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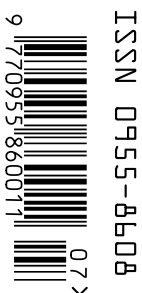


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www.YnNiTeg.cymru

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Visit YnNiTeg.cymru to download the full share offer document. All new applications received before 8th July 2018 will receive a free pair of "Powered by Wind" pants supplied by Ethical Consumer "best buy" supplier Greenfibres (one pair per applicant, we will contact you to ask for gender/size).

Josie Wexler
Editor



Palm oil and cocoa

The primary subject of this issue is palm oil, which continues not to offer up any easy answers: while the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil incurs ever greater opprobrium, the lack of any clear alternative makes it hard to give up on altogether.

We also look at cocoa, which has quite a lot of parallels with palm oil. It is another tree crop, also causing deforestation, and also associated with abusive labour practices. The certification options on offer here are also insufficient, but better than nothing at all.

In both the cocoa and palm oil sectors there has been a proliferation of corporate targets aimed at 2020. With just two years to go, it is clear that many of them will be missed by huge margins – obviously company targets in these areas need to be taken with a pinch of salt. We will be looking in more detail at half-hearted targets in future magazines.

Issue 172 printing error

The last issue of the print magazine contained two page 41s and no page 14. Good as page 41 was, this was not deliberate!

We emailed everyone as soon as we realised and sent them a pdf of the missing page and the offer of a paper copy. For those for whom we lacked an email address, the offer still stands. Just email enquiries@ethicalconsumer.org or ring us on 0161 226 2929.

Alternatively, the digital version of the magazine is full and intact. You can view and download this from www.ethicalconsumer.org/ethical-consumer-magazine

Our production manager was devastated by having made this mistake, so thank you to all the supportive messages that readers sent her.

Badgers crowdfunder

We are running a 6 week crowdfunder campaign till the 20th July, to fund a cartoon competition on the badger cull.

We are asking artists to find visual ways to link the Red Tractor logo (a scheme connected to the National Farmers' Union) with the badger cull. The winning images will be used in the campaign against the 2018 cull which is very likely to be the bloodiest on record.

Not only are the cull zones being expanded, but Michael Gove recently announced that low-risk areas will now be able to apply to join them. Farmers are also going to be allowed to trap and shoot badgers, for which they can get paid up to £50 per kill.

Plastic packaging

Since the issue was featured on Blue Planet, UK concern about plastic pollution has skyrocketed, and most of the guides in this issue discuss plastic packaging.

We also intend to incorporate it into our rating system, but we have decided to wait for the results of a study being conducted by the Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and Greenpeace UK. The results, due out in the Autumn, will cover major UK grocery retailers' approaches to tackling plastic pollution.

More information about the study can be found at www.greenpeace.org.uk/press-releases/supermarkets-challenged-act-faster-plastic-new-survey-launches-rank-efforts/

We are also aware that some plastic packaging serves a role in increasing the longevity of food and so may decrease food waste, which adds a degree of complexity to the issue. We hope that this and other studies will cast more light on the matter.

Investor members election

Nominations are currently open for election to our board of directors.

Two seats on our board are reserved for investor members who have been with us for at least a year and are over 18 years old. We're looking for people who really care about Ethical Consumer and want to help us develop as an organisation, while remaining true to our principles. We welcome people who have experience managing a social enterprise or an ethically-minded business of another sort.

There is a short video on our website about what it's like to be on our board that can be found at www.ethicalconsumer.org/about-us/board-directors and you can also download an information pack, which includes the nomination form.

Nominations close on 30 June. Call us on 0161 226 2929 or email finance@ethicalconsumer.org if you would like further information.

NFU Mutual correction

In the Insurance guide in the last issue, we wrongly attributed the ownership of NFU Mutual to the NFU (National Farmers Union).

NFU Mutual is a mutual insurer with around 900,000 members. As a mutual, it is owned by its members. According to NFU Mutual, "we have always taken social responsibility very seriously and feel it is an important part of our mutuality".

The NFU is a separate organisation and is registered as an Employers Association. It has a network of around 300 local offices which are staffed by Group Secretaries who offer general advice to members as well as being insurance agents for NFU Mutual. According to the NFU's annual report, income for the NFU in 2013 included 'contributions' from NFU Mutual of £5,939,333.

The NFU was criticised in Ethical Consumer's own 2017 Report 'Understanding the NFU, an English Agribusiness Lobby Group.' In it we noted how the NFU was pro-GM, pro-large-scale-farming, and even pro-neonicotinoid-pesticides.

Co-op Group AGM backs Stop Funding Hate

In May, a massive 96% of the Co-op Group's annual general meeting voted in favour of a motion on responsible advertising.

The motion called on the Co-op Board to review existing advertising policy and "prepare an ethical policy that puts controls in place to ensure adverts do not appear in media that are incompatible with co-operative ethics, values and principles".

The motion also noted "the concern from the United Nations and hate crime experts that some media outlets in the UK are fuelling and legitimising prejudice and an increase in hate crime".

The member motion was proposed by Colin Baines, a former ethics adviser and campaigns manager for the Co-op Group, and a non-executive director of the Stop Funding Hate campaign, which is campaigning against companies that advertise in newspapers like The Daily Mail and The Sun which publish hateful and racist content.

The motion was also supported by 200 other Co-op members, including many Ethical Consumer readers who helped to promote the motion.

The motion came after our research estimated that the Co-op spent nearly half a million pounds advertising in The Sun over a six-week period in Oct/Nov 2017 alone.

In 2016, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees reviewed media outlets across five European countries and concluded that, of all the publications surveyed, the Sun and Daily Mail exhibited a "hostility" to refugees and migrants that was "unique".

Lego, Paperchase, the Body Shop, JOY, the Phone Co-op, Ecotricity, Good Energy and more have already moved to exclude certain publications from advertising procurement, citing incompatibility with their company or brand values.

Birdfair drops pro-NRA sponsor

Ethical Consumer has secured a campaign victory with the news that Birdfair, the world's biggest birdwatching event, has dropped Bushnell binoculars as a sponsor for the event held every August. This year's event takes place from 17-19th August at Eggleton Nature Reserve, Rutland Water.

The move follows our investigation into the ethics of the binocular and optics industry which revealed that leading binocular company Bushnell is a sponsor of both Birdfair and also the National Rifle Association, the controversial US pro-gun lobby.

Bushnell is owned by Vista Outdoor, the largest ammunitions manufacturer in America and the maker of the MSR 15 assault rifle. The company is very politically active within the gun lobby and has strong ties to the NRA.

Following the recent Florida high school shooting, growing numbers of companies are now severing their links with the NRA because of its pro-gun policies.



A trophy hunter using an MSR 15 assault rifle made by Vista Outdoor, the owners of Bushnell.

A spokesperson on behalf of Birdfair, Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust and the RSPB said: "Following a review, Birdfair and its partners Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust and the RSPB, in consultation with BirdLife International which is the beneficiary of the fair, have concluded that it is not in keeping with our respective organisations' ethical values for Birdfair to receive sponsorship money from a source which is part of a corporate group involved in the manufacture and sale of armaments. Birdfair's sponsorship agreement with Bushnell has therefore ended."

Ethical Consumer is now calling on Birdfair and other environmental organisations to develop clear and transparent ethical sponsorship policies to address other key ethical issues such as big-game and trophy hunting.

You can read our Shooting Wildlife report to find out which binoculars, spotting scopes, cameras and other optics are linked to sports hunting – www.ethicalconsumer.org/technology/shooting-wildlife



Refugees' lifejackets given new lease of life

The hundreds of thousands of lifejackets abandoned on Greek beaches after saving refugees lives are now helping build careers for refugees in the Netherlands.

Dutch social enterprise Makers Unite decided to bring 5,000 lifejackets to Amsterdam. Over the past year, as part of a six-week coaching programme to help refugees establish careers in the Netherlands, 71 refugees have been involved in upcycling the lifejackets into laptop sleeves and tote bags, including 13 who have joined a team of tailors to create the upcycled products.

"We give both the newcomers and this waste material a second chance," says Thami Schweichler, the director and co-founder of Makers Unite. He also believes the material will spark a much-needed discussion. "We hope our products will create awareness about refugees and at the same time help them build a future."

The tailors receive €150 (£131) a month for their eight hours of weekly volunteer work, in addition to unemployment benefits.

Makers Unite sells about 100-200 products every month, mostly through its website – <https://makersunite.eu>. The products are also available in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

"Customers like that we've created something positive out of such a difficult situation," says Schweichler. "I think many buy our products as a statement against their governments' anti-immigration policies."



Sainsbury's and ASDA – threat or opportunity?

Bananalink are worried that the merger of Sainsbury's and ASDA will mean lower prices for banana farmers – an even faster race to the bottom. But they state that there is a potential upside:

"Sainsbury's and ASDA both have demonstrable commitments to ethical sourcing of bananas. 100% of Sainsbury's bananas carry the Fairtrade label, which ensures fair minimum prices for suppliers which cover the costs of sustainable production. Both are members, along with Banana Link, of the World Banana Forum, which brings together stakeholders in the global banana supply chain to work towards consensus on best practices for sustainable production and trade.

The increased buying power and greater economies of scale of the merged retailer could provide an opportunity for greater commitment to the ethical sourcing of tropical fruit."

Watch this space!

Banana Link is a not-for-profit co-operative based in Norwich, which works for fair and sustainable banana and pineapple trades – www.bananalink.org.uk

See our Supermarkets article on page 34 for more on these two supermarkets.

Hawaii bans sunscreens which harm coral reefs

Hawaii has become the first US state to pass a bill banning the sale of any sunscreens that have chemicals known to harm coral reefs. The bill bars the sale of sunscreens containing chemicals oxybenzone and octinoxate, which some scientists say contribute to coral bleaching.



It is estimated that roughly 14,000 tons of sunscreen flow into the world's coral reefs every year.

The chemicals are used in over 3,500 of the most popular sunscreen products. The bill will take effect in 2021.

Some argue that it is not an important threat compared to the others that coral reefs are facing. However, particularly if you are going swimming around any coral while on holiday it isn't hard to choose a sunscreen that doesn't contain the chemicals. Look for mineral sunscreens rather than chemical ones. Oxybenzone has also been linked to endocrine disruption.

See our guide to sunscreens to check out our Best Buy recommendations for mineral sunscreens – www.ethicalconsumer.org/health-beauty/shopping-guide/sunscreens

Bio-D's recycled packaging

Best Buy cleaning company Bio-D will roll out 100% recycled plastic packaging by the end of the year. The recycled packaging is currently available on more than half of Bio-D's 20 products.



Greenpeace International will not renew FSC membership

In March, Greenpeace International announced that it is not renewing its membership in the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), a global timber certification scheme for which the NGO was a founding member 25 years ago. Matt Daggett, Global Campaign Leader for the Forest Campaign at Greenpeace International, said:

"We are firmly committed to advancing the best possible forest protections for people, biodiversity, and the climate. We believe robust timber certification is a helpful but imperfect tool for protecting people's rights and improving forest management, which is why Greenpeace International will not renew its Forest Stewardship Council membership nor participate as a member of any other timber certification scheme.

"When implemented effectively, Forest Stewardship Council certification can protect people's rights and improve forest management, but we no longer have confidence that FSC alone can consistently guarantee enough protection, especially when forests are facing multiple threats. FSC is not consistently applied across regions, especially where there's weak governance.

"Timber certification is a helpful but insufficient tool in the struggle to save our forests – we've always asked companies to go above and beyond. We encourage companies to firstly reduce their use of virgin fibre and use recycled and responsible alternative fibre whenever they are available. When virgin wood fibre is required, we still encourage the use of 100% FSC, with additional due diligence."

EU bans bee-killing pesticides



In April, the EU Member States voted in favour of extending their ban of neonicotinoid pesticides. In a move that means good news for our vital pollinators, neonicotinoids will be banned on all outdoor crops.

Peter Melchett, Soil Association Policy Director, responded to the decision: "Banning neonicotinoids is a positive step but it will not solve the wider problem if they are simply replaced with another pesticide. We need to move towards alternative systems of farming, such as organic, to find environmentally-sensitive ways of producing food while reversing the recent terrifying collapse in insect populations."

Cartoons Against the Badger Cull

Support our Crowdfunder

Ethical Consumer is raising money to run a cartoon competition and anti-badger cull campaign. We are asking artists to find visual ways to link the Red Tractor logo (a scheme connected to the National Farmers' Union) with the badger cull. We want to use this competition to suggest that people should stop buying Red Tractor Assured products until the cull has ended.



For more information head to www.ethicalconsumer.org/badger

Palm oil and consumers in 2018

This magazine contains guides to several foods that frequently contain palm oil. Bread may seem like a surprising interloper, but it actually often lists palm oil as an ingredient. Chocolate itself does not contain it, but the fillings in chocolate bars commonly do.

Ever since palm oil was identified as a problem commodity nearly 20 years ago, Ethical Consumer has been following the story and trying to work out the best way for consumers to respond. In 2018, voices expressing concern about the damage it is causing – to forests, climate, people and endangered species – are getting, if anything, even louder. This is despite the fact that, during this period, a whole raft of new initiatives to try to solve the problems have been launched involving hundreds of companies, international campaign groups like Greenpeace and WWF, huge certification schemes like the RSPO and even some governments and the World Bank.

The trouble is that none of these initiatives appear to be working, with deforestation to meet the growing demand for palm oil and other commodities showing no signs of really slowing down.¹ In April this year, with the UK supermarket chain Iceland announcing a ban on palm oil in own brand products from 2020, consumer opinion is, if anything, hardening against the idea that palm oil could ever be sustainable.

Greenpeace links brands to forest destruction

Greenpeace and many other key campaign groups have chosen to work outside the RSPO. Instead they choose to name and shame companies that are failing to ensure that their supply chains are free of deforestation, damage to peatlands and the worst human exploitation.



The rainforest distress call cut into a 124-acre Sumatran oil palm plantation that has been bought by the Sumatran Orangutan Society and Lush Cosmetics to be reforested.

In March 2018, Greenpeace International released a report called 'Moment of truth: time for brands to come clean about their links to forest destruction for palm oil'.

