

truvia.



Sustainability Program Update

2013



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ABOUT THIS UPDATE

We began communicating about our sustainability initiatives in late 2010 and reported on our progress in 2011, when *Ethical Corporation* featured Truvia in its corporate focus on developing a sustainable supply chain. Since then, we have been busy improving, refining and expanding our sustainability program. In the pages that follow, we update you on our progress during 2011 and 2012 and highlight our plans for the future.

Transparency is a key communication pillar to the Truvia business. Without open communication, we cannot achieve our goals for a sustainable value chain. We invite your feedback and comments on our initiatives.

For questions or comments about the Truvia sustainability program, go to truvia.com/sustainability.

Matthew Jacobs
Truvia® Global Communications Manager
info_truvia@cargill.com

Dear Readers,

Truvia® is a truly fortunate brand. From the start, we wanted the Truvia brand to be built upon a foundation of sustainability and transparency. These business drivers have led to the creation of a common bond across our business team, a way of thinking and working that continuously seeks out economic, environmental and social opportunities. Our responsibility commitments fall into three areas: sourcing responsibly, stewarding natural resources, and sharing in improving communities. And the results are notable.

It has taken four years to develop the Truvia sustainability program, and in the last two years of implementation we have reached a number of key milestones. In the area of responsible sourcing, we developed and launched the stevia sustainable agricultural standard in October 2011. This standard is the first for growing stevia and is setting the bar for responsibility across the industry.

In stewarding natural resources, we completed a life cycle analysis of Truvia stevia leaf extract, then partnered with the Carbon Trust to have our carbon footprint certified and our water and waste footprints verified. The results of our footprint analysis are published in this report. These numbers have

value beyond telling us where and what our impacts are; sharing these numbers with our stakeholders is a means of engagement and propels continuous improvement.

Sustainability is a mindset. It is how we do business.

And finally, in addition to engaging in the communities where we operate under our social commitment, we launched a new partnership with the World Food Programme in an effort to reach over 36,000 school children in Bolivia in need of better nutrition. Through this partnership, we hope to strengthen future generations and create more sustainable communities in the areas where the stevia plant originated. We look forward to engaging with our loyal Truvia consumer to make this program an even larger component of seeking to do good through our sharing initiative.

We are open for scrutiny and invite conversation on how we're doing. Sustainability is not an adjunct or add-on; it is how we do business. It is a mindset. And we want stakeholders and consumers to be aware of our efforts and to be involved in helping us improve.



From Field to Table. Sustainability is a journey that is taking us around the world, and while we continue to learn, we are proud of the progress we've made. 🌱

Zanna McFerson
Vice President,
Truvia® Business Director



About Truvia®



Truvia® sweetener is natural, great tasting sweetness born from the leaves of the stevia plant. Introduced in 2008, Truvia sweetener was the pioneer in a new space of naturally sourced, calorie-free sugar substitutes—a category it today leads in most markets.

The success of the product can be traced to a close understanding of emerging consumer needs. A combination of stevia leaf extract, erythritol and natural flavors, Truvia sweetener offers consumers concerned with health and wellness a way to help manage sugars and calories in their diet, naturally. In order to fulfill this purpose, the Truvia portfolio continues to grow. For example, Truvia Baking Blend, a new product made with sugar, provides consumers 75% fewer calories than sugar alone while maintaining the sugar-like properties necessary for baking.

As we look to the horizon for yet other ways to offer consumers responsible choices, we do so with the entire business in mind.

The Truvia sustainability program is therefore founded on three pillars:

- 1. Sourcing responsibly**
- 2. Stewarding natural resources**
- 3. Sharing in improving communities**

These pillars define the core of our values and our efforts. Our commitments to building a sustainable business include support for fair and ethical treatment of our farmers, protecting

Global Supply Chain



natural resources, and improving the social and economic conditions in the communities where we operate. We are proud to uniquely manage our stevia supply chain from Field to Table.

Truvia® sweetener and Truvia® stevia leaf extract are products of Cargill, an international producer and marketer of food, agricultural, financial and industrial products and services. More information on Cargill's corporate responsibility can be found at www.cargill.com/corporate-responsibility/.

The Journey From Field to Table

The journey of bringing Truvia sweetener from Field to Table began with a desire to embed sustainable practices throughout the value chain. The infancy of the industry gave us an unparalleled opportunity to build a globally-managed sustainable supply chain from scratch. In six stages, the sweetness of stevia makes the journey from greenhouse to the kitchen table. By

following these steps, we ensure we obtain the best tasting part of the stevia leaf.

