

## **Policy and Strategy: Dean Food - ensuring sustainable sourcing of soy**

The Dean Foods WhiteWaves division buy more that 1.5 million bushels of organic soybeans farmed on more than 40,000 organic acres, for Dean Food's Silk (Soya-Milk) products. Dean Foods have partnered with Conservation International to develop soy-sourcing guidelines, which incorporate environmental and social best practices from farmers and vendors.

The Silk Soyabean Sourcing and Production Program has three focal areas: environmental responsibility (biodiversity conservation, soil and water resource protection, waste and emissions management), 2) social management (community impact, farm and labour relations) and 3) continuous improvement. It outlines goals for improving bean variety without genetic modification, and ways to work with soybean growers to uphold best practices for biodiversity conservation, soil and water resource protection, and erosion management

Conservation International are also helping Dean Foods to develop a comprehensive supplier survey to help develop new sourcing methods designed to protect biodiversity in the regions where WhiteWave sources its soybeans. The survey will be used to determine a baseline from which the company can enhance its sourcing methods. Improvements will include implementation of best practices for soil productivity, fertility and erosion management and landscape level management i.e. co-ordination between farms to maximize individual efforts e.g. biodiversity conservation corridors and buffer zones for shared water bodies. The company is also using the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool to help determine where the farms occur in relation to important areas of biodiversity.

*Source: <http://www.silksoymilk.com/content/pdf/SilkSoybeanSourcingProgram.pdf> (July 2009)*

## **Policy and Strategy: Foster's Guidelines for Biodiversity Conservation**

In a partnership with the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF), a set of Guidelines for Biodiversity Conservation were developed to describe Foster's approach to biodiversity management in its viticulture business. The guidelines cover in detail a number of issues focused on the management of native vegetation and have been provided for use at all Foster's own and contract vineyards.

Vineyard managers are now required to use biodiversity assessment tools and set goals for regional-catchment outcomes. Actions may include: enhancing degraded patches of native vegetation; establishing wildlife corridors, and; sharing water with the environment. One of the unique components of the Guidelines is the requirement for Vineyard Managers to raise the capacity of the staff to undertake conservation related activities. Through the development of the Biodiversity Conservation Guidelines, Foster's is able to articulate best management practice

across its operations in Australia and provide a consistent approach to native vegetation management with a set of tools and biodiversity metrics.

*Source: Foster's Sustainability Report 2008*

## **Policy and Strategy: Sustainable sourcing standards in the retail sector (Tesco, Sainsburys & M&S)**

Carrefour, Marks & Spencer and Tesco have developed standards to minimize impacts on the natural environment and biodiversity. **Carrefour's** Quality Lines standards cover aspects such as species and ecosystems protection; animal welfare; local community support programmes; soil and water management; carbon emissions and recycling waste.

**Tesco's** environmentally friendly farm management scheme, Tesco Nature's Choice (recently renamed Nurture) incorporates 15,000 growers from over 70 countries around the world and covers all aspects of farming to promote best agricultural practice. The scheme ensures customers that all products can be traced back to source; growers demonstrate commitment to wildlife protection and landscape conservation; sustainable farming practices are encouraged; the rational use of artificial pesticides and; ensures that all their staff are treated in a responsible manner.

**Marks and Spencer** have developed supplier specifications through the 'Field to Fork' initiative to give customers assurances on farm animal welfare, animal health, food safety and quality. These include produce in the entire agriculture supply chain. The current standards contain requirements of relevance to biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Source: Marks & Spencer Field to Fork standard, Carrefour Quality Line standard excerpts, Tesco's 'Natures Choice' disclosures on [www.tesco.com](http://www.tesco.com)

## **Policy and Strategy: Social Responsibility in Tobacco Production (SRiTP): a tool to encourage sustainable agriculture practices (BAT & Imperial Tobacco)**

The SRiTP (or SRTP) is a tool to monitor supplier performance on an annual basis. It is used by **BAT** and **Imperial Tobacco** to enable suppliers to self-assess performance for a range of sustainable agriculture practices including climate change, labour rights, minors in crop production, capacity building and guiding policy, biodiversity, water management, timber use, soil protection and integrated pest management. It allows year on year comparison of performance, with a sample of suppliers audited to ensure accuracy, and build supplier capacity to understand key aspects of sustainable agriculture and implement improvements.

Manufacturers are able to consolidate results from their suppliers, and thus identify common issues and areas of weakness within the supply chain that need to be addressed. It is one of the most comprehensive, publicly available supply chain tools we encountered in our analysis.

For a number of the companies, the SRiTP is central to their management of biodiversity and ecosystem services. It has the potential to function as a supplier standard – it is not being used in this way at present. Instead of setting mandatory standards, the industry has opted to encourage performance improvement. As a result, supplier performance is likely to vary significantly and in some parts of the supply chain may expose the company to risk. This presents an opportunity to strengthen the application of the tool, requiring, for example, stricter time frames for progression from one level of performance to the next.

*Source: <http://www.leafc.com/downloads.htm> (June 2009)*