It examined progress towards pledges made in 2010, when members of the Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) made a clear commitment to clean up their supply chains by 2020. Greenpeace stated "with less than two years to go until 2020 ... corporate commitments and policies have proliferated, but companies have largely failed to implement them. As a result, consumer brands, including those with 'no deforestation, no peat, no exploitation' (NDPE) policies, still use palm oil from producers that destroy rainforests, drain carbon-rich peatland and violate the human rights of workers

and local communities – making their customers complicit in forest destruction, climate change and human rights abuses."

Before publication, Greenpeace challenged 16 members of the CGF

to demonstrate their progress by disclosing the mills that produced their palm oil, and the names of the producer groups that controlled those mills. Eight of the global brands did so. The eight who did not initially respond were: Ferrero, Hershey, Kellogg's, Kraft Heinz, Johnson & Johnson, PepsiCo, PZ Cussons and Smucker's.

There has been a problem of big brands sourcing certified sustainable palm oil from Indonesian and Malaysian

"Halting and beginning to reverse the destruction of the world's forests for agriculture is the cheapest, quickest and most equitable option to stabilise the climate and buy time for a just transition to a low-carbon economy."

Greenpeace 2018

companies which are linked to other companies engaged in some of the worst deforestation. Given the intensity of the problems, Greenpeace is now arguing that consumer brands should only be sourcing from company groups whose entire business is NDPE.

What about biofuel?

Oxfam campaigns against the use of food crops as biofuels, and the bar chart below, taken from one of its reports, shows how the recent growth in demand for palm oil in Europe has largely been caused by increasing demand for biofuels. Most of this is for transport, with a smaller amount burnt for electricity generation. This led New Scientist this year to publish an article arguing that “plans to ditch palm oil are missing the real issue: forget food, it’s in your car”.⁵ At the core of this problem is the now widely derided EU policy to ensure that 10% of transport energy comes from renewable sources by 2020, with increases in subsequent years. The European Parliament, in January this year, voted to end subsidies for palm-based biodiesel from 2020, but the vote has no force and the final decision will depend on EU wrangling. The power of the biofuel lobbies in Brussels are enormous and, for those of us in the UK, the issue is further muddled by Brexit.⁵

A techno-fix on the horizon?

One problem raised by many commentators is that there aren’t clear alternatives to palm oil in food that could be used at the same scale without becoming problematic as well. Palm oil is very high yielding per acre, and the vegetable oils

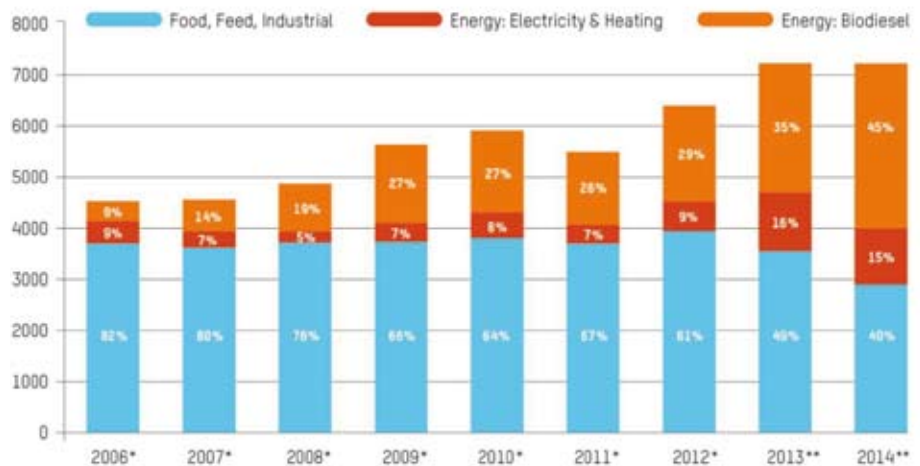
currently able to replace it would use a lot more land.

It is therefore logical that laboratories around the world are trying

to find a viable alternative. Scientists from Abu Dhabi claim to have found an algae that “naturally produces large quantities of palmitic acid – the fatty acid that is a major component in palm oil.”⁴ And a research team from the University of Bath claim to have produced a palm-like oil from yeast.

However, Greenpeace chief scientist Doug Parr has expressed his reservations with these projects, saying: “I think you have to be quite beady-eyed about the challenges of getting from the lab to commercial production ... on the sort

EU uses of palm oil by sector in 1,000 metric tonnes



of scale that’s going to impact the palm oil industry. We shouldn’t imagine for a moment there is a sort of ‘get out of jail free’ card for the tricky corporate and political transition that needs to be taking place in countries where palm oil is a major damper of important forests.”⁴

What can consumers do?

At Ethical Consumer, we have taken the view that avoiding palm oil altogether or choosing products with the very best sustainability certifications are both reasonable responses to a very complex

set of issues. Our buyers’ guides and palm oil ratings in this issue and elsewhere are designed to help people make this choice, whichever

side of the line people personally fall. In each guide, therefore, we highlight those companies which are palm oil free and those that are not, but get best marks. We also incorporate into our ratings external criticisms, such as those from Greenpeace, of companies’ palm oil supply chains. The full details of how we arrive at the rankings appears on our website and, for logged-in subscribers, in the company stories that sit behind the table scores.

This year though, the sense of urgency is increasing. A report from Changing Markets published in April 2018 has cast

further doubt on the ability of certification schemes to help, and we reproduce an extract from it opposite. However, the key campaigners in this field – Greenpeace included – are not arguing for a consumer boycott of all palm oil. It is recognised that pressure from western consumer markets is at least driving some environmental standards into the industry but lots of growth is coming from markets – like those in China and India – without similar demands for environmental standards.

Of course, the growing use of palm oil is also heavily linked to the increase in the amount of processed foods consumed in the west. Cooking fresh meals can have multiple benefits such as avoiding fat, sugar, salt as well as palm oil.

In addition, it is always worth keeping up with the name-and-shame campaigns from the big campaigners like Greenpeace and SumOfUs. Strategically avoiding the worst companies out there will help create pressure in the right place in the short term, and it certainly makes sense to focus on the companies with the biggest market power. Unilever, for example, uses over 1 million tonnes annually and, therefore, its power to affect change is far greater than a company using less.

And finally, acting as citizens as well as consumers is important too. Keeping up the pressure to remove palm oil from, for example, transport biofuels will be a key part of any plan to halt the destruction associated with this most troublesome of crops.

Source: * World Oil/ISD and ** EDOIL/Transport & Environment.

References: 1 www.wri.org/blog/2017/10/global-tree-cover-loss-rose-51-percent-2016 cited in Greenpeace International (2018): Moment of truth time for brands to come clean about their links to forest destruction for palm oil. 2 www.independent.co.uk/environment/orangutans-extinction-population-borneo-reasons-palm-oil-hunting-deforestation-rainforest-a7199366.html 3 Oxfam International (2016): Burning Land, Burning the Climate: The biofuel industry’s capture of EU bioenergy policy 4 www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2017/sep/29/algae-yeast-quest-to-find-alternative-to-palm-oil 5 New Scientist: ‘The real palm oil problem: it’s not just in your food’, May 2nd 2018

Is palm oil certification an obstacle to sustainable development?

In this extract from a longer report, the campaigning research group Changing Markets, argues that certified palm oil is not solving the problems it set out to address.

Palm oil is now so common that it is estimated to be present in half of all supermarket products. In addition, a third of all biodiesel burned in cars and trucks in the EU is now estimated to be palm oil. While Indonesia and Malaysia currently represent 85% of global palm oil production, plantations are quickly moving into new areas and countries, such as in Africa and Latin America, leading to similar problems there. The deforestation, species loss and human exploitation are now well known.

Founded in 2004, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) has become the most prominent voluntary palm oil certification scheme worldwide, now certifying 2.6 million hectares – or around 19% of global palm oil production. Since then, other certification initiatives in the palm oil sector have emerged, leading to continuous growth in the amount of certified palm oil on the market. These include the Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials, and Indonesian Sustainable Palm Oil, which has rapidly increased in recent years to cover 16.7% of all plantations.



“Certifying palm oil as responsible or sustainable makes consumers feel good and encourages increased consumption, which is precisely the root cause of the problem.” Friends of the Earth

Our research shows that none of the schemes has been effective at slowing down deforestation, peatland draining or the loss of biodiversity. All of the schemes investigated also have consistency issues: they offer numerous different standards within each scheme. These have different levels of ambition (tailored to the market of destination) and different traceability requirements (ranging from full segregation of certified products to

just selling green certificates via trading platforms). The schemes set up by the Malaysian and Indonesian governments particularly are a blatant effort to ‘greenwash’ the sector and allow further expansion into new areas, and are driven by continuing growth in demand for biofuels and processed food products.

Fixing the RSPO?

Although the RSPO has been ranked as having the most robust standards for sustainable production of palm oil, it urgently needs to implement reforms. Its reputation as a credible scheme has been damaged by systemic and serious failure to tackle the malpractices of some of its members.

It has several shortcomings. Most notably;

- it allows the conversion of secondary forests and the draining of peatlands;
 - it has not prevented human rights violations; and
 - it does not require greenhouse gas emissions reductions.
- It should also:
- focus on the quality, not quantity, of certification, and should not compromise its standards by operating different certification systems with lower levels of ambition;
 - ensure that small and medium-sized companies are no longer disadvantaged;
 - address concerns around its governance and functioning as a scheme, including better monitoring of its members’ operations, ensuring that complaints are dealt with effectively and transparently and that offending members are adequately sanctioned;
 - not operate under non-segregated traceability schemes. Our report shows how too much flexibility for economic operators in this area can actually compromise the effectiveness of certification altogether.

In this context, the RSPO should look to the Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG) to recognise the leadership practices of certain industry actors. POIG was founded

by NGOs and palm oil producers in 2013, with the aim of limiting deforestation by going beyond RSPO requirements. POIG developed a Charter for members, who commit to certifying all of their palm oil production under RSPO.

How to solve the problem of palm oil

Some NGOs, like Friends of the Earth (FoE), oppose certification schemes as a way to tackle palm oil-related problems; they believe “certifying palm oil as responsible or sustainable makes consumers feel good and encourages increased consumption, which is precisely the root cause of the problem”. Indeed, the proliferation of palm oil schemes is leading to meaningless mass certification, with 60% of all palm oil used by the European food industry claiming to be sustainable.

In light of this, we call for action to reduce demand for palm oil, by ditching biofuels targets, as well as channelling new plantations into non-forested areas by putting in place a strong moratorium on palm oil expansion to forests and peatlands. Most certification schemes in this sector should be abolished in light of their failures on multiple fronts.

Despite NGOs’ call for governments to pass and enforce laws to control the damaging expansion of palm oil cultivation, major EU countries continue to emphasise private-sector-driven solutions as the way to address commodity-driven deforestation. The only exception to the rule seems to be a groundbreaking French law, which requires French companies to establish a risk assessment and report and act on environmental and social damage within their supply chains, including subcontractors and suppliers all over the world.

This article was taken from the May 2018 Changing Markets report ‘The False Promise of Certification’. For more information see: <https://changingmarkets.org>

The spread on your bread

Whether to scrape or dig is about the only ethics-free question when it comes to what to put your bread. Joanna Long churns over the issues.

This report covers butter, margarine and spreads, including non-dairy and supermarket brands.

What is the difference?

In the EU there are regulations over what can be called a butter, margarine or spread.¹

Butter: “The product with a milk-fat content of not less than 80% but less than 90%, a maximum water content of 16% and a maximum dry non-fat milk-material content of 2%.”

Margarine: “The product obtained from vegetable and/or animal fats with a fat content of not less than 80% but less than 90%.” According to DEFRA only a “small number of producers in the UK make a fat spread that would legally qualify as margarine.”²

Spread: a blend of plant and/or animal fats whose fat content is less than 80%.

What's in a spread?

Over the years spreads have been promoted as the healthier alternative to butter due to the fact they contain less saturated fats, which increase cholesterol, and more polyunsaturated fats, which can help to maintain healthy cholesterol levels. The robustness of these claims is currently the subject of debate. Research was published in 2014 suggesting there was insufficient evidence to support claims that spreads are healthier. However, the British Heart Foundation, which helped to fund the study, has not changed its advice on butter and cholesterol because it says that more research is still needed.³

With sales of bread in decline in recent years, the whole butter, margarine and spreads market has struggled. Butter has fared better than margarines and spreads though, perhaps partly due to this uncertainty around the latter's health benefits and due to the image of butter as more natural and less processed.⁴

Butter is made by churning cream until it thickens. The remaining liquid (buttermilk) is drained off and the residual solids are shaped into blocks.

The basic method for making margarine is to emulsify a blend of vegetable oils and fats such as palm, rapeseed or sunflower with skimmed milk, chilling the mixture to solidify it and working it to improve the texture.

In the past, many companies made margarine using a process called hydrogenation. This is where liquid oils are hydrogenated by bubbling hydrogen through them to turn them into solid fats. However, concerns about this process leading to increased trans fats has meant that many of the companies and supermarkets in this report have removed hydrogenated fats from their products.

Many food manufacturers have turned to palm oil as the preferred replacement oil because, unlike most vegetable oils, it is solid at room temperature.⁶

As water and fat do not usually mix, emulsifiers are used in spreads as well (namely, lecithin and mono-glycerides). Flavourings, stabilisers, colourings and preservatives are also added, along with artificial vitamins. Some spreads contain gelatine to help improve consistency.

Environmental impact

The process for making margarines and spreads may be more convoluted than butter but this doesn't necessarily mean that it is more energy intensive.

A life-cycle analysis of butter, margarine and spreads in the UK, France and Germany found that margarine was less than half as environmentally damaging as butter in terms of energy use, greenhouse gases, damage to waterways

and acidification.⁷ The large carbon footprint of butter (and spreadable butter) is due in large part to the methane produced by cows.



The only area where butter outperformed margarine was on its potential to create low-level ozone. This was due to the use of hexane in the extraction of oils – the more oil in a product, the more hexane required for extraction.

Packaging

When it comes to the packaging of butters and spreads, the words ‘rock’ and ‘hard place’ spring to mind.