The Stevia Plant

Stevia is a member of the Asteraceae family native to northeastern Paraguay. The leaves of the plant have been used to sweeten foods and beverages for hundreds of years. One particular species, *Stevia rebaudiana* (Bert.) Bertoni, contains steviol glycosides that are 200-300 times sweeter than sugar. Steviol glycosides are the key sweetening components of the plant.

The stevia plant is commonly grown on small-scale farms. Most of our supply currently comes from China, where the industry was first commercialized decades ago to serve the Japanese market when the Japanese government banned the use of artificial sweeteners.

Our sustainability program was developed and piloted in Argentina as the region near where the stevia plant is native. We are scaling up supply from South America first through

Field to Table

Stevia begins as a root cutting cultivated in local greenhouses.



It is then transplanted as a seedling, three to four inches tall, to the field in early spring.

The appearance of small white flowers signals the time for harvesting and drying the leaves.



The leaves are steeped in water similar to making tea.

The sweet extract is then purified to concentrate the best tasting part of the leaf.



Finally, Truvia® stevia leaf extract is blended with erythritol crystals and natural flavors.

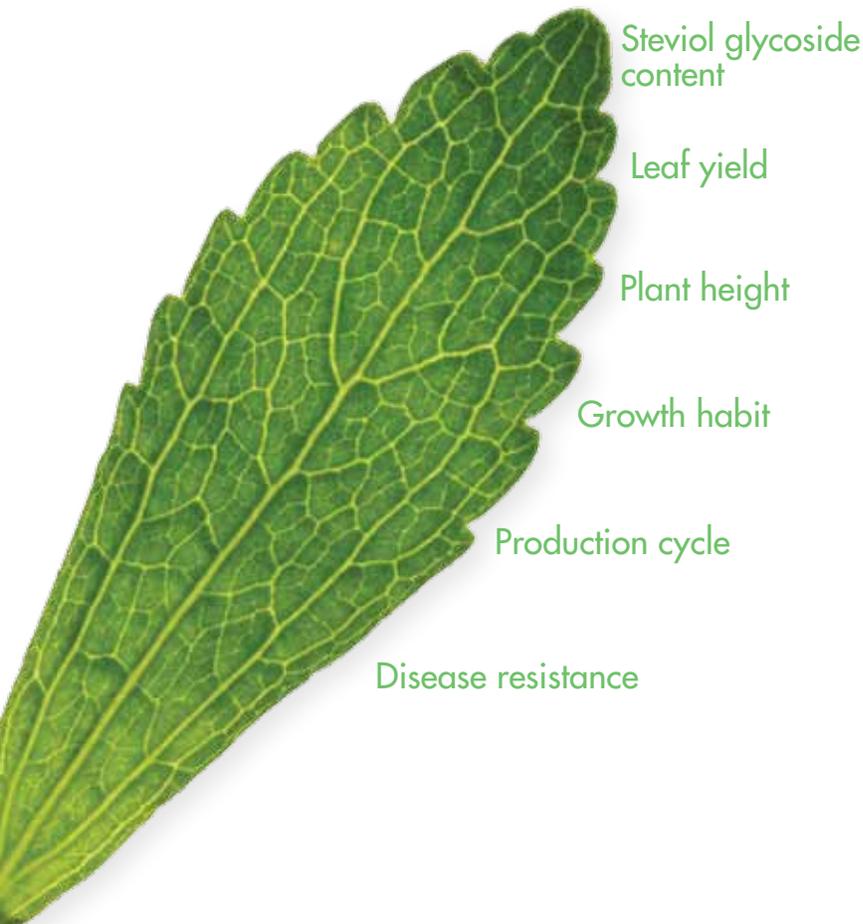


our strategic commercial partnership with the Cooperativa Tabacalera de Misiones (CTM) in Argentina.

The Truvia® South America supply chain begins at CTM's seed production lots where high quality, robust stevia seeds are produced using traditional plant breeding techniques, and then provided to member farmers of the cooperative. The local farmers receive these non-genetically modified seeds free of charge and plant them in seed beds to create seedlings capable of being transplanted for commercial propagation in the field for about three years.

There are several hundred stevia producers in the Misiones province of Argentina cultivating some 200 hectares of land with stevia. By the end of 2015, the cooperative aims to nearly double the number of producers involved in commercial stevia farming with an increase in the total cultivated area to balance demand requirements globally.

We have research projects in both China and Argentina to develop new stevia cultivars. Some stevia traits evaluated during breeding selection include:



Our selection program in South America specifically seeks to increase glycoside content, drought tolerance, disease resistance and leaf yield in varieties commercially propagated by seeds, and in two different types of soils (clay and silt). Successful cultivars will reduce the impacts to the environment from growing stevia, namely reducing the need for pesticides and water usage. 🌱



Dr. Moisés González, PhD

Truvia® Agronomist

Moisés is the Stevia Breeding Manager for the Truvia business. His research focuses on developing proprietary stevia varieties. In collaboration with universities and partners worldwide, Moisés leads genetic improvement programs that focus on stevia traits such as leaf yield, drought tolerance and disease resistance, emphasizing certain attributes depending on the environmental factors unique to each growing region.

