collaboration with packaging suppliers and externally through active membership of a food industry taskforce on MOH.

Organic

Organic is part of Wessanen's DNA – 74% of the product portfolio is currently certified as organic. In 2016 Wessanen strengthened its partnering with organic players by becoming member of IFOAM and IFOAM EU. As main sponsor of the IFOAM EU Wessanen participated in the fourth annual Organic Processing Conference held in Seville, Spain.

Ethics in the supply chain

Wessanen is sourcing 56% of tea, coffee and cocoa via fair trade certified chains and is further working on increasing this ratio.

Supplier needs to commit to Wessanen's Supplier Code, which follows ILO-based principles. If suppliers refuse to sign, a process of replacing the supplier starts.

In the UK, the Modern Slavery Act was enacted in 2016. Wessanen's UK operating company has implemented a dedicated policy. Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, human trafficking and forced labour. Wessanen has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery.

Other topics

Food waste:

Wessanen tracks physical waste as a ratio of total volumes sold. The aim is to reduce this ratio by 30% between 2016 and 2020. Implementing a robust sales and operational planning (S&OP) system, which aims at better planning orders, will be a key enabler of this ambition.

Packaging:

Packaging protects the contents from damage and spoilage, thus preventing losses along the supply chain and reducing food waste. Looking at it this way, packaging actually only represents a rather small part of the carbon or energy footprint of food.

Nonetheless, Wessanen tries to use packaging (materials) with minimal impact, for example by using recycled and/or recyclable materials, by using materials that do not rely on fossil fuels and are renewable (and responsibly sourced) and of course by using the least necessary amount of material.

Green Entrepreneurial culture and healthy lifestyle:

Wessanen believes that the involvement of employees in community-related activities is a great force and that encouraging physical activity is essential. People are encouraged to become involved in different green and sporting events throughout the year.

[Read the full integrated report here](#)

About Wessanen

At Wessanen, we focus on food that is good for people and for the planet. In most cases, foods which benefit our own health are also better for the planet, and vice versa. We have therefore defined our mission as 'Healthier food, healthier people, healthier planet'. We focus on our core categories dairy alternatives, sweet in between, bread and biscuit replacers, veggie meals, breakfast cereals and hot drinks.

A family of brands

Many of our brands are successful leaders of their respective markets. They all have strong local roots and are among the pioneers of the organic market in their country.

Brands like Bjorg, Allos, Kallo, Bonneterre, Isola Bio, Gayelord Hauser, Alter Eco, Zonnatura, Tartex, Clipper, Whole Earth, Mrs. Crimble's and Destination are part of our family.

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