Butter comes in wrappers made with layers of paper, aluminium and wax, paraffin or polyethylene.⁸ These cannot be recycled but they are small in volume and contain relatively little plastic, so could be considered a less bad option. Spreads come in containers made of low-grade plastic which are theoretically recyclable, but there are few facilities in the UK to do this.

This lack of facilities is partly down to demand for the recycled material and partly down to the recycling process itself.⁹ Companies making things out of recycled materials demand high-grade plastics such as the ones used in plastic bottles, but margarine and spreadable butter tubs are mainly made from low-grade plastics. High- and low-grade plastics also melt at different temperatures, so any low-grade plastics that find their way into a batch

A life-cycle analysis found that margarine was less than half as environmentally damaging as butter

of plastic recycling will contaminate it, rendering it unusable.

If you have room in your fridge you could buy in bulk, which means less packaging per unit of product and also gives you potentially more useful storage containers afterwards. Of the companies in this guide, Suma's sunflower spread and Morrisons spread are available in 2 kg tubs. Tesco and Asda spreads are available in 1 kg tubs.

You can of course try making your own regular butter using cream, or vegan butter using chickpea water (aquafaba). An online search will give you all the information you need.

Animal rights

Butter is, of course, a product of dairy farming, an industry with inherent animal welfare issues due to the simple fact that, if you want a continuous supply of milk, you need to keep female cows in a perpetual cycle of pregnancy and birth to encourage lactation.

To ensure high yields, cows have been selectively bred for dairy farming and can now produce six to ten times (20-45 litres) what they naturally would for a calf. This can have health implications which, when coupled with reduced pasture time or zero grazing (no time outdoors), it's not surprising that dairy cows commonly suffer from Mastitis (an infection of the udder) and lameness (a foot infection).

Because of these inherent issues all companies offering dairy products are marked down under Ethical Consumer's Animal Rights category. Where we differentiate between best animal welfare practice is under the Factory Farming, Product Sustainability, and Company Ethos categories.

Yeo Valley uses only organic milk so is not marked down under the Factory Farming category and gains a positive Company Ethos mark. Other organic

butters were marked down under Factory Farming due to other activities in their company group. If a company offers an organic product (look for the [O] on the score table), it will gain a positive Product Sustainability mark.

Veggie and vegan brands

Vegetarians, vegans and those with pig-related dietary restrictions should look out for E471 in the ingredients list. This is an emulsifying food additive comprised of diglycerides and mono-glycerides of fatty acids. It is mainly produced from vegetable oils, but animal fats are sometimes used.

Veggie

In this guide, all the spreads are suitable for vegetarians except Benecol Light, Sainsbury's spread and Lidl spread. The latter two are unclear, but they did not state that they were suitable for vegetarians and the online ingredient information was either insufficient or absent.

Vegan

These ones are suitable for vegans: Suma, Biona, Tomor (regular margarine), Vitalite, Pure Dairy Free, M&S Dairy Free spread, Flora Dairy Free, Waitrose Avocado spread and Sainsbury's Free From spread.

Salty spreads

A survey in 2013 by Consensus Action on Salt and Health looked at over 300

products and found a large proportion (62%) of 'fats and spreads' failed to achieve salt targets set out by the Department of

Health in 2012. It found that, on average, people consume 11 g of spreads a day, and that "whilst people are aware of the high fat content of fats and spreads and the risks linked to obesity, they rarely think

about its contribution to their daily salt intake and their blood pressure."¹⁰

It also found that some diet spreads contained higher amounts of salt than full-fat versions.

The organisation's advice to consumers wanting to make healthier choices is:

- Opt for unsalted spreads and butters.
- Think twice about diet spreads with less fat – they may have a higher salt content.
- Have smaller portions or eat them less often.
- Opt for olive oil, canola (rapeseed) oil or other vegetable oils high in mono-unsaturated or polyunsaturated fat when cooking, as they have no salt and less saturated fat than butter.

The companies behind the brands

Suma is the trading name of Triangle Wholefoods Collective, a workers' cooperative based in West Yorkshire. The company is vegetarian and GM free. It has a buying policy that gives preference to organic, fair trade and cooperative production and works to avoid sourcing from companies or countries with proven poor human rights records.

Arla is a global dairy cooperative from Denmark. It was rated 'tier 3' in the 2017 'The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (BBFAW)' report, the same score it had received the previous year. Tier 3 indicates that animal welfare measures were 'established' within Arla's business model but there was still work to be done. We felt that companies rated Tier 3 and below needed to demonstrate more progress, and so these companies lost a whole mark under the Animal Rights category.

KKR (Kohlberg Kravis Roberts) is global investment firm. It is a new face in this market, having agreed to purchase Unilever's spreads business in December 2017. Since the sale has not yet been completed, and given that KKR will need time to establish its own policies, we are treating the brands involved as being 50% owned by each company. KKR's business is private equity, energy, infrastructure, real estate, credit and hedge funds. In 2017, its two founders and current co-CEOs, Henry R Kravis and George R Roberts, were paid around \$113 million each.

St Helen's Farm is part of the Kavli group, which is owned by the Norway-based

Some diet spreads contain higher amounts of salt than full-fat versions

Aquafaba on toast – a vegan alternative you make yourself.



USING THE TABLES

Ethicscore: the higher the score, the better the company across the criticism categories.

- = worst rating,
- = middle rating,
- empty = best rating (no criticisms).

USING THE TABLES

Positive ratings (+ve):

● **Company Ethos:**

★ = full mark,

☆ = half mark.

● **Product Sustainability:**

Maximum of five positive marks.

BRAND	Ethiscore (out of 20)	Environment					Animals			People				Politics			+ve		USING THE TABLES		
		Environmental Reporting	Climate Change	Pollution & Toxics	Habitats & Resources	Palm Oil	Animal Testing	Factory Farming	Animal Rights	Human Rights	Workers' Rights	Supply Chain Management	Irresponsible Marketing	Arms & Military Supply	Controversial Technologies	Boycott Call	Political Activity	Anti-Social Finance			Company Ethos
<div>USING THE TABLES</div> <div>Ethiscore: the higher the score, the better the company across the criticism categories.</div> <div>● = worst rating, ○ = middle rating, empty = best rating (no criticisms).</div> <div>Positive ratings (+ve): ★ = full mark, ☆ = half mark.</div> <div>Product Sustainability: Maximum of five positive marks.</div>																					
COMPANY GROUP																					
Suma Organic [Vg,O]	15	●					○											★	1.5	Triangle Wholefoods	
Suma [Vg]	14.5	●					○											★	1	Triangle Wholefoods	
Biona [Vg, O]	14.5	●									●							★	1.5	Windmill Organics	
Yeo Valley butter [O]	13.5	○						●			●							★	1	Yeo Valley Group	
Tomor [V, Vg]	11	●			●					○	●			○					1	Fortis Foods	
St Helen's goat's butter [V]	9.5	●			●		●	●		○	●			○				★	0.5	Kavli Trust	
Vitalite [Vg]	9	○			○		●	●		●	●			○			○		1	Dairy Crest Group	
Clover/Utterly Butterly	8.5	○			○		●	●		●	●			○			○		0.5	Dairy Crest Group	
Benecol [V]	8	●			●	●	●	●		○	●								0.5	Raisio Oyj	
Country Life butter	8	○			○		●	●		●	●			○			○			Dairy Crest Group	
Kerrygold butter	8	●			●		●	●	●		●			○				☆		Ornua Co-operative	
Benecol light	7.5	●			●	●	●	●		○	●									Raisio Oyj	
Waitrose Duchy Organic [O]	7	○		●	●	○	○	●	●	○	●	○		○			○	★	1	John Lewis/Princes Trust	
Lactofree	7	○		○				●	●	●		○	○		○		●	●	☆	Arla Foods	
Anchor, Lurpak butter	6.5	○		○		○		●	●	●		○	○		○		●	●	☆	Arla Foods	
Pure Dairy Free [Vg]	6.5	○		○		●		●	●	●	●			○			●		1	Kerry Group/C. Creameries	
M&S butter [O]	6		○	●	○		○	●	●	●	●		○		○		○	●	1	Marks & Spencer Group	
Dairygold butter	5.5	○		○		●		●	●	●	●	●		○			●			Kerry Group/C. Creameries	
M&S Dairy Free [Vg]	5.5		○	●	○		○	●	●	●	●		○		○		○	●	0.5	Marks & Spencer Group	
Président butter	5.5	●		○		●		●	●	●		●			○		○	●		JEMA 1	
Co-op butter	5		○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●		●		○		●	○	☆	Co-operative Group	
M&S butter & spread	5		○	●	○		○	●	●	●	●		○		○		○	●		Marks & Spencer Group	
Flora Dairy Free [Vg]	4	●	●	○		○	●	●	●	●	●	○			○		●	●	1	KKR & Co, Unilever	
Rachel's Organic butter [O]	4	●		○		●	○	●	●	●	●	○			○	○	●	●	1.5	JEMA 1, Nestlé	
Waitrose Avocado [Vg]	4	○	○	●	●		●	●	●	●	○	●			○			●	☆	0.5	John Lewis Partnership
Morrisons butter [O]	3.5	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○	○		○	1	Wm Morrison Supermarkets	
Waitrose butter & spread	3.5	○	○	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○			●	☆	John Lewis Partnership	
Bertolli, Flora, I Can't Believe	3	●	●	○		○	●	●	●	●	●	○			○		●	●		KKR & Co, Unilever	
Lidl, Danpak	3	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	○	○		○		○	○		Schwarz Beteiligungs-KG	
Sainsbury's butter [O]	3	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		○	○	1	J Sainsbury/Qatar Investment	
Morrisons butter & spread	2.5	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○	○		○		Wm Morrison Supermarkets	
Sainsbury's Free From [Vg]	2.5	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		○	○	0.5	J Sainsbury/Qatar Investment	
Sainsbury's butter & spread	2	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		○	○		J Sainsbury/Qatar Investment	
Tesco butter [O]	2	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		●	●	1	Tesco plc	
Asda butter [O]	1	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		○		●	●	1	Wal-Mart Stores Inc	
Tesco butter & spread	1	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		●	●		Tesco plc	
Asda butter & spread	0	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		●	●		Wal-Mart Stores Inc	

See all the research behind these ratings on www.ethicalconsumer.org. For definitions of all the categories go to www.ethicalconsumer.org/our-ethical-ratings

All margarines or spreads unless otherwise stated. [V] = vegetarian [Vg] = vegan [O] = organic

References: 1 Marketing Standards – Spreadable Fats, Official Journal of the European Union 20.12.2013 2 UK Government response to the consultation on margarine fortification, February 2014 www.gov.uk, viewed 25 April 2018 3 www.bhf.org.uk/news-from-the-bhf/news-archive/2014/march/fats-in-your-diet, 25 April 2018 4 Mintel Yellow Fats and Edible Oils - UK - September 2017 6 FDA Bans Trans Fats: What Does This Mean for Palm Oil Consumption in the US? Union of Concern Scientists 16th June 2015, viewed 25 April 2018 7 Comparative life cycle assessment of margarine and butter consumed in the UK, Germany and France, Nilsson et al, International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment (2010) 15:916–926 8 www.quantum-packaging.com, viewed 2 May 2018 9 recycleforgreatermanchester.com, viewed 2 May 2018 10 New Research Exposes Completely Unnecessary Levels of Salt Hidden in Butter and Margarine, Consensus Action on Salt & Health 2013 www.actiononsalt.org.uk/news/surveys/2013/fat-spreads/, 25 April 2018 11 Kerry Group Palm Oil Sourcing Progress Report, March 2017 12 Kerry Foods, RSPO Annual Communication on Progress 2016 13 <https://kavlifondet.no/en/about-kavlifondet/>, 2 May 2018 14 www.lactalis.fr, viewed 19 April 2018



Organic dairy cows – of all of the animal welfare standards, organic is the best.

Kavli Trust. In 2016, the Trust distributed NOK 72.5 million (about £6.8 million) in funds, primarily to humanitarian projects but also to research projects and cultural initiatives.¹³

Groupe Lactalis and **Nestlé** are the companies behind **Rachel's Organic**, which they run as a joint venture. Groupe Lactalis has operations in oppressive

regimes and publishes virtually no corporate social responsibility information, either in English or in French. References were found to a 'Cap Sur L'Avenir' (cap on the future) charter which was said to include "criteria for the respect of good breeding practices favouring animal welfare", but no further details were given.¹⁴ It was rated Tier 6 in the most recent Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare, a category for companies for which "farm animal welfare does not appear to be recognised as a business issue".

Kerry Group is the producer of Pure Dairy Free spread but another part of the business focuses on farming in order to supply Kerry with dairy ingredients.

Raisio is a Finnish company. In 2014, Raisio decided to focus its activities on cattle and fish feeds, and on plant cultivation. The company owns the Benecol brand which it claims reduces 'bad' cholesterol.



Vegan spreads

Best Buys are **Suma** organic spreads. Suma also makes a non-organic spreads which are also vegan.

15



Butter and spreadable butter

Although low-scoring, **M&S organic** was the only butter brand to have a best rating for palm oil and for supply chain management.

6



Palm oil scores

None of the companies in this guide were palm oil free. Yeo Valley is a palm oil free brand but its parent company, Yeo Valley Farms (Production) Ltd, makes products containing palm oil for external clients. St Helen's Farm similarly does not use palm oil in any of its products but it is part of a wider group, Kavli, that does use palm oil and has a weak policy regarding sustainable sourcing. St Helen's Farm therefore received our worst rating for palm oil, based on the policy of its parent company.

Kerry Group (Pure Dairy Free) has gone from a best rating for palm oil sourcing to a worst rating in the space of a one year.

When we looked at Kerry Group in 2017, it stated that 100% of its palm oil was certified by the RSPO. The company had promised that, by 2018, all of its palm oil would be certified under stronger mechanisms: mass balance or segregated. This may be the case in the UK, but its most recent report to the RSPO has expanded to cover its global palm use, revealing that only 5% of the palm it uses is certified and only 0.2% through a segregated mechanism.