One of the most rewarding aspects of his work is the collaboration he is fostering between Asia and South America, the principle growing regions for Truvia. In Argentina, farmers have had years of experience growing stevia and understand much about the biology of the crop, which boasts more than 200 different genotypes. In certain parts of China, stevia is still a new crop to many farmers. But with help from Moisés, farmers in China are benefiting from the knowledge and experience gained by the farmers and the cooperative in Argentina.

"The exchange of information between Argentina and China is something we are very proud of," said Moisés. "In the past, research was done in isolation. Now, we have integration, and by sharing our findings, we are seeing advances come more quickly."



Pillar 1: Sourcing Responsibly

When Cargill envisioned a stevia business years ago, no stevia supply chain of scale existed in South America, where the plant is indigenous. The Truvia® team decided to build a world-class socially and environmentally responsible supply chain from the very outset, and, in the process, to set the benchmark for responsible business practice in the stevia industry.



Truvia manufacturing facilities are members of Sedex, the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange. Sedex is a not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to driving improvements in responsible and ethical business practices in global supply chains. Sedex allows a member

to store, share and report information in four key areas: labor standards, health and safety, environment, and business integrity. By joining Sedex, information is shared on all business practices through both self-assessments and third-party audits. A number of Truvia manufacturing



Mark Brooks

Global Product Line Director

Two core values have guided the development of a sustainable supply chain for the Truvia® business:

Ethical Practices

Wherever we operate and whatever we do, the Truvia enterprise treats all people and business partners with dignity and respect.

Through a system of self-assessments and third-party audits, this ensures that the supply chains which bring product from Field to Table are managed with integrity and transparency.

Fair Pricing

The partnership we have with farmers in the Misiones region of Argentina is for the long term, founded on shared objectives and values that intrinsically link our future. We have worked together with the farmer cooperative to create a pricing mechanism that is fair to all, reducing volatility of earnings for the farmer, sharing the upside of success, and is balanced over time.

Farmers in the cooperative independently choose to grow stevia as they seek to diversify their income stream and enable crop rotation. Stevia seedlings are provided to the farmer free of charge to enable the beginning of the propagation cycle. The foundation is a long term contract, the key principle of which is a mechanism that safeguards the farmer from crop failure and rewards superior yield.

Trust is fundamental to the long term partnership. This is established and reinforced through transparency, specifically transparency of quality parameters, long term demand forecast and price commitments set annually in advance in consultation with the farmer's cooperative representatives. We are proud to have established a solid foundation in collaboration with our partners and are committed to continuous improvement as we work together over the coming years.

facilities in China will be audited in 2013. In the interest of transparency, we choose to share such information, allowing members to review the data to seek out possible improvements.

The Stevia Sustainable Agriculture Standard

Over the last two years, the Truvia® business has developed the first global sustainable agricultural standard for stevia. We view the development of a best-practice stevia agricultural standard as a core component of our strategy to set the bar for responsible practices in the stevia industry and give producers a guide for the responsible cultivation of stevia.



Our stevia standard consists of 135 control criteria

Our stevia standard is applicable to small-scale farms globally. It aims to minimize environmental impact, ensure the health and safety of the producer, align with food safety and traceability requirements, and promote continuous improvement. Our stevia standard consists of 135 control criteria in 13 categories

- Record keeping and internal self assessment
- Complaints
- Traceability
- Farm history and management
- Workers health, safety and welfare
- Waste and pollution management, recycling and reuse
- Environment and conservation
- Plant propagation material
- Soil and substrate management
- Fertilizer use
- Integrated pest management
- Plant protection products
- Harvesting



During the course of the last growing season (October 2011 – May 2012), we piloted the program with a subset of CTM producers to substantiate the stevia protocol. We sponsored agricultural technicians who worked directly with cooperative producers to provide training and technical assistance on the stevia standard, as well as on agricultural best-practices. Among other things, training covered crop management, farm management and best-practice in the handling of raw materials during harvesting, drying and transport.

All of the farmers registered in the pilot for the 2012 harvest season received training on the stevia agricultural standard. Internal inspections were then conducted on approximately half of the farms from May through August 2012.

The Truvia® business engaged the Brazilian NGO Imaflores, an accredited certification body (CB) authorized to provide Rainforest Alliance certification based on Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN) standards, to conduct an audit of our stevia standard. Specifically, this audit:

- 1) Evaluated CTM's training and internal management systems related to implementation of the stevia standard.
- 2) Evaluated the Truvia stevia agricultural standard against SAN agricultural standards.



