

# REDUCING FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

“ With 1 in 9 people across the world going to bed hungry and a third of all food produced wasted, we need to take action to reduce food loss and waste across the value chain. Not only will this help tackle global hunger, it will also contribute to the fight against climate change. ”



## OUR POSITION

As one of the largest food companies in the world, we believe we have a responsibility to address food loss and waste across our operations. Our global reach also means we have the scale and network to collaborate with others to make systemic interventions to address the food loss and waste challenge, which contributes to the double burden of climate change and food insecurity.

At Unilever, we have a clear purpose – to make sustainable living commonplace. The Unilever Sustainable Living Plan sets out our ambition to grow our business whilst reducing our environmental footprint and increasing our positive social impact. Launched in 2010, the Plan sets out three key pillars including improving health and wellbeing, reducing our environmental impact and enhancing livelihoods. Within each pillar are several ambitious targets spanning our entire value chain; from farm to fork.

As part of our environmental pillar, we have a goal to halve the environmental footprint in the making and use of our products by 2020. More specifically, we want to halve the waste associated with the disposal of our products, including that of our food brands.



**PAUL POLMAN,  
CHIEF  
EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER,  
UNILEVER**

## OUR ACTIONS

### What we're doing across our value chain:

We work to deliver food waste initiatives which are locally relevant to the countries in which we operate, this includes everything from establishing anaerobic digesters in our factories, inspiring our employees to take action or redistributing any surplus food to address food poverty.

Our approach to tackling food waste spans all stages in our value chain from farmers to consumers:

- **Supporting our farmers:** We've been supporting our farmers for the past 15 years to take action with our Sustainable Agriculture Code which urges suppliers to minimise waste by using the principles of 'reduce, reuse, recycle'. To ensure we monitor progress, our agricultural suppliers are expected to assess their operations at every crop cycle. We then check these self-assessments through an independent verifier.
- **Collaborating with our suppliers and retail customers:** Together with our suppliers and retail customers we look for opportunities to partner and collaborate on food waste initiatives to maximise our reach.
- **Minimising waste in manufacturing:** We are embedding a 'zero waste mind-set' across our manufacturing sites. In January 2015, we sent zero waste to landfill across all of our factory network, and

by the end of 2015 we had expanded this achievement to an additional 600 sites, including warehouses, distribution centres and offices.

- **Inspiring our consumers:** We believe a critical part of the food loss solution lies in preventing avoidable food waste at a household level. This is why we are committed to helping our consumers value their food more and make the most of their leftovers. We are delivering this through our brands and with strategic partnerships. For instance, this year in the UK, we have launched a Joint Ambition for a Zero Food Waste Britain. A long-term, nationwide campaign aimed at raising awareness of food waste at a household level.

### Driving transformational change:

To help us meet our Sustainable Living Plan targets and progress towards wider systemic change on food waste, we have committed to The Consumer Goods Forum resolution to halve food waste in our operations by 2025. In addition, our CEO, Paul Polman is one of the Champions of Champions 12.3 which is a global coalition of leaders from governments, businesses, international organisations, research institutions, and civil society who are looking to inspire and mobilise action towards achieving target 12.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## OUR RESULTS

### Partnering to prevent food poverty

In 2014, we signed a three-year partnership with the European Federation of Food Banks to tackle food waste and hunger by enhancing in-kind donations across Europe and providing volunteering opportunities to Unilever employees. In 2015, we expanded our efforts across all our markets by partnering with the Global Food Banking Network. By the end of the year, over 4 million people benefitted from our food bank partnerships across the world.

### Unilever Food Solutions

Through UK foodservice business, Unilever Food Solutions (UFS), we are helping UK chefs and caterers to cut their food waste and see how much money they can save in the process. In partnership with the UK facilities services provider, ISS Food & Hospitality (F&H), UFS launched the Wise Up on Waste app in 2013. This is an industry-first mobile app that allows chefs to track food waste. The app highlights the average volume of each type of waste (spoilage, preparation or customer plate waste) generated throughout the day. It gives week-by-week comparisons to help identify the indicative cost savings for a business. It also contains case study videos, waste action tips, recipes and spoilage prevention advice. By the end of 2015, the UFS UK team supported ISS to reduce waste by over 10 per cent and cut over 16 tonnes of food waste. Last year, the

app was rolled out in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, UK, Spain and Australia and has been used over 15,000 times.

### Kissan ketchup: Preventing food waste whilst protecting smallholder farmers

India businesswoman Manisha Dhattrak set up a processing plant to stop local crops being wasted. The smallholder farmers she works with provide 100% of the tomatoes we use to make our Kissan ketchup.

Three years ago, Manisha noticed farmers in Nasik, India, throwing away crops by the side of the road. While these rotted, the same produce was being imported. So she set up a plant to process the local crops and approached Unilever. Manisha sources from many smallholder farmers, training them – with our help – in sustainable agriculture practices to increase their yields and improve their crop. Her company, Varun Agro, is now one of our key strategic suppliers.

The programme works with 3,000 farmers, giving them access to ongoing contracts, better quality materials, training and tools such as drip irrigation. This helps them significantly increase their yields.

The initiative contributes to our USLP targets to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, expanding opportunities for women, while at the same time providing a reliable supply of high-quality, sustainably sourced ingredients for our ketchup production lines.