Kerry Group's own palm oil policy contains stipulations designed to protect forests, peatlands and indigenous communities. It claims to be able to trace 81% of its palm kernel oil and 97% of its crude palm oil to the mill.¹¹ Unfortunately, these traceability figures did not include derivatives, which accounted for nearly two-thirds of its total palm oil use and of which 0% was listed as certified by the RSPO.¹²

BEST	MIDDLE		WORST
Suma	Anchor	I Can't Believe it's so Good	Lidl
Biona*	Lurpak	Stork	Tomor
Waitrose	Lactofree	Waitrose Duchy Organic	Benecol
M&S*	Vitalite	Co-op	Kerrygold*
Yeo Valley*	Clover	Morrison's	Pure Dairy Free
	Utterly Butterly	Asda	Dairygold ‡
	Country Life	Tesco	Président
	Bertolli	Sainsbury's	St Helen's Farm*
	Flora		

*These brands have some palm oil-free products even if the company group is not entirely palm oil-free: **Biona Coconut Spread**, **Waitrose butter**, **M&S butter** and **softer butter**, **Yeo Valley (all products)**, **St Helen's Farm (all products)**, **Kerrygold Spreadable** and **Softer Butter**.

‡No ingredient information could be found.

RECOMMENDED

Vegan spreads

Also recommended are **Biona** organic spreads.

14.5



Vegetarian spreads

Tomor margarine.

11



Butter and spreadable butter

St Helen's Farm goat butter and **Yeo Valley** which are both palm oil-free products.

Despite its poor rating for supply chain, Yeo Valley is an organic brand and its products are widely available.

13.5



9.5



The quest for a guilt free biscuit

Mackenzie Denyer looks for an ethical cookie jar to stick his hand in.



In this product guide we compare the UK's most popular biscuit brands with ethical alternatives. We highlight key areas of concern, such as palm oil, sugar, packaging, and certification, as well as providing a handy where-to-buy guide for our recommended brands.

The mighty biscuit

For a country of over 65 million people who find agreeing on anything very difficult, when it comes to biscuits we are amazingly united. According to research group Mintel, 93% of us eat biscuits and, in the last year alone, we munched our way through 420,000 tonnes of them.¹

Despite growing consumer concern about healthy diets, people still appear willing to make an exception for the irresistible biscuit. Sales of biscuits have grown by 4% to £1.8 billion in 2017,¹ the same year that sales of other unhealthy snacks such as chocolate and confectionery stagnated.

Troublesome ingredients

The thought of putting your favourite biscuit brand under the ethical microscope might be daunting prospect. Because if you look past their indulgent persona, the vast majority of biscuits contain a whole host of ethically troublesome ingredients such as palm oil, sugar, and cocoa. Understanding the wider implications of these industries might make you think twice before putting your hand back into the cookie jar.

Palm oil

13 companies in this guide received our best rating for palm oil. None received our worst rating. Only Mondelez lost a whole mark in this category, owing to a combination of its middle rating and external criticism from Greenpeace. This suggests that most companies in this industry are actively tackling this issue.

As discussed on page 10, we don't think that it is clear whether consumers should avoid it altogether. With this in mind, companies can get our best rating either by being palm oil free, or by using best practices in their sourcing.

For example, a company must have all of the possible palm products used in its global supply chain certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) plus something extra like

full disclosure of volumes, suppliers, or traceability to the mill. Or else a high proportion certified and even more other positive initiatives. The higher proportion of palm sourced

The vast majority of biscuits contain a whole host of ethically troublesome ingredients such as palm oil, sugar, and cocoa.

from segregated supply chains, the easier it is for a company to achieve our best rating.

Another way companies can demonstrate engagement on this issue is by sourcing palm oil that is certified as organic. Doves Farm was one such company; it stated on its website, "The Palm Oil used in our products is responsibly sourced from an organic supplier in Colombia. It is fully traceable, GMO-Free and, being produced in South America, is in no way implicated in the destruction of Orangutan and other wildlife habitats that is occurring in Southeast Asia."²

Spotlight on FairPalm

The only fair trade brand in this market was Traidcraft, which sources its palm oil through its "FairPalm" scheme. The scheme focuses on smallholder farmers in West Africa, where palm plants originate from. To avoid monoculture, FairPalm encourages producers to grow oil palm plants alongside other crops and pays producers a fair trade price for their product.³ It is certified as organic and 'Fair for Life' by the Institute of Marketecology (IMO).

Palm oil scores

With the exception of Island Bakery, every biscuit brand in this guide used palm oil or its derivatives. Not including supermarkets, the majority of brands received our best rating for their palm oil policies and practices. Bahlsen, Mrs

BEST		MIDDLE
Palm oil free:		Lazy Day
Island Bakery		Nairn's
Contains palm oil:		Border Biscuits
Against the Grain	Mrs Crimble's	Hill
Biona	Fox's	Lotus
Doves Farm	Jammie Dodgers	BN
Duchy Originals	Lyons	Crawfords
Traidcraft*	Maryland	McVitie's
Bahlsen*	The Edinburgh Bakery	Penguin
Walkers Shortbread*	Viscount	Cadbury
	Wagon Wheels	Oreos

*These brands have some palm oil-free products.

Crimble's, and Fox's all managed to improve their score from middle to best since we last covered biscuits in 2015. However, Hill moved in the opposite direction, slipping down our ranking, as it failed to submit the latest RSPO report.

Largely, the brands in this guide covered 100% of their palm use with some form of certification (RSPO or organic), with the exception of Mondelez (96%), Lotus (74%), and Nairn's (89%). Burton's Foods and Hill Biscuits went further and only used 'segregated' oil. Of the supermarkets, only M&S and Waitrose scored best.

Cocoa scores

Chocolate biscuits are the most popular biscuit type in the UK. In our chocolate guide on page 20 we have detailed the many ethical problems of chocolate and said that, as a minimum, companies need to source their cocoa from certified suppliers.

But, in the world of biscuits, very few companies are taking this responsibility seriously. In fact, our research has shown that only Against the Grain, Island bakery, Biona, Doves Farm and Traidcraft source 100% certified cocoa. The remaining companies in this guide have been marked down under our Workers' Rights category because of the well-known prevalence of child labour in the industry.

High in sugar

The big news when it comes to sugar is the UK's long-awaited sugar tax, which came into force in April 2018 for soft drinks. Money raised from this levy will supposedly be channelled directly into funding school sports and breakfast clubs. Although there are no guarantees that the sugar tax will be effective in the UK, similar taxes in Mexico have seen a 10% decline in soft drinks consumption in just two years.⁴

Its introduction has prompted sugar and health campaign groups, such as Action on Sugar, to call for a widening of the tax to other high-sugar foods such as biscuits and sweets.

The NHS recommends a maximum daily sugar intake of 30 g (7 teaspoons) for those aged 11 and over and, with most biscuits containing 3-5 g each, you can understand why they have been targeted. Such is the health concern surrounding biscuits, Diabetes UK have dedicated an entire page on their website to their health impacts.⁵



Sugar beet can be grown in the EU but is less productive and needs more land than tropical sugar cane.

For children aged 7 to 10, the recommended maximum daily sugar intake is 24 g, and for children aged 4 to 6 it is 19 g. In other words, five biscuits can exceed a 10-year-old's full daily sugar allowance.

The NHS has this advice: "Read the nutritional information on food labels to see how much sugar the food contains. The nearer to the beginning of the ingredient list the sugar is, the more sugar the product contains."

"Look for the 'carbohydrates (of which sugars)' figure in the nutrition label to see how much sugar the product contains for every 100 g:

- more than 22.5 g of total sugars per 100 g is high.
- 5 g of total sugars or less per 100 g is low.
- If the amount of sugars per 100 g is between these figures, it's a medium amount of sugars."⁶

The UK's most popular biscuits, McVitie's Chocolate Digestives, contain 29.5 g per 100 g and are therefore high in sugar.⁵

Does sugar beet cane?

Although biscuit companies are feeling threatened by the sugar tax, they are currently enjoying the lowest sugar prices for many years. The EU's removal of sugar beet quotas in October 2017 has seen global sugar prices drop dramatically.⁷ As the EU ramps up its sugar beet production, sugar cane producers from the Global South are being squeezed out of the market.⁸

One might assume that producing sugar from sugar beet grown in the UK and the EU would have dramatically less environmental impact than importing

sugar cane from half way across the world. However, as is often the case, both industries have their ethical shortcomings.

On the one hand, tropical sugar cane is both more productive and requires less land than sugar beet.⁹ However, as the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) highlights, sugar cane is also a very 'thirsty' crop that has contributed to deforestation and fresh water pollution in countries such as Brazil.¹⁰ In terms of carbon footprint, an EU sugar industry report found that "The carbon footprint range for EU beet sugar was found to be at least similar, if not lower, than cane sugar imported and refined in the EU."¹¹

Supermarkets abandon Fairtrade

When we last looked at biscuits back in 2015, four of the UK's major supermarkets, Sainsbury's, M&S, Tesco, and Asda, all offered Fairtrade-certified own brand biscuits. However, all the above have ceased these ranges. This follows a very public distancing that some UK supermarkets have taken away from Fairtrade, a move spearheaded by Sainsbury's and Tesco.¹² We did, however find Fairtrade shortbread available at the Co-op.



USING THE TABLES

Ethicscore: the higher the score, the better the company across the criticism categories.

- = worst rating,
- = middle rating,
- empty = best rating (no criticisms).

USING THE TABLES

Positive ratings (+ve):

• **Company Ethos:**

- ★ = full mark,
- ☆ = half mark.

• **Product Sustainability:**
Maximum of five positive marks.

BRAND	Ethicscore (out of 20)	Environment					Animals			People					Politics			+ve		USING THE TABLES Positive ratings (+ve): ★ = full mark, ☆ = half mark. ● = worst rating, ○ = middle rating, empty = best rating (no criticisms). ● = full mark, ☆ = half mark. ● = Product Sustainability: Maximum of five positive marks.	
		Environmental Reporting	Climate Change	Pollution & Toxics	Habitats & Resources	Palm Oil	Animal Testing	Factory Farming	Animal Rights	Human Rights	Workers' Rights	Supply Chain Management	Irresponsible Marketing	Arms & Military Supply	Controversial Technologies	Boycott Call	Political Activity	Anti-Social Finance	Company Ethos		
Against the Grain [O, Vg]	16.5																	★	1.5	Ag. the Grain/Island Bakery	
Island Bakery [O]	16																	★	1	Island Bakery Organics Ltd	
Doves Farm [O, Vg]	14.5	○									○								1.5	Doves Farm Foods Ltd	
Biona [O]	14	●									●							★	1	Windmill Organics Ltd	
Lazy Day [Vg]	14					○				○	●							★	1	Lazy Day Foods Ltd	
Traidcraft [F]	12.5	○		○	○		○		●					○				★	1	Traidcraft plc	
Bahlsen [UTZ]	12	○									○	●					○		0.5	Bahlsen KG	
Walkers Shortbread	11.5	●									○	●								Walkers Shortbread Ltd	
Nairn's	11	●				○					○	●								Peffermill Holdings Ltd	
Border Biscuits	10.5	●				○					○	●		○						Border Biscuits Ltd	
Hill Biscuits	10.5	●				○					○	●		○						Ginger Acquisition Company	
Lotus Biscoff	10	●				○					○	●					●			Lotus Bakeries NV	
Mrs Crimble's	9.5	○					●	●			○	○					●			Koninklijke Wessanen NV	
McVitie's, Crawfords	9	○			○	○				○	○	●	○				●			pladis/Yildiz Holding	
Penguin, BN	9	○			○	○				○	○	●	○				●			pladis/Yildiz Holding	
Fox's	8.5	○			○			●	●		○	●	○		○					Boparan Holdings Ltd	
Waitrose Duchy Organic [O]	7	○		●	●		○	●	●	○	●	○	○		○		○	★	0.5	John Lewis Partnership	
Co-op Fairtrade [F]	6		○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●		●		○		●	○	☆	1	Co-operative Group Ltd
Co-op	5		○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●		●		○		●	○	☆	Co-operative Group Ltd	
M&S	5		○	●	○		○	●	●	●	●		○		○		○	●		Marks & Spencer Group plc	
Waitrose	3.5	○	○	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○			●	☆	John Lewis Partnership	
Aldi	3	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○		○			○		Siepmann Stiftung	
Lidl	3	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	○	○		○		○	●		Schwarz Beteligungs	
Morrisons	2.5	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○	○		○		Wm Morrison Supermarkets	
Sainsbury's [O]	2.5	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	○	○	●		○		○	○		0.5	J Sainsbury plc
Oreos, Cadbury	2	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○			○	○	●	●		Mondelez International	
Jammie Dodgers, Maryland	2	●	●	●	○		○	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○		Ontario Teacher Pension Plan	
Lyons', Wagon Wheels	2	●	●	●	○		○	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○		Ontario Teacher Pension Plan	
Edinburgh Bakery, Viscount	2	●	●	●	○		○	○	●	●	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○		Ontario Teacher Pension Plan	
Sainsbury's	2	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	○	●		○		○	●			J Sainsbury plc	
Tesco	1	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	○	●		○			●	●		Tesco plc	
Asda	0	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○			●	●		Wal-Mart	

See all the research behind these ratings on www.ethicalconsumer.org. For definitions of all the categories go to www.ethicalconsumer.org/our-ethical-ratings

[O] = organic, [Vg] = Vegan, [F] = fair trade, [UTZ] = All products in the UK are UTZ certified

References: 1 Sweet Biscuits and Snack Bars, Mintel 2018 2 www.dovesfarm.co.uk/faqs/palm-oil, viewed 20 May 2018 3 A Fair Palm Sunday, Traidcraft, 2015 4 www.theguardian.com/society/2017/feb/22/mexico-sugar-tax-lower-consumption-second-year-running, viewed 05 May 2018 5 www.diabetes.org.uk/guide-to-diabetes/enjoy-food/eating-with-diabetes/diabetes-food-myths/biscuits, viewed 02 May 2018 6 www.nhs.uk/ckp/pages/1139.aspx?categoryid=51, viewed 20 May 2018 7 www.business-standard.com/article/markets/sugar-prices-fall-to-lowest-level-in-28-months-owing-to-distress-sales-118042401354_1.html, viewed 28 April 2018 8 www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-41412717, viewed 02 May 2018 9 www.worldwildlife.org/magazine/issues/summer-2015/articles/sugarcane-farming-s-toll-on-the-environment, viewed 20 May 2018 10 www.kws.com/aw/Sugarbeet/Profitability-Made-by-Breeding/Sugarbeet-vs-Sugarcane/-ieyr/, viewed 20 May 2018 11 The Product Carbon Footprint of EU Beet Sugar, Sugar Industry Journal, Issue 137 (62) 2012 12 www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jun/24/fairtrade-crashing-down-sainsburys-tesco-tea-growers-nairobi, viewed 05 May 2018 13 www.packagingnews.co.uk/top-story/Mondelez-eliminates-46300-tonnes-packaging-27-07-2017, viewed 10 May 2018 14 www.thegrocer.co.uk/home/topics/environment/2-sisters-pledges-90-recyclable-plastic-packaging-by-2020/565702.article, viewed 10 May 2018 15 www.peta.org/living/food/three-ingredient-vegan-cookie/, viewed 05 May 2018

Packaging

Plastic food packaging has come under the spotlight in recent months after the BBC's Blue Planet II series highlighted the chronic damage it is doing to our marine ecosystems. Like most food companies, biscuit producers contribute to this problem. All brands in this guide appear to use plastic packaging to varying degrees.