We view the development of a best-practice stevia agricultural standard as a core component of our strategy to set the bar for responsible practices in the stevia industry.

3) Evaluated the CTM methodology for internal audits.

Overall, the results were positive. The highest scoring areas included risk assessment and training and capacity building.

Traceability and crop management were the strongest points in the management of farms,



where farmers with the CTM must maintain procedures and a system that identifies the origin of each batch of stevia.

As with any new program, there is also room for improvement.

The audit identified

integrated waste management and occupational health and safety as the lowest scoring areas.

Even so, it was clear to the auditors that the Truvia® program intends to improve the health and safety of workers, because the criteria are

stringent for training and safety, primarily with regard to the handling of agrochemicals and implementing the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Imaflora concluded that the work of CTM with the Truvia agricultural standard is promoting positive changes in the field. Now that these initial audits are complete, the Truvia business is working to improve the compliance rate of the standard based on the findings. The findings will become part of our longer-term strategy to scale up activities and test the standard in other growing regions. As such, the implementation of the standard is underway in China, and an initial assessment is expected during the 2013 harvest season.

2012 Pilot Farms

■ Number of pilot farm inspections in 2012



Total number of pilot farms in 2012



Pillar 2: Stewarding Natural Resources

Producing good crops depends on clean water, healthy soil, clean air and sunlight. As a food and agricultural company, our awareness of the importance of taking care of natural resources over the long term cannot be overstated. We believe the best way to ensure proper care is to implement a system that strives for continuous improvement.

We started by undertaking a life cycle analysis to identify the major environmental impact areas in the Truvia® value chain. We looked at all the individual stages: from the farming and harvesting of stevia leaves, to the extraction, purification and product distribution stages. The results of our analysis brought four key areas to the forefront: greenhouse gas emissions, water use, waste and land management. Our commitments are centered around these areas:

- Reduce our **carbon** footprint by 50% in 2015 from a 2010 baseline to become carbon neutral in 2020.
- Ensure all processed **water** is returned in the same quality in which it was taken and reduce net depletion by 25% by 2020.
- Reduce **waste** by 50% across the supply chain in 2015 in efforts to become zero waste by 2020.
- Ensure our stevia is not grown on conservation or protected **land**.

Carbon

Our product life cycle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions were calculated using the globally recognized PAS2050 assessment methodology from the agricultural component to processing through the packaging of our consumer product. Our baseline assessment indicates that under standard supply chain conditions and practices, stevia leaf extract produces 1,000 kg of CO₂-equivalent per metric ton of “sweet” (using an assumed measure of 250 times the sweetness of sugar). The vast majority of ingredient product

emissions – 99 percent – are produced during the farming and processing stages.

We have identified measures to reduce GHG emissions over the course of 2013. Actions we will take include:

- Replacement of existing energy sources at our primary processing sites with renewable energy sources such as waste-to-energy and renewable biomass.
- Investigation of the potential for more advanced, efficient manufacturing technologies.

Truvia calorie-free sweetener is the first stevia-based sweetener to be awarded certification for its carbon footprint. The UK-based Carbon Trust has certified the total greenhouse gas emissions at each stage of the supply chain, including cultivation, processing, packaging, transport, and use and disposal.

The Truvia business team worked with the Carbon Trust to certify its carbon footprint and verify its waste and water footprints throughout its supply chain. The certified metrics are part of an action plan to manage the Truvia stevia leaf extract carbon footprint, in order to become carbon neutral by 2020.

By displaying this label, which in this case covers UK, USA, Mexico, Spain, France and Italy, the Truvia business is committed to reducing the carbon footprint of its sweetener over a two year period per the stated reduction objectives.



Truvia® calorie-free sweetener is the first stevia-based sweetener to be awarded certification for its carbon footprint. The UK-based Carbon Trust has certified the total greenhouse gas emissions at each stage of the supply chain.

Water

According to our life cycle analysis, our largest water impact comes as a result of extraction – the primary processing stage of the life cycle when stevia leaves are steeped in water to separate out the sweet components of the stevia plant, which are then further purified. Baseline figures show that each ton of sweet required 2,288 cubic meters of water. Our 2012 results show we have already surpassed our original 25% reduction goal by using 45% less water, largely due to improved yields. In light of this, we will revisit our 2020 goal.