Renewed public attention on this topic has prompted some brands to make commitments to reduce their plastic packaging. Mondelez, for example, has pledged to reduce its global use of packaging by 65,000 tonnes by 2020.¹³ Fox's immediate parent company, 2 Sisters, aims to slash its packaging 90% by 2025.¹⁴

Make your own

Making your own biscuits is both easy and tasty. At their most basic, home-made biscuits take a mere 30 minutes to make and only require around four to five ingredients. The beauty of home-made cookies is you can tweak recipes to suit

your taste buds, ensuring that you don't get stuck in a chocolate digestive rut.

To spark your imagination, Peta have created a helpful list of easy vegan biscuit recipes, including sunflower seed and date, peanut butter, fudge, and pumpkin oat.¹⁵

Where to buy the Best Buys

You should be able to find these biscuits in wholefood shops. Otherwise, try this guide:

Brand	Where to buy
Against the Grain/ Island Bakery	Waitrose
Biona	Ocado and Holland & Barrett
Doves Farm	Ocado and Waitrose
Lazy Days	Sainsbury's and Holland & Barrett
Traidcraft	Oxfam shops
Bahlsen	All major supermarkets



Our Best Buy biscuits are **Against the Grain, Island Bakery, Doves Farm** and **Traidcraft**.

All of these brands demonstrated robust palm oil sourcing practices, supply chain management and used either Fairtrade or organically certified cocoa for their chocolate.

16.5



16

14.5



12.5



The companies behind the brands

McVities, the UK's most well-known biscuit brand, is owned by the Turkish food company Yıldız. The company bought the brand as part of United Biscuits, alongside other household names like Penguin, Jacobs and Carrs.

It should be noted that the company has high-risk subsidiaries in tax havens such as Jersey and the Netherlands. This meant that it lost a mark in our Anti-Social Finance category.

Island Bakery Organics was founded in 1994 by Joe and Dawn Reade, and is located in the Hebrides on the Isle of Mull. After successfully appealing to investors on the TV show Dragons Den, the couple built a new biscuit factory in 2012 and greatly expanded their capacity. Uniquely, they cook all of their organic biscuits in wood heated ovens and use zero palm oil.

Traidcraft has been the vanguard of the Fairtrade movement in the UK since 1979. Initially set up as a charitable faith organisation, Traidcraft has grown from a small scheme selling goods at church stalls and markets, to a highly respected movement campaigning against trade injustice. Traidcraft engages with civil society, the business community and government to maximise its impact globally. Traidcraft loses marks on our table because it sells some Fairtrade goods such as honey, silk, and leather which have other ethical implications.

RECOMMENDED

We also recommend other biscuit brands that received a product sustainability mark for being organic, fairly traded, or vegan. Such as Biona, Lazy Day, and Bahlsen.

BRANDS TO AVOID

Avoid biscuit brands from Mondelez International and Burton's Foods (Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan) as these groups score worst on our table.

This advice writes off Jammie Dodgers, Lyons, Viscount, Maryland, The Edinburgh Bakery, Wagon Wheels, Cadbury Biscuits, and Oreos.



Chocolate: the **sweet** and the **bitter**



Cutting into a cocoa pod.

© Mighty Earth

*Cocoa growing has been reported to be causing deforestation as well as involving child and slave labour. **Josie Wexler** investigates an industry choc-full of problems, and asks what consumers can do to help.*

A couple of years ago, you may remember reading about how cocoa was imminently running out. Prices were about to skyrocket. Some prudent newspapers advised their readers to start hoarding chocolate.

Well, that didn't happen. The opposite happened. Last year the market became awash in a sea of excess cocoa, which wiped a third off the market price.

For the world's 5 million cocoa farmers this was a disaster. This statement, quoted in a recent report, has been echoed by many elsewhere: "the price decline of cocoa will de facto erase all of the sustainability gains that have been achieved in the past ten years".¹ Prices have since started rising again, but they are still pretty low.

Cocoa farmers are almost all extremely poor. Cocoa can only be grown in tropical countries, and it is almost entirely grown by smallholders. The bulk of production is in West Africa, with Ivory Coast – the biggest exporter – producing 43% of the world's supply. Ghana is in second place, and produces about 20%.

Child labour and deforestation

It is now nearly twenty years since the Western media first started talking about child labour in West African cocoa production, including forced labour. The Harkin-Engel Protocol, in which companies promised to tackle the issue, was signed in 2001. Child labour reports,

sustainability projects and 2020 targets abound.

Despite this, there is scant evidence of significant progress. There are still estimated to be about two million children working

Even before the recent price collapse, cocoa farmers' average incomes were less than half of the \$2.40 per day deemed the cut off for 'extreme poverty' in Ivory Coast.

on cocoa farms in West Africa.² There is particularly profound concern about it because it is such hazardous work – cocoa pods are split with machetes, toxic chemicals are used, and the children carry extremely heavy loads. Injuries are extremely common.

As forced labour goes on underground, it is harder to get reliable information on it and nobody agrees on how much there is. However, while most of the child labour

is family labour, a small proportion of it is still generally believed to be children trafficked from Mali or Burkina Faso: neighbouring countries which are even poorer than Ivory Coast and Ghana.

Anti-Slavery International says that: “the more sensational phenomena publicised in European and North American media in the 1990s and 2000 (children being kept locked up and physically mistreated), are rare”.³ However, what appears to be more common than overt violence is various forms of deceit: for example, children accepting transport to cocoa farms on the back of promises about well-paid work, and the payment never materialises.

Deforestation

In the last year, everyone has started talking about another issue in cocoa production: deforestation.

About 117,866 hectares of forest in Ivory Coast was cleared between 2001 and 2014, and a similar amount in Ghana. A substantial amount of it has been replaced with cocoa trees.⁴ This is not nearly on the scale of palm oil, which is believed to be responsible for the loss of about 340,000 hectares every year.⁵ But it is still serious. About 40% of Ivorian cocoa – which is about 17% of the global cocoa market – is

believed to come from inside officially protected areas, which technically makes it illegal.⁴

This is having tragic effects on local wildlife, including the beautiful and critically endangered pangolin (a pangolin is basically an anteater crossed with a suit of armour). Chimpanzees and elephants – Ivory Coast’s national symbol – have also almost disappeared.

There is no need to rip up any new land to produce cocoa – yields in West Africa are less than a third of what could be achieved.⁶ The main reason for the deforestation is poor farming practices; farmers who have stripped the soil of its fertility can get a short-term boost by moving onto recently deforested land.¹

The underlying cause – poverty

What all of the analysts seem to agree on is one thing: the key underlying cause of both the child labour and the deforestation is desperate poverty.

Since the 1980s, the average (inflation adjusted) cocoa price has halved. Even before the recent price collapse, cocoa farmers’ average incomes were less than half of the \$2.40 per day deemed the cut off for ‘extreme poverty’ in Ivory Coast.⁷

As a result, hiring sufficient adult labour is effectively impossible for many

cocoa farmers, and they resort to using (largely their own) children. Poverty is also the main cause of poor farming methods, leading to land degradation and the need to move into the forests for a cheap short-term fix.

The situation is a vicious circle – if there was no possibility of anyone using children the cocoa price would rise to pay for adult labour. And while poverty has led farmers into the forest, the ensuing glut in supply has helped to cause the low prices that perpetuate it. In other words, simply policing child labour and deforestation will tend to raise the cocoa price.

But of course, that isn’t simple, because the Ivorian government has no resources. The low cocoa price isn’t helping: in April 2017, the President said that because of the price fall and ensuing reduced tax intake, the government was cutting budgets across the board by 10%.⁸

Someone is making good money out of the low prices. The Cocoa Barometer (a report published every three years by a global NGO consortium including Oxfam and the International Labor Rights Forum) calculated that chocolate companies paid US \$4.7 billion less for their cocoa this year than the year before.¹ If you didn’t notice the price of chocolate going down, that would be because it didn’t.



Shelling cocoa pods.

USING THE TABLES

Ethicscore: the higher the score, the better the company across the criticism categories.

- = worst rating,
- = middle rating,
- empty = best rating (no criticisms).

USING THE TABLES

Positive ratings (+ve):

• **Company Ethos:**

- ★ = full mark,
- ☆ = half mark.

• **Product Sustainability:**

Maximum of five positive marks.

BRAND	Ethiscore (out of 20)	Environment					Animals		People					Politics				+ve		COMPANY GROUP	
		Environmental Reporting	Climate Change	Pollution & Toxics	Habitats & Resources	Palm Oil	Animal Testing	Factory Farming	Animal Rights	Human Rights	Workers' Rights	Supply Chain Management	Irresponsible Marketing	Arms & Military Supply	Controversial Technologies	Boycott Call	Political Activity	Anti-Social Finance	Company Ethos		Product Sustainability
Plamil [F, O, Vg]	18																		★	3	Plamil Foods Ltd
Raw Chocolate [F, O, Vg]	18																		★	3	The Raw Chocolate Co Ltd
Pacari [O, Vg, VA]	17.5																		★	2.5	Pacari Chocolate LLC
Booja Booja [O, Vg]	17																		★	2	M CG Mace, Booja Booja co
Moo Free [O, Vg]	17																		★	2	Moo Free Ltd
Raw Chocolate [F, Vg]	17																		★	2	The Raw Chocolate Co Ltd
Seed and Bean [F, O, Vg]	16.5							●											★	2.5	Organic Seed and Bean Ltd
Madécasse [Vg]	16																		★	1	Madecasse LLC
Plamil [Vg]	16																		★	1	Plamil Foods Ltd
Seed and Bean [O]	15							●											★	1	Organic Seed and Bean Ltd
Biona [O]	14	●									●								★	1	Windmill Organics Ltd
Chocolat Madagascar [VA]	13.5							●	●						○				★	1	Chocolaterie Robert SA
Divine [F, Vg]	13	●						●	●						○				★	1.5	Divine Chocolate Ltd
Divine [F]	12.5	●						●	●						○				★	1	Divine Chocolate Ltd
Vivani [O]	12.5	●							●			○								1	Ludwig Weinrich GmbH
Montezuma [O, Vg]	12	●						●	●						○				1.5	Revenge Holdings Ltd	
Montezuma	10.5	●						●	●						○						Revenge Holdings Ltd
Ritter Sport	9.5	○				○		●	●			●			○						Alfred Ritter GmbH
Hotel Chocolat	9	●				○		●	●		○	○			○						Hotel Chocolat Group Plc
Lindt	8.5	○				○		●	●	○		○			○		○	○			Lindt & Sprüngli AG
Ferrero Rocher	6.5					○		●	●	○	●	●	○		○		○	●			Ferrero International SA
Kinder	6.5					○		●	●	○	●	●	○		○		○	●			Ferrero International SA
Thorntons	6.5					○		●	●	○	●	●	○		○		○	●			Ferrero International SA
Co-op [F]	6		○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●		●		○		●	○	☆	1	Co-operative Group
Marks & Spencer [F]	6		○	●	○		○	●	●	●	●		○		○		○	●		1	Marks and Spencer Group
Hershey's	5	●		○		●		●	●	○	○	●			●		●	○			The Hershey Trust Co
Waitrose [F]	4.5	○	○	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○			●	☆	1	John Lewis Partnership
Aldi [F]	4	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○		○			○		1	Siepmann Stiftung (Aldi-Sud)
Green & Blacks [O, F]	4	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○		○	○	●	●		2	Mondelēz International
Guylian	3.5	●	●	○		○		●	●	●	○	●			●		●	●			Lotte Group
Morrisons [F]	3.5	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○	○		○		1	Wm Morrison
Lidl	3	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	○	○		○		○	●			Schwartz Group
Mars	3		○		●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○			○		●	●			Mars inc
Sainsbury's [F]	3	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		○	●		1	J Sainsbury Plc
Cadbury, Green & Blacks	2	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○		○	○	●	●			Mondelēz International
Nestlé, Rowntrees	1.5		○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○	●	●	●			Nestlé
ASDA [F]	1	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○		●	●		1	Wal-Mart stores inc
Tesco	1	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		●	●			Tesco Plc

See all the research behind these ratings on www.ethicalconsumer.org. For definitions of all the categories go to www.ethicalconsumer.org/our-ethical-ratings
[O] = organic [Vg] = Vegan [F] = fair trade [VA] = Value-added-at-source

M&S, Waitrose, ASDA, Lidl, Aldi, Morrisons and Sainsbury's all sell both Fairtrade and non-Fairtrade chocolate. Co-op only sells Fairtrade chocolate.

We have only shown the Fairtrade chocolate. Their non-Fairtrade chocolate scores a whole mark lower.

Who makes what?

Bars of chocolate: All of the companies except Booja Booja and Biona make bars of straight chocolate. Biona only makes chocolate snacks like covered nuts, and Booja Booja only makes boxes of chocolate truffles.

Boxes of chocolates: The following sell boxes of chocolates, truffles and gift chocolates: Divine, Hotel Chocolat, Montezuma, Vivani, Lindt, Tesco, Asda, Guylian, Mars (Celebrations), Mondelez (Green & Blacks, Heroes, Roses, Milk Tray, Terry's All Gold), Nestlé (After Eight, Quality Street, Dairy Box, Black Magic), Booja Booja and Ferrero (Ferrero Rocher, Thorntons).

Chocolate snack bars: The following sell chocolate snack bars like Twix or Snickers: Mars, Nestlé, Mondelez, Hershey and Ferrero.

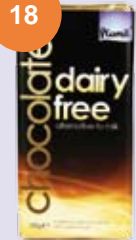


Our Best Buys are **Divine, Plamil, Chocolat Madagascar and Pacari** because they stand-out for being different. There are lots of other vegan, organic and Fairtrade brands that score well on the table.

Divine is 45% owned by Ghanaian cocoa farmers, and certified Fairtrade. It is inexpensive, quite widely available, and includes chocolate boxes/gifts.

Plamil's cocoa is 100% certified by third-party schemes, and its chocolate is all vegan and organic.

Chocolat Madagascar and Pacari are both value-added at source to tackle poverty. It is premium priced and only available online or from speciality outlets.



All of the companies that sell snack bars like Twix or Snickers come at or near the bottom of the table, thus we are not able to recommend any of them.

Of the supermarkets, all of Co-op's bars of chocolate are Fairtrade.

Vegan chocolate companies

These companies are dairy free: Pacari, Moo Free, Madécasse, Booja Booja, Plamil and the Raw Chocolate Company.

Palm oil scores

Chocolate itself does not generally contain palm oil. However, fillings such as biscuit commonly do, so we rated all of the companies on their palm oil policies.

- These companies are palm oil free: Chocolaterie Robert, Pacari, Moo Free, Madécasse, Divine, Booja Booja, Seed and Bean, Montezuma, and the Raw Chocolate Company.
- These companies got our best rating for palm oil, but are not palm oil free: Ferrero, Vivani, Plamil, M&S, Mars, Waitrose and Windmill Organics (Biona). Ferrero, however, also lost half a mark in the palm oil column due to criticism from Greenpeace.

BEST		MIDDLE	WORST
Palm oil free:	Contains palm oil:		
Chocolaterie Robert (Chocolat Madagascar)	Windmill Organics (Biona)	Ritter Sport	Hersheys
Pacari	Vivani	Hotel Chocolat	Nestlé
Moo Free	Plamil	Lindt	Mondelez (Cadbury, Green & Blacks)
Madécasse	Mars	Ferrero (Thorntons)	
Divine	Waitrose	Co-op	
Booja Booja	M&S	Lidl	
Seed and Bean		Aldi	
Montezuma		Guylian	
The Raw Chocolate Company		Mars	
		Morrisons	
		Sainsbury's	
		ASDA	



What is 'raw' chocolate?

'Raw' chocolate has become a bit of a phenomenon recently.

Chocolate is produced in several stages, the first of which involves the farmers laying out the cocoa beans and fermenting them in the sun. After that, they are transported to be roasted and ground. The roasting helps to develop the normal chocolate flavour, and also sterilises the beans. In the case of raw chocolate, the roasting stage is forgone, giving a different flavour.



BRANDS TO AVOID

We recommend avoiding Guylian as we could find no evidence that any of its cocoa is certified by any sustainability scheme, or that it has any plans to change that in the future.

The rise of the cocoa sourcing certification standards

The media attention on child labour has led to a major rise in the proportion of cocoa that is certified by a third-party standard, from 2% a decade ago to about a quarter today.⁹ It is still growing fast as companies push towards their 2020 targets. UTZ is by far the most popular, followed by Rainforest Alliance, and then Fairtrade. (UTZ and Rainforest Alliance are merging but, for the time being, they are still separate standards). There is also a small amount that is certified organic.

















We have given extra Product Sustainability points on our score tables to brands that are 100% organic, Fairtrade, UTZ, Rainforest Alliance or Value-added-at-source (see page 26).

Any form of external auditing makes it more likely that the worst practices, especially illegal ones, will be picked up on.² We therefore consider some form of certification to be a minimum requisite for chocolate companies buying from West Africa.

Cocoa certification schemes currently used, targets and our cocoa sourcing rating









Best rating

100% of West African cocoa, certified in some form, or based on a business model that returns more money to poor communities

 Divine 100% Fairtrade. Also the company is 45% owned by farmers themselves.	 Plamil 100% Organic, Fairtrade or UTZ.	 Vivani 100% covered by UTZ, Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance.	 Ritter Sport 100% certified.	 Chocolaterie Robert 100% sourced in Madagascar with 'Value added at source' model.
 Pacari 100% Organic and produced in Ecuador with 'Value added at source' model.	 Madécasse 100% Sourced in Madagascar and certified as 'Direct Trade'.	 Seed and Bean 100% Organic and a percentage Fairtrade.	 Moo Free 100% Organic, sourced from the Dominican Republic.	 Biona 100% Organic
 Raw Chocolate Company 100% both Organic and Fairtrade.	 Booja Booja 100% Organic.	 Lidl 100% Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Organic or UTZ.	 Co-op 100% certified Fairtrade. Some of it comes from Kuapa Kokoo co-op.	 Montezuma 80% Fairtrade, UTZ, Rainforest Alliance or Organic, all from outside West Africa.
				 Lindt 100% of West African cocoa covered by Lindt & Sprüngli's own "farming programme".

Worst rating

Partially certified, with goal for 100% by 2020

 Aldi 78.94% of all cocoa certified by Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance or UTZ.	 Hershey's 60% UTZ, Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade.	 Ferrero 50% UTZ, Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade.	 Mars 50% UTZ, Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade.
 Hotel Chocolat Something in the region of 50% covered by own "engaged ethics" scheme.	 M&S About 38% Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, Organic or UTZ.	 Sainsbury's Unknown amount certified Rainforest Alliance, UTZ or Fairtrade.	 Tesco Unknown amount certified Rainforest Alliance.

Worst rating

2020 goal of less than 100%

 Nestlé 42.9% covered by Nestlé's own "Nestlé Cocoa Plan".	 Mondelēz (Cadbury) 35% either Fairtrade or covered with Mondelēz's own "Cocoa Life" scheme.	 Morrisons Unknown amount certified Fairtrade.	 Waitrose Unknown amount certified Fairtrade.	 Asda Unknown amount certified Rainforest Alliance or Fairtrade.
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Avoid

No certification goals



Details about the cocoa standards

Third party certification schemes

In terms of the differences between the standards, there are significant clues in the names.

As the name suggests, **Fairtrade** is about fair trading. In particular it aims to tackle price volatility, which is very dangerous for small farmers who have very little ability to insure themselves against risks. Fairtrade thus guarantees farmers a minimum price, and a fixed premium on top. In the case of cocoa, the minimum price is \$2000/tonne cocoa, and the premium is \$200/tonne.¹⁰ Some labour and environmental standards are also incorporated into the standard, but prices were always at the centre.

UTZ and Rainforest Alliance, on the other hand, just aim to police how production is done. They thus have no floor price or fixed premium, although UTZ does ask the buyer and seller to negotiate a premium to cover the certification cost. This premium has been falling and, in 2017, it averaged about \$100/tonne cocoa – half of Fairtrade's.¹¹

On the other hand, Rainforest Alliance, being more of an environmental scheme, tends to be stronger on environmental protection. It has an outright ban on deforestation of any kind, while UTZ and Fairtrade only do so in the case of 'primary' (old growth) forest. This may matter as, in Ghana and Ivory Coast, 92% and 90% of forests respectively are 'secondary' forests.¹²

None of the schemes seem very good at protecting workers' wages. Although cocoa farmers are almost entirely smallholders, most of them do employ a few workers, at least at labour-intensive times of the year. These workers are some of the most marginalised people in the supply chain, and frequently get paid below the minimum wage.¹³ Fairtrade does not regulate wages if the smallholder employs less than a "significant number" of



A Fairtrade USA building in Mt. Peko National Park, Ivory Coast, showing pictures of forbidden activities.

© Mighty Earth

workers, generally reported to mean 20.¹⁴ UTZ and Rainforest Alliance do officially demand that they are paid the legal minimum wage, but research suggests that it often still doesn't happen.¹⁵

Companies' in-house certification schemes

Most of the major chocolate companies now also have their own sustainability programmes. These include Mondelez' (Cadbury) 'Cocoa Life', Nestlé's 'Cocoa Plan', Hotel Chocolat's 'Engaged Ethics', and the Lindt & Sprüngli 'Farming Program'.

The main purpose of these is to invest in cocoa-growing communities by helping with training, equipment and infrastructure. In itself, that is a noble goal, although the Cocoa Barometer points out, rather caustically, that the hundreds of millions being spent on these projects pales into insignificance compared to the US \$4.7 billion it calculates that the companies saved on cheaper cocoa this year.

And, furthermore, in many cases these schemes are not just being touted as complements to third-party standards, but as replacements for them. Cadbury made headlines in 2016 when it announced that it was going to replace Fairtrade certification on its chocolate with its own in-house 'Cocoa Life' certification.

Consumers might fairly wonder what is being promised by a bar of chocolate being 'Cocoa Life'-certified, and how that is being audited. The answer is that it is very unclear. The Fairtrade Foundation inputted into the scheme's creation and FLOCERT, which audits for Fairtrade, is supposed to audit it. But there is no information available about what it is supposed to be auditing for, or the results.

Hotel Chocolat's scheme also seems quite nebulous. There is no mention of auditing criteria. While the company makes vague claims about paying over the market price, the example figures it gives on its website are 10 years old, making it impossible to judge what this means.

The better company schemes

There are two schemes that do clearly include auditing, and are slightly more transparent: Nestlé's and Lindt's.

Nestlé's includes auditing by the Fair Labor Association for compliance with Nestlé's Code of Conduct. The code forbids child and forced labour, and deforestation of both primary and secondary forest. It requires all workers to be paid the minimum wage.¹⁶ Lindt's is audited by The Forest Trust for compliance with Lindt's Code of Conduct, which also forbids child and forced labour, and regulates wages. It is vague on forests.¹⁷ Both schemes (particularly Nestlé's) have been praised by NGOs for their work on child labour. Both produce publicly available audit reports.

However, there is another major problem with all these company schemes – even Nestlé's and Lindt's (possibly not Hotel Chocolat's, but it is impossible to say without more information) – which is their lack of action on prices.

The companies argue that instead of artificial price supports, a better way to increase farmers' income is to help them improve agricultural practices so that they can increase yields, and so this has been their primary focus. (Most of them make no bones about the fact that it is also a way of ensuring their cocoa supply. They describe it as a "win-win" for themselves and the farmers).

Improving agricultural practices has got to be a good idea, especially in light

Company sustainability schemes have been partially blamed for the recent price collapse, by helping to flood the market with too much cocoa.

of the deforestation issue. However, company sustainability schemes have also been partially blamed for the recent price collapse by helping to flood the market with too much cocoa.¹ In a market full of destitute farmers, simply promoting increased production without coupling it with other measures is extremely problematic.

Other options

The consensus across campaigning organisations, and even now among quite a lot of industry representatives, is that all of this is inadequate.

A recent paper commissioned by the Dutch government argues that “farmers need both a major price increase for their cocoa and a substantial increase in productivity in order to make a decent living out of cocoa.”¹⁸

Even Fairtrade’s price supports are minimal. During the recent price collapse, the cocoa price dropped below \$2000/tonne, very briefly, for the first time in a decade. But at all other times, the market price has been between \$2200 and \$3500, so Fairtrade’s \$2000/tonne minimum price hasn’t been doing anything (farmers receive whichever one is higher).¹⁹ The \$200/tonne premium, meanwhile, while not nothing, is clearly not huge. Fairtrade is reviewing these prices at the moment, and it is to be hoped that it will raise them.

But Fairtrade is the only scheme that directly addresses pricing, even minimally. The others rely exclusively on policing, training and small infrastructure investments. While these may help, nobody seems very convinced that they are going to really change the game.

Commodity agreements

Given this, some people are calling for a more radical solution, such as governments agreeing to regulate the supply of cocoa.²⁰ This is not an unprecedented idea: a number of such international commodity agreements existed prior to the neoliberal era. A particularly successful one was the International Coffee Agreement (ICA) which was based on national quotas and kept the price of coffee high until its demise in 1989. To an extent, this agreement was a product of the cold war: a key reason importing countries (particularly the US) agreed to only allow coffee imports that carried the ICA stamp was the threat of poor coffee-producing countries turning to communism if they didn’t get thrown some bones.²¹ However, it demonstrates what is possible.



It is also theoretically possible that companies themselves could make an agreement. The cocoa market is extremely concentrated. There are three traders (Barry Callebaut, Cargill, and Olam) which buy 75% of the cocoa in the world. The top six manufacturers (Mondelēz, Mars, Nestlé, Hershey’s, Ferrero and Lindt) have 40% of the manufacturing market. And most chocolate is sold in supermarkets, of which there are only a handful.¹⁸ This concentration gives these companies a disturbing degree of power, but it does open the possibility of benevolent as well as malevolent coordination: if they all agreed to pay higher prices they would no longer need to worry about being undercut.

Neoliberalism does not smile on cartels that fix prices, and such an agreement might be illegal. However, its grip is weakening sufficiently that people are at least starting to talk about the idea.¹ Of course, the companies would also need to be motivated to do it – no trivial matter.

Direct trade and value added at source

The International Labor Rights Forum recommends buying from chocolate companies who buy directly from farmers, as that not only means that you know where the cocoa is coming from but, by cutting out the multiple layers of middlemen, it makes it more likely that farmers will receive a better wage.¹³ Madécasse has got itself certified ‘direct trade’ on this basis, meaning that it buys directly from farmer. Divine is 45% owned

by cocoa farmers themselves, meaning that they are intimately connected with the company, and get a 45% share on any distributed profit. We recommend buying from these companies.