Over the next year, we expect to make significant progress in identifying and implementing de-watering measures. We already require the use of wastewater treatment facilities across our entire supply chain. Minimizing water use in the extraction stage is of critical importance not only because it reduces the potential for water stress in local communities, but because heavy water use in the primary processing stage also incurs

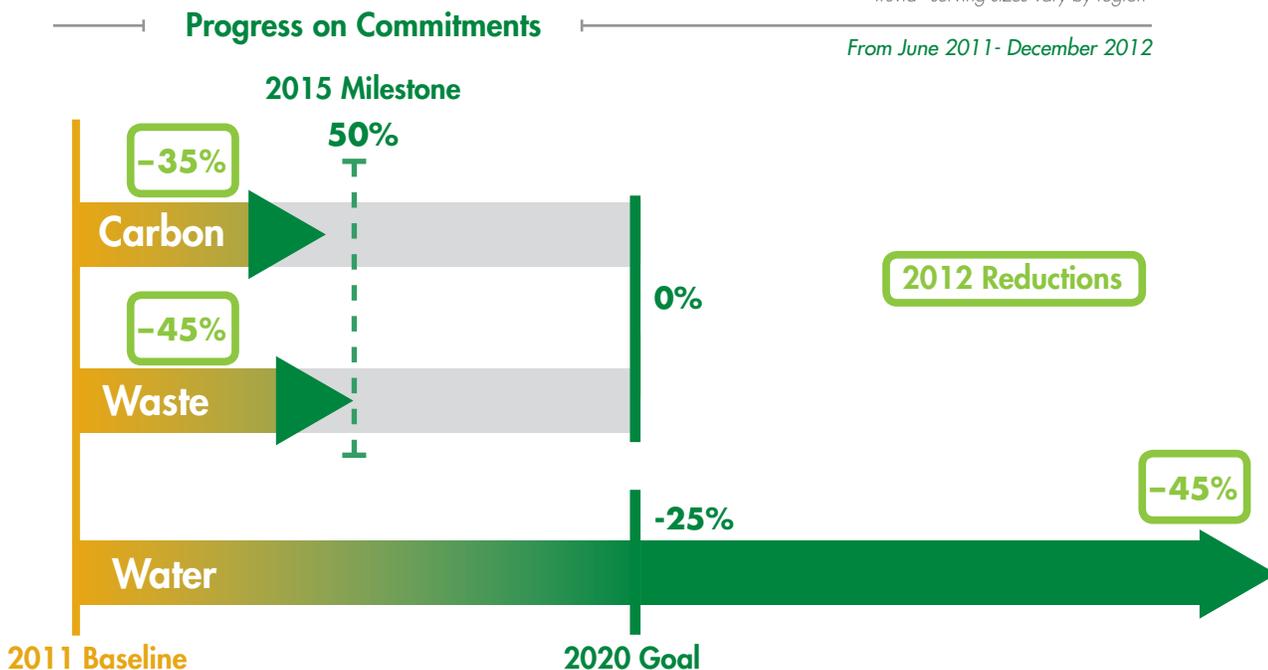
additional energy use – through pumping systems. Reducing water use will also deliver GHG emissions reductions.

Waste

There are two types of waste in the stevia supply chain: spent leaf, where alternate uses are being explored, and packaging. Our total waste footprint is 1,864 kg per ton of sweet. The primary waste stream is spent leaf, a by-product of extraction as the best-tasting part of the leaf is extracted through a process of steeping. The remaining spent leaf is wet and heavy. We are currently evaluating potential recycling options, which would have a dual benefit of fertilizing existing crops while reducing the need to remove and transport the plant by-product from the fields.

Another significant aspect of our waste strategy is to measure and minimize the impacts of our product packaging systems. Our baseline assessment indicates that each 1.5 gram* sachet of Truvia® produces 2.4 grams of CO₂-

* Truvia® serving sizes vary by region



equivalent. Our spoonable jar packaging system produces 2.2 grams per 1.5 gram serving.

We are exploring measures to reduce overall levels of packaging for both the sachet and spoonable jar packaging systems. We introduced smaller cartons in the U.S. market that contain the same amount of product, but use an average of more than 25% less paper for our cartons of sachets. In addition to the reduced paper usage, the smaller carton requires less space for shipping and saves on transportation cost and materials.

Land

The Misiones province of Argentina is particularly susceptible to soil erosion due to the region's rainfall. To protect the land for the future, the Truvia business and CTM farmers have created channels that collect excess rainwater allowing it to drain away slowly and safely. These buffer zones will prevent both soil erosion and compaction, keeping nearby rivers and streams free of runoff while allowing the land to hold more organic matter and nutrients.

In China, crop rotation is important because the plant is grown as an annual due to frost levels. This rotation often occurs with fruits and vegetable crops and helps to slow the depletion of soil nutrients.

We also fund the building of soil terraces and contour planting on stevia-cultivated land to protect against land erosion and preserve water. The use of soil terraces in farms with greater than four percent slope has been shown to reduce the loss of top soil and organic matter by soil erosion.

We also continue to work with the Argentine National Institute of Agricultural Technology (INTA) and the Ministry of Ecology and Renewable Natural Resources of Misiones province on developing on-farm environmental management plans for our growers that address issues such as stevia plot location, local

watershed management, soil quality and erosion. Our work with INTA and the Ministry of Ecology and Renewable Natural Resources of Misiones province supports the on-going development of the stevia agricultural standard. 🌱



Sustainable Fuel Feedstock Sourcing and Reforestation

Stevia growers use woody biomass as a fuel feedstock to dry stevia leaves on the farm before storage. The Truvia sustainable agricultural standard includes a requirement to source wood used as feedstock sustainably. Farmers are required to implement an environmental management plan to ensure feedstock for leaf drying is available with minimal disruption to biodiversity.

Capuera is a field that is out of rotation where biomass grows and acts as a habitat for biodiversity. A *capuera* also provides ecosystem services such as acting as a buffer for water runoff, which protects water quality. On average, CTM producers in Argentina maintain 30 percent *capueras*. Biomass from these fields is harvested and used as a fuel feedstock.

Where possible, eucalyptus is the preferred fuel feedstock for drying stevia leaf. The use of eucalyptus is ideal because the farmer can preserve *capueras* and protect biodiversity. Eucalyptus plantations serve as an excellent shelter for livestock and act as a means of carbon storage, helping to reduce the carbon footprint of the supply chain.



Pillar 3: Sharing in Improving Communities

In the communities where we operate, we have an impact on people and families. We have the ability to make this impact positive by helping to build sustainable communities. Our work with communities centers on two commitments:

- To participate in long-term partnerships and engage as a team to improve the communities where stevia is harvested and where we operate;
- To provide support to producers to invest in education, healthcare, farm improvements and technical assistance to increase yield and quality, thereby increasing income.

Many schools in the Misiones province of Argentina need assistance to improve the learning environment and infrastructure for the growers' children. The Truvia®-CTM partnership aims to systematically improve school infrastructure to create environments conducive to education and meet basic needs for the children. Through the Cargill Cares Council in China, the Truvia team similarly supports local school development. The outcome of these efforts will provide children in the community with a suitable and vibrant place to learn, promote education, and strengthen the relationship with growers. In Argentina, there are approximately 350 schools in the agriculture extension area, and there are approximately 700 stevia growers' children attending 107 primary schools and 68 secondary schools.

Many families in the CTM growing community are in need of school supplies such as dictionaries, books, folders, calculators and school clothes. We have distributed approximately 8,000 schoolbags among the farmers' children who attend primary school. The Truvia-CTM partnership plans to continue providing school kits to growers in the community, enabling a large number of children in the community access to the necessary materials for their education and self advancement.

In addition to direct support given to schools, the Truvia business participates in other programs and organizations designed to improve nutrition and well-being for children and adults alike. We see ourselves as one part of the solution for helping people manage sugars and calories in their diets and lifestyles. As such, we contribute to and promote the efforts of organizations like the International Food Information Council (IFIC), International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI), and the International Stevia Council (ISC), among others.

World Food Programme Partnership

Beginning on World Food Day 2012, the Truvia business embarked on a new partnership with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Over a three-year period, nearly \$1 million in contributions from Truvia will be used to support sustainable communities in Bolivia, a region of critical need with one of the highest rates of chronic malnutrition in Latin America, and where a large portion of the population lives below the poverty line, according to WFP's vulnerability assessment map.

The program, called Sharing a Sweet Future, is a natural extension of the Truvia brand. Based on the notion that in many countries Truvia sweetener offers a way to reduce excess calories, the business can now deliver



needed nutrition to those who do not receive sufficient calories in other parts of the world. This program will provide 36,000 children in the Chuquisaca region of Bolivia with nutritious breakfasts and lunches at their schools. In addition, 240 cleaner-burning stoves will be installed in schools to improve the health and safety for hundreds of mothers who cook at the schools over open fires being exposed to burn hazards and smoke inhalation. The new stoves create less smoke and reduce fire hazards as well as deforestation.

The Truvia® business has set up www.sharingasweetfuture.com as a platform, and we invite consumers to participate in this program. By logging on, consumers can send children in Bolivia a note of encouragement and inspiration. For every note sent, the Truvia business donates \$1 toward the World Food Programme's "Sustainable School Meals" program in Bolivia, as a part of its committed \$300,000 contribution in the first year.