Another possibility worth looking at is the ‘value added at source’ business model, which is a more structural response.

As described above, poverty plays a fundamental role in every negative aspect of the cocoa supply chain. It is, in turn, linked to oversupply, which is exacerbated by a lack of alternative employment opportunities in cocoa-producing communities. And while the cocoa farmer only gets about 3-7% of the final chocolate price, about 40% of it is taken at the manufacturing stage, which is invariably done in the rich world.¹

There are a few companies that are trying to create more money and employment for local people in cocoa growing countries by making it at source instead. Only about 1% of UK chocolate is made this way, but we looked at two companies who do so – Chocolaterie Robert (Chocolat Madagascar), based in Madagascar, and Pacari in Ecuador. These companies are eager to point out the difference that their model makes. Fairtrade, they say, means that the cocoa producing country gets an extra 5-10%, whereas their model means that it gets about an additional 400%.²²

Madécasse, also based in Madagascar, has also been based on this model until recently, although it has been having problems with production, so, for the time being, it is making its chocolate

The cocoa farmer only gets about 3-7% of the final chocolate price. About 40% of it is taken at the manufacturing stage, which is invariably done in the rich world.

in the developed world. However, it hopes to get its Madagascan factories up and running again soon.

It is a shame that you can’t buy chocolate fully made in West Africa in the UK, but while there are a few companies who make it and sell it locally, we don’t know of any options to buy it over here.

And unfortunately, it may not be easy for this model to catch on widely. Value-added-at-source chocolate tends to be expensive, and there are good reasons for that – it is much harder and more expensive to make chocolate in hot climates and transport it in finished form. One problem is that it melts.

The companies behind the brands

Divine is 45% owned by the Ghanaian Kuapa Kokoo cocoa farmers co-op, a syndicate with about 65,000 members who together produce about 5% of Ghanaian cocoa. Kuapa was created in the 1990s with the help of Christian Aid, The Body Shop and Twin Trading – the company behind Cafédirect's coffee. It launched Divine Chocolate in 1997 with some additional help from Comic Relief, who promoted it in the UK in a series of TV adverts starring Ben Elton.

The company's chocolate is made in the Netherlands, but nearly all of its cocoa comes from Kuapa. As well as a share of any distributed profits, farmers get an additional 2% of the company's turnover which is invested in Kuapa's programmes.

The remainder of Divine is now mostly owned by Twin Trading, with a small amount owned by Oikocredit, a Dutch microfinance institution.

Pacari is an Ecuadorian company which makes its chocolate bean-to-bar in Ecuador. Its chocolate is all organic and vegan. Pacari's chocolate is sold in specialist shops across the UK, and can also be ordered online.

Chocolaterie Robert is a Madagascan company established in 1940. Its chocolate is made in Madagascar from Madagascan cocoa. In most parts of

the UK, you are limited to buying its chocolate online, although a company called Chococo sells it in its shops in Swanage, Winchester, Exeter and Horsham.

Madécasse was founded in 2006 by two American Peace Corps volunteers (the US equivalent of Voluntary Service Overseas) who had been teaching in Madagascar. They decided to make chocolate bean-to-bar in the country in order to aid with development. Madécasse's chocolate is sold by Waitrose in the UK, or online.

Plamil Foods is a UK vegan company which was set up in the 1960s to produce alternatives to cow's milk. The name Plamil comes from PLAnt MILK. It sells dark and milk-alternative chocolate that is not expensive, but only available from wholefood shops or online.

Lindt and Sprüngli is a Swiss company that was founded in 1845. Its 'sustainability' programme has been praised by the NGO Stop the Traffik for its work on child labour.²³

Hotel Chocolat is a British luxury chocolate company, with over seventy shops in the UK. It is the only UK chocolate company that owns its own cocoa plantation, which is in St Lucia, and it has written a lot about this plantation. But only a tiny amount of its cocoa comes from there: it told us that the total proportion sourced from South America, Asia and St Lucia is less than 5%.²⁴ Hotel Chocolat does moderately well in our ratings.

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Is sliced bread one slice short of a loaf?

Heather Webb looks at the wrapped and sliced bread market.



A loaf of bread only needs to contain four ingredients: flour, water, yeast and salt. Yet the majority of UK households (97%)¹ purchase 'wrapped and sliced' bread that has been produced using the Chorleywood Process (CHP) and contains additional ingredients such as hard fats, extra yeast, 'processing aids', E numbers and a number of other chemicals.

Recently the ingredients added to bread have been making headlines. An investigation by the Real Bread Campaign

in April 2018 found wholemeal loaves to contain up to 26 ingredients and additives, including refined flour.²

The regulations state that the name 'wholemeal' can only be used on bread if all the flour used as an ingredient in preparation is wholemeal.

The campaign group has also been challenging bread and sandwich chains' claims that the bread that they use is "natural". In April 2018, the Advertising Standards Agency agreed with the Real Bread Campaign that the coffee chain Pret a Manger's use of the term "natural" when describing its sandwiches was misleading.³

'Wrapped and sliced'

The 'wrapped and sliced' bread market is highly concentrated with three main manufacturers – Allied Bakeries, Hovis and Warburtons – accounting for nearly three-quarters of sales in the UK.⁴

However, according to The Grocer, many brands in this market are experiencing declining sales.⁵ Trends such as low-carb diets, concerns about gluten and an increase in alternatives to the lunchtime sarnie – from protein pots and

salad bowls to sushi and macaroni cheese⁶ – have all put pressure on bread brands to revise their offerings to include seeded and low-gluten varieties.

This guide just focuses on the largest brands producing wrapped sliced bread, plus widely available gluten-free bread brands. All nine supermarkets are also included as they sell own-branded sliced and wrapped bread.

The only supermarket to produce an organic version is Sainsbury's. However organic loaves were available at some of the supermarkets including Co-op, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose.

Some of the supermarkets also sell their own range of gluten free breads including Sainsbury's and Tesco.

In-store bakeries

According to the Federation of Bakers there are three principle sectors in the baking sector in the UK:

- Large plant bakeries
- In-store bakeries
- Craft bakers.

In-store bakeries (ISBs) within supermarkets produce about 12% of baked goods, while larger (plant) baking companies make up the majority – 85% – of the bread produced. The remainder is made up of high-street retail (craft) bakers.

All the supermarkets in this guide offer freshly baked bread from their in-store bakeries. However, these bakeries have attracted criticisms over the years for being merely 'tanning salons' where loaves made and part-cooked elsewhere are simply browned.

The Real Bread Campaign found that 'freshly baked' bread from supermarkets can be laden with artificial ingredients because loopholes in labelling rules mean they need not list all additives and processing aids.

In 2014, Defra updated its Food Information Regulations. However, it failed to tighten definitions which allow frozen in-store 'bakery' bread to be marketed with the claims that it is 'fresh' or 'freshly baked'.⁷

Real Bread Campaign

The Real Bread Campaign is part of the UK charity 'Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming' and fights for better bread in Britain. A basic definition of Real Bread is that it is made without the use of any artificial additives or processing aids.

Part of its work includes supporting small, local and independent Real Bread bakers around the UK. These brands are not included in this report because there are over 900 listed on the Real Bread Finder. To avoid unnecessary additives in your bread, find your nearest baker here: www.sustainweb.org/realbread/bakery_finder

The Honest Crust Act

Following a successful ruling in France, where bread marketed or sold as traditional French bread must be made without artificial additives and from a mixture of only wheat bread flour, drinkable water, cooking salt and bakers' yeast, the Real Bread Campaign is calling on the UK government to pass the 'Honest Crust Act', which would require:

- All bakers and retailers to provide a full list of ingredients and declare all additives in flour.
- Legally define the terms 'fresh', 'freshly baked', 'sourdough', 'artisan', 'wholegrain' and 'craft'.
- Tightening of the Bread and Flour Regulations (1998) to ensure dried gluten and soya flour do not make their way into loaves sold as wholemeal.
- A ban on below-cost selling of loaves



by multiple retailers, a practice Real Bread believe leads to an artificial misperception of the baseline price. During the first stage of the campaign – which finished in April 2018 – over 1,500 people wrote to Michael Gove at Defra in support of the call. The Real Bread Campaign will be announcing the next step later in 2018.

Environmental impact of wheat

Wheat is a crop grown on two-fifths of Britain's arable land and we produce 11–18 million tonnes per year. According to the National Association of British and Irish Flour Millers (NABIM), the British milling industry is the largest single user of domestic wheat. A number of flours and breads are produced entirely from UK grown wheat.

In 2017, a study by a group of researchers at Sheffield University showed that more than half of the environmental impact of producing a loaf of bread arises directly from wheat cultivation, with the use of nitrogen fertiliser alone accounting for around 40%.⁸

In its review of the study, the New Scientist argued that this fact meant that bread eaten in the UK is responsible for 0.5% of all the UK's greenhouse emissions. This does not mean that bread is an especially environmentally damaging food – we do eat quite a lot of it. However, as the article says: “the finding highlights the urgent need to tackle global emissions from farming, which produces a third of all greenhouse gases”.⁸

Yet none of the bread brands in this report mentioned or talked about the environmental impacts of wheat production in their environmental reports.

Packaging

According to WRAP, the grocery sector accounts for about 70% of the packaging market which equates to around 10 million tonnes (mt) of packaging used in the UK.⁹ Therefore, it is disappointing that very few of the brands in this report mention the issue of packaging, especially in light of the recent public outcry regarding its use.

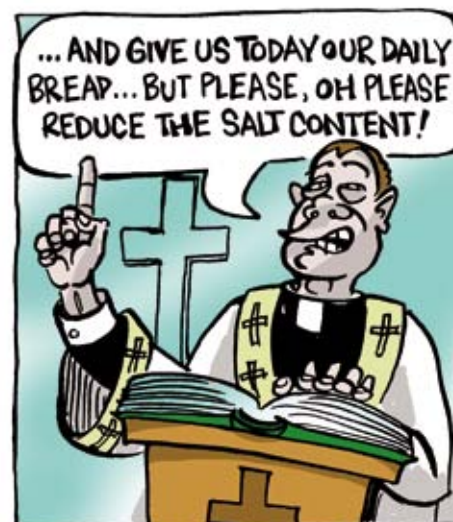
Kingsmill states that its bags are recyclable, although not all councils will accept them. They can be recycled through recycling banks.

In 2012, it was reported that the plastic bags that Warburtons used were made from recycled materials, while paper bags used were traditional biodegradable wax wraps.¹⁰ However more recent information or policy on the type of packaging Warburtons used could not be found.

Labour exploitation in the bakery sector

In May 2018, Focus on Labour Exploitation (FLEX) released a report¹¹ which examined the vulnerabilities of migrant workers to labour exploitation across three UK labour sectors – construction, bakeries and fishing. Its interviews with workers found many of those working in these industries to be experiencing poor workers' rights, poor pay, poor welfare provisions and a lack of oversight. They also had poor rates of union membership.

In particular, it noted that in the UK bakery sector there is a high number of temporary agency staff, which, it argues, is partly responsible for the low rates of union membership. It said: “on one of the sites it visited, agency staff working at a



large bakery were unaware that a bakeries union existed, despite significant union activity at the site”.

Other issues related to having a high number of temporary workers included short-notice shift cancellations, irregular shifts, and low hours for those employed through labour providers. Agency staff in the bakeries sector were also found to be earning less than non-agency colleagues doing the same job.

There was also evidence that agency staff were bullied and harassed. Staff from three different bakery sites reported being forced to wear distinguishing clothing to separate them from full-time staff. The report said, “Some expressed concerns that these clear distinctions created animosity between the two groups, and in some cases led to bullying and harassment against agency staff.”

One of FLEX's key recommendations is a limit on the number of layers in labour supply chains for high-risk sectors. This would be in line with the approach adopted in Spain and Norway, where a limit on the number of layers in labour supply chains has been introduced in sectors such as construction and cleaning.

Supply chain management policies

Given the degree to which labour exploitation is found within the UK's food processing sector, it is disappointing to see consistently poor policies from the bread companies addressing workers' rights within supply chains.

Except supermarkets, all the companies received a worst Ethical Consumer rating for supply chain management. However, there were some differences between the largest brands' policies, especially with



USING THE TABLES

Ethicscore: the higher the score, the better the company across the criticism categories.

- = worst rating,
- = middle rating,
- empty = best rating (no criticisms).

USING THE TABLES

Positive ratings (+ve):

• **Company Ethos:**

- ★ = full mark,
- ☆ = half mark.

• **Product Sustainability:**
Maximum of five positive marks.

BRAND	Ethicscore (out of 20)	Environment					Animals			People				Politics			+ve		COMPANY GROUP		
		Environmental Reporting	Climate Change	Pollution & Toxics	Habitats & Resources	Palm Oil	Animal Testing	Factory Farming	Animal Rights	Human Rights	Workers' Rights	Supply Chain Management	Irresponsible Marketing	Arms & Military Supply	Controversial Technologies	Boycott Call	Political Activity	Anti-Social Finance		Company Ethos	Product Sustainability
Biona Gluten Free [O]	14	●									●								★	1	Windmill Organics
Brace's	11	●				●					●										Brace's Bakery
Cranks [O]	11	●				●					●						●			1	All About Food
Dr Schär Gluten Free	11	●				●					●										Dr Schär AG/SPA
Robert's	11	●				●					●										Frank Roberts & Sons Ltd
Warburtons	10.5	●								●	●							○			Warburtons 1876 Limited
Weight Watchers'	10.5	●								●	●							○			Warburtons 1876 Limited
Genius Gluten Free	9	●				○		●	●		●			○							Verlinvest
Hovis	9	●			○	○		○	○	○	○	●									Gores Group/Premier Foods
Jackson's	9	●				●		●		○	●							○			William Jackson Food Group
Mother's Pride	9	●			○	○		○	○	○	○	●									Gores Group/Premier Foods
Village Bakery	8.5	●				●		●	●		●			○							Village Bakery (Holdings) Ltd
Co-op	5		○	○	○	○	○	●	●	●	●		●		○		●	○	☆		Co-operative Group Ltd
Marks and Spencer	5		○	●	○		○	●	●	●	●		○		○		○	●			Marks & Spencer Group plc
Waitrose	3.5	○	○	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○			●	☆		John Lewis Partnership
Aldi	3	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	○		○			○			Siepmann Stiftung
Lidl	3	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	○	○		○		○	●			Schwarz Beteiligungs
Sainsbury's So Organic [O]	3	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●		○	○		○		1	J Sainsbury
Morrisons	2.5	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○	○		○			Wm Morrisons Supermarkets
Allinson	2	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●			○		○	●				Associated British Foods
Burgen Gluten Free	2	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●			○		○	●				Associated British Foods
Kingsmill	2	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●			○		○	●				Associated British Foods
Sunblest	2	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●			○		○	●				Associated British Foods
Sainsbury's	2	○	●	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		○	●			J Sainsbury
Tesco	1	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	○	●		○		●	●			Tesco plc
Asda	0	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		○		●	●			Walmart

See all the research behind these ratings on www.ethicalconsumer.org. For definitions of all the categories go to www.ethicalconsumer.org/our-ethical-ratings

[O] = organic

regards to the use of agency workers.

Allied Bakeries explicitly acknowledges in its Modern Slavery statement that the use of temporary labour within its supply chain was a key risk area. It said, "we are working with our providers so that they understand our expectations of them in taking the required proactive steps to tackle hidden labour exploitation."

Premier Foods (Hovis and Mother's Pride) has policies addressing workers' rights, the use of zero-hour contracts (although not a ban on their use) and recruiters' compliance principles. In its Modern Slavery statement, it says that

it has only recently extended its Ethical Trading policy to include all third-party providers providing staff to Premier Foods (e.g. labour agencies, logistics partners).

Warburtons' Modern Slavery Statement, on the other hand, does not mention the use of agency staff, writing that it believes "the risk of modern slavery in our operation and in our first-tier supplier base is low".

Roberts states that it audits its providers of temporary/agency staff and outsourced services to check for compliance with its policies and other legal requirements, including payment of

the national minimum wage.

The William Jackson Food Group's publicly available policies did not cover workers' rights within its supply chain.

Modern Slavery statements

Whilst carrying out this research we noticed that two companies: Genius and Windmill Organics, who both have a turnover of more than £36 million and are thus required to produce a Modern Slavery Statement each year and display it on their website, and had failed to do so.

Windmill Organics told Ethical Consumer “We are completely opposed to any form of slavery or exploitation and will be adding a statement to our website.”

Palm oil scores

Palm oil is not the most obvious ingredient to be added into bread, yet most of the brands in this report list it as an ingredient.

BEST	MIDDLE	WORST
Biona	Genius	Brace's
M&S	Hovis	Cranks
Waitrose	Mother's Pride	Dr Schar
Warburtons	Co-op	Robert's
Weight Watchers	Aldi	Jackson's
	Lidl	Village Bakery
	Sainsbury's	
	Morrisons	
	Allinson	
	Burgen	
	Kingsmill	
	Sunblest	
	Tesco	
	Asda	

Warburtons received a best Ethical Consumer rating for its palm oil policy. The company stated “We only use a relatively small amount of palm oil, (around 1,200 tonnes each year) however we will continue to work with our suppliers and are on track to meet a target of 100% segregated sustainable palm oil by the end of 2020.” According to its latest RSPO ACOP 2016 the company was sourcing 78% of its palm oil through segregated sources.

Premier Foods (Hovis, Mother's Pride) also sourced 100% of its palm oil through RSPO mechanisms however according to its latest ACOP only around 36% of this was through segregated sources.

Allied Bakeries (owner of Allinson, Burgen, Kingsmill and Sunblest) did not appear to be sourcing all its palm oil through RSPO certification. Its website stated “Our aim is to work with our suppliers to convert our remaining mass balanced volume to achieve 100% segregated sustainable palm by 2020.” Currently 62% of its palm was through segregated sources.

For further discussions about whether to buy or boycott palm oil see page 9.



Local, independent, organic bakers of real bread would be our first choice. See the Real Bread finder, www.sustainweb.org/realbread/bakery_finder



RECOMMENDED

We recommend breads which are organic such as **Cranks** or **Biona** for a gluten-free option.



Of the more widely available brands, Warburtons comes out best because of its best rating for palm oil.



BRANDS TO AVOID

For supermarkets we recommend avoiding Asda who are at the bottom of the table. We also recommend that you avoid the widely available brands Allinson, Burgen, Kingsmill and Sunblest which all score poorly.

The companies behind the brands

Biona is owned by Windmill Organics, a company that champions organic food brands. Its turnover increased from £37m in 2015 to £45m in 2016. Biona produces a range of gluten free bread as well as rye bread and can be found across the UK in wholefood shops, Ocado, Tesco and Waitrose.

Cranks Organic is owned by All About Food, a company that specialises in making restaurant brands (such as Pizza Express salad dressing) available in supermarkets. According to All About Food's Annual Report the company is ultimately owned by The Taro III Trust, which is incorporated in tax haven Liechtenstein.

Cranks Organic brand focuses on making wholesome vegetarian foods including supplying vegan and vegetarian sandwiches. Its bread can be found in Sainsbury's, Waitrose and Ocado.

Genius is a gluten free brand which is widely available across the UK. It is owned by investment company Verinvest, which also holds investments in the popular coconut water brand, Vita Coco.

Verinvest is owned by Belgian families De Mévius and De Spoelberch who hold shares in brewing company AB InBev (owner of beer brands such as Stella Artois).

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Bread and Salt

Bread is one of the biggest sources of salt in diets. In early 2018, the World Action on Salt and Health (WASH) released a global study into the variation of salt levels in bread around the world. It looked at over 2,000 white, wholemeal, mixed grain and flat breads from 32 countries and regions and found shocking levels of salt present. More than a third of breads worldwide were found to have more salt than Public Health England's target for bread (0.9 g per 100 g).¹ It called on governments worldwide to take urgent action and reinvigorate salt reduction programmes.²

An Ethical Consumer survey found that around half of the brands in this report are failing to achieve the target set by Public Health England. These are highlighted in red in the table below. The results were based on nutritional information for wholemeal medium sliced loaves or the nearest comparison.

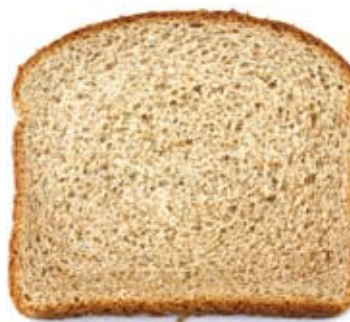
What is wrong with salt?

Salt puts up our blood pressure, and raised blood pressure (hypertension), is a major factor in strokes, heart failure and heart attacks – major causes of death and disability worldwide. There is also increasing evidence of a link between our current high salt intake and stomach cancer, osteoporosis, obesity, kidney stones and kidney disease.³

Current UK government advice states that adults should eat no more than 6 g of salt a day (2.4 g sodium) – that's around 1 teaspoon.

What can you do to reduce salt?

- **Check the labels** – choose brands with 0.9 g salt or less per 100 g. All the brands in this report listed salt on their nutritional labels and most broke it down per slice.
- **Make your own** – there are plenty of recipes for Tuscan bread – an Italian bread made without salt – available on the internet such as www.visittuscany.com/en/recipes/diy-tuscan-bread-pane-toscano-recipe



Just one slice of Village Bakery wholemeal bread has more salt in it than a packet of Walker's ready salted crisps. Several other brands had salt levels approaching this amount.

(Walker's Ready Salted 32.5 g bag of crisps – 0.46 g of salt).

The salt content of wholemeal, medium loaves

	Salt (g) per 100g	Salt (g) per slice
Village Bakery	1.41g	0.54g
Brace's	1.10g	0.35g
Lidl	1.07g	0.37g
Weight Watchers	1.00g	0.30g
Kingsmill	1.00g	0.29g
Robert's Bakery	1.00g	0.40g
Jackson's brown bloomer	1.00g	0.40g
Sainsbury's So Organic	1.00g	0.35g
Waitrose	0.98g	0.33g
Biona GF Millet	0.97g	-
Warburtons	0.95g	0.43g
Co-op	0.95g	0.43g
M&S	0.93g	0.38g
Schar GF Wholesome Seeded	0.91g	0.25g
Hovis	0.90g	0.26g
Genius GF brown	0.90g	0.32g
Sainsbury's	0.89g	0.32g
Morrisons	0.89g	0.32g
Tesco	0.88g	0.35g
Asda	0.86g	0.25g
Aldi	0.85g	0.31g
Cranks (org)	0.80g	-
Burgen GF Soya and Linseed	0.75g	0.33g

Salt-free wholemeal bread recipe

Makes 1 loaf or 12 slices

Ingredients:

- 300 g wholemeal flour
- 150 g strong white flour
- 1 sachet (7 g) fast action bread yeast
- 2 tablespoons olive oil/rapeseed oil
- ½ pint warm water

Method

Place the flours in a large bowl together with the yeast, olive oil and warm water. Mix to a dough adding a little bit more water or flour if necessary. Transfer to a lightly floured surface and knead for 5-10 minutes, until smooth and elastic. Leave in a warm place until it has doubled in size (about 30 minutes).

Turn out the dough and knead again for a few minutes. Lightly oil a 450 g loaf tin or baking tray and shape the dough to fit the tin or make an oblong shape and place on the tray. Leave it for about 10 minutes.

Heat the oven to 220°C (Gas mark 7) and bake for 30-40 minutes until golden brown and sounds hollow when tapped underneath. Cool on a wire tray.

If the bread is not eaten on the same day it is a good idea to slice it when absolutely fresh and freeze it.

Recipe taken from Blood Pressure UK, www.bloodpressureuk.org/BloodPressureandyou/Yourlifestyle/Eatingwell/Yourfood/Salt-freebread

References Accessed May 2018: **1** Public Health England, Salt Reduction Targets for 2017 March 2017 **2** World Action on Salt, New WASH Survey Finds Huge and Unnecessary Variation of Salt Levels in Bread - WASH Urges Governments Worldwide To Take Action And Protect Health 2018 **3** www.actiononsalt.org.uk/salthealth/factsheets/kidney

Supermarkets

Heather Webb gives an update on recent supermarket news.

The shock announcement, in April 2018, that two of the UK's biggest food retailers – Sainsbury's and Asda – plan to merge, led to a wave of concern over the further concentration of the UK's food retailer market. If it goes ahead, the merger is estimated to give them a market share of 31.4%; Tesco – the UK's largest retailer – currently has a market share of 27.6%.¹

In our last report on supermarkets in Issue 166, we argued that their low prices are often paid for by those in their supply chains who can least afford it.

With the threat of the merger between two of the largest supermarkets, there is real potential for progress to be rolled back. Sainsbury's has announced that the merger could lead to price cuts in their stores of "around 10% on many of the products customers buy regularly"² – such cuts are often passed on to suppliers. And according to one study by the New Economics Foundation up to 2,500 jobs could be at risk as a result of the merger.³

The Groceries Code Adjudicator – which regulates the relationship between supermarkets and their direct suppliers within the UK – has helped to curb some of the abusive practices employed by the retailers. Disappointingly, the government recently decided not to extend its remit to cover supermarkets' relationship to farmers / growers and processors, slaughterhouses and manufacturers.⁴

How do the supermarkets score?

In this issue of the magazine, we look at several markets where supermarket own-brands often compete with branded products.

Supermarkets are extremely complicated to rate. This is because their retailing activities often cover several sectors, food, cosmetics, electronics and clothing. Therefore, we think it is useful to look at them as a separate group to highlight best practice in the sector.

Currently our Best Buy recommendations in this market are the Co-op and Marks & Spencer.

Waitrose is third, but is being chased by the discounters Aldi and Lidl.

Supermarket	Ethicscore (out of 20)
Co-op	5
Marks & Spencer	5
Waitrose	3.5
Aldi	3
Lidl	3
Morrisons	2.5
Sainsbury's	2
Tesco	1
Asda	0

For full supermarket ethicscore details, see the score tables in the other guides in this magazine.

Aldi UK has developed some clear policies around particular issues. For instance, in January 2018, its cosmetics range was certified cruelty free and in the latest Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare it moved up a level to tier 3. Waitrose, on the other hand, has been consistently rated tier 1 in the report for its leadership on policies around animal welfare.

Where Aldi falls short is in its policies for other countries. Ethical Consumer considers the policies and practices of the whole group; therefore, we would want to see that policies apply to its global operations and not just the UK.

Bringing up the rear are the largest four retailers in the UK. Over the past year the 'big four' – Sainsbury's, Asda, Tesco and Morrisons – have been focusing on attracting customers who are increasingly shopping at the discounters Aldi and Lidl.

This has represented a move for some away from a focus on sustainable practices. Sainsbury's highlighted this in June 2017, when it announced that it planned to stop using Fairtrade-certified produce, preferring to use its own 'Fairly Traded' label instead.

A pioneer of the use of the Fairtrade label for many of its own-branded products, the move was seen by many as a sign of retailers reducing their commitments to producers. Tesco also announced a switch of its coffee from Fairtrade to the less rigorous certification scheme, Rainforest Alliance.⁵

Palm oil

In April 2018, frozen food retailer Iceland announced that, by the end of 2018, all its own-branded products will no longer contain palm oil. Richard Walker, Iceland Managing Director said, "Until Iceland can guarantee palm oil is not causing rainforest destruction, we are simply saying 'no to palm oil'. We don't believe there is such a thing as 'sustainable' palm oil available to retailers, so we are giving consumers a choice about what they buy."

The use of palm oil is controversial and we discuss its usage along with our current thoughts on pages 9-11.

Supermarkets who receive Ethical Consumer's best rating for their palm oil sourcing policies are Waitrose and M&S. All the rest of the supermarkets receive our middle rating.

Based on their recent RSPO Annual Communication on Progress (ACOP) filings, the following supermarkets sourced 100% of their palm oil through RSPO certified mechanisms: Co-op, M&S, Sainsbury's, Tesco, and Waitrose.

Asda's figures, presented on its website, stated 99.8% of its palm oil was through RSPO.

Aldi did source 100% RSPO-certified palm oil for all its food items in the UK, however this did