Our goal for this program is that it will stimulate self-sufficient and thriving communities, using education and schools as the portal to reach not just children but also families and farmers. 🌱

sharing a sweet future



Component One: School Meals

Over the past two years, the World Food Programme was able to deliver only two of the five products in the school meals ration due to funding constraints. WFP provided wheat flour fortified with iron and Vitamin B complex and vegetable oil fortified with Vitamin A. These two products were chosen because their fortification ensures more nutrients than other staple food products making up the school meals food basket. The 12 Municipalities of Tupiza in Bolivia run school meals programs in 515 schools. In 2012, Truvia funds allowed WFP to meet Tupiza's full second semester requirement of wheat flour and vegetable oil in all of the schools. Municipalities provided other food products, such as rice, noodles and maize. Parents contributed sugar, lard, spices and wood fuel. Truvia enabled steady funding for two primary commodities, while facilitating a smooth transition to locally-run programs. In 2013-2015, Truvia funding will cover 100 percent of the food needs for the entire caseload of the Department of Chuquisaca in the new Country Program's school feeding system. Specific municipalities to be covered will be defined at the beginning of 2013.



Component Two: Construction of LOLA Stoves

A second use of Truvia funding in Bolivia goes to improving the working conditions for the mothers who come to the local schools to prepare the meals in the form of installing new stoves. The "LOLA" is an energy-efficient stove made of mud, fine soil and brick. A local study in Bolivia comparing the traditional stove to the LOLA demonstrated that the LOLA stove used two kilograms of wood fuel for cooking 30 rations per day, whereas the traditional stove required at least five kilograms of wood fuel to cook the same quantity of rations. This translates into a 60 percent saving of energy and resources. The basic areas of implementation are as follows:

- Construction and installation of fuel-efficient stoves with the participation of School Committees and the community so that households may replicate the stoves and construct them at home
- Preparation and distribution of manuals
- Training on the use and maintenance of stoves

Perspectives

In January 2013, Cargill held an advisory roundtable to discuss plans for the Truvia sustainability program. The intention of the meeting was to reveal the Truvia sustainability program and open a dialogue with key stakeholders and opinion leaders who would provide constructive feedback on the plan.

The roundtable was well attended and we received constructive feedback on our plans. Charles Secrett, co-founder of The Robertsbridge Group and former Executive Director of Friends of the Earth, was one of the attendees, and he has followed our progress closely.



TRUVIA SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS ASSESSMENT

By Charles Secrett, The Robertsbridge Group

The Truvia sustainability story is a tale of effort and hard work – of Cargill and its farmers striving rigorously to get things right. Overall, they are succeeding.

Two years ago, I wrote an independent assessment of Cargill's Truvia operations for an *Ethical Corporation* supplement. I was pleasantly surprised (actually, a little shocked) to learn of the comprehensive sustainability standards to which the company worked, the ambitious environmental and social targets for improvement it set, and the contractual decency in which Truvia held its small farm stevia suppliers and their home communities.

It is early days, but the performance boxes are being ticked off one by one, as this report shows. I'm impressed, for example, by the year-on reductions in carbon (35%), water (45%) and waste (45%). It gives confidence that the company can become carbon neutral and zero waste by 2020, as well as achieve even further net water depletion goals.

But, to meet these challenges, the Truvia business should also:

- Move to clean, green fuels and vehicles, and Smart IT logistics to eliminate unnecessary journeys, to reduce the energy and carbon impact of the global transport chain. It's an important step in extending good practice from the farms to the shops where Truvia is sold.
- Boost such a natural product further by aiming to eliminate pesticides, herbicides and artificial fertilisers; and provide more data on soil quality and the effect of these synthetics.
- Evaluate whether stevia production can be elevated to a whole farm, closed cycle system, involving co-cropping and other diversifications (such as other cash or food crops), and further cut fossil energy and resource waste, and minimising and replacing expensive synthetic chemicals with natural alternatives.

- Build a rigorous species and habitat conservation and re-establishment programme, on the farms and the surrounding areas. Using the 'capuera' rotation and not growing on designated conservation areas is a start. Restoring degraded land and supporting local wildlife conservation programmes is the next step.
- Provide hard data on the gains from reducing packaging along the supply chain – pallets, super sacks, bags, boxes, tarps and plastic containers – and boost recycled and reused products and materials.
- Amplify on-farm water conservation improvements through a local to regional watershed management plan. Participate in programs to help government agencies implement such an important safeguard for the farming community, and the wider local population and rural economy (critical to do in a climate changed world).

These improvements will take time. I'm pretty confident that, given the targets, commitment and progress made to date, the business can deliver.

One of the most satisfying aspects of its Truvia® enterprise is how Cargill has cemented best practice into the social and community dimensions of stevia production. Elsewhere, small producers invariably feel squeezed by big contractors. Margins are minimal. Job and supply order security is weak. Payments are late. Prices fluctuate, usually downwards. Community investment is missing.

But not in Misiones. As far as I can discover (and I have not travelled to either Argentina or China), Cargill is still exemplary in treating farmers with respect, ensuring fair prices and long-term contracts, and investing in the schools

and well-being of the villages where stevia is grown.

Sure, more could be done. It always can. I hope the company will go that extra mile, help the communities become self-sufficient in renewable energy, for example, and partner with local government (as with the World Food Programme in Bolivia) to improve housing, roads, community facilities and other essential infrastructure.

Working with the Carbon Trust, Imafflora, INTA and SEDEX to assess and improve environmental footprint, and labour and social standards, is good. But, I think an independent, expert advisory board to report holistically on measurement, systems and progress across all 135 control criteria in the stevia standard would be better.

To open things up further, I'd like Truvia to enable the farmers to tell their stories direct to the outside world through YouTube and Facebook. As a unique testimony to sustainability, and a locked-in guarantee of public scrutiny, that would be hard to beat.

Who knows what supportive relationships would develop between producer and consumer, as life on the farm unfolds? It's about replicating the trust and solidarity of the local food economies that we see in Northern nations, but on a trans-continental scale. Think local, act global.

'Sourcing Responsibly'. 'Stewarding Natural Resources'. 'Sharing in Improving Communities'. When Zanna McFerson writes in the Foreword: 'Sustainability is not an adjunct or add-on; it is how we do business. It is a mind-set.', I believe her. The evidence is here.

Charles Secrett is a co-founder of The Robertsbridge Group and was Executive Director of Friends of the Earth (England, Wales & Northern Ireland) from 1993-2003.

Sustainability Partners



Carbon Trust

An independent UK-based company with a mission to accelerate the move to a sustainable, low carbon economy through advice, measurement, certification and deploying energy-efficient technologies. www.carbontrust.com



Cargill

Founded in 1865, the privately held company employs 142,000 people in 65 countries and helps customers succeed through collaboration and innovation and is committed to applying its global knowledge and experience to help meet economic, environmental and social challenges wherever it does business. www.cargill.com



Cooperativa Tabacalera de Misiones (CTM)

Farmer cooperative based in Argentina whose 7,000 growers diversify their crops across tobacco, citrus and stevia. www.cooptabmis.com



Imaflora

Brazilian-based non-profit association (the Institute of Forest and Agricultural Management and Certification) whose mission is to encourage and promote changes in agricultural and forestry sectors, to promote the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and generation of social benefits. <http://imaflora.org>



INTA (Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria)

A public decentralized body addressing the innovation of agricultural and livestock, agro-food and agro-industrial sectors to contribute to the competitiveness of agro-industrial chains, environmental health and sustainability of productive systems, social equity and territorial development, through research, technological development and extension. <http://inta.gob.ar>



Sedex

A not-for-profit membership organization dedicated to driving improvements in ethical and responsible business practices in global supply chains. www.sedexglobal.com



Sustainable Agriculture Network

As a coalition of leading conservation groups, SAN promotes efficient and productive agriculture, biodiversity conservation and sustainable community development by creating social and environmental standards. <http://sanstandards.org>

The Robertsbridge Group

The Robertsbridge Group

Environmental consultancy whose goal is to facilitate a real shift towards sustainability in a way that enables business to thrive, politics to be more effective, and communities to benefit from it. www.robertsbridgegroup.com



World Food Programme

As a United Nations organization, World Food Programme is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger. www.wfp.org

Product Information

Truvia® Sweetener *(also called Truvia® Calorie-Free Sweetener and Truvia® Natural Sweetener, depending on the country in which it is marketed)*

A calorie-free, kosher, gluten free, tooth friendly sugar substitute sweetener suitable for people with diabetes, meaning consumption of Truvia sweetener has no effect on glycemic index and is well tolerated by type 2 diabetics. It is sold in sachets, in a spoonable jar, and in tablets.

Stevia Leaf Extract

Common name of the sweetening components derived from the leaves of the stevia plant. It refers to a high purity and consistent sweetening components containing the best tasting parts of the stevia leaf.

Natural Flavors

Natural flavors are used to bring out the best of Truvia sweetener, like pepper or salt or any other spice that would be used to enhance the taste of food.

Erythritol

Erythritol is a sugar alcohol found naturally in various fruits such as grapes and melons. Erythritol is a natural, non-caloric sweetener, used as an ingredient that provides bulk for Truvia sweetener.



truvia®



15407 McGinty Road West, Wayzata, MN 55391

1-866-853-6077

www.cargill.com

www.truvia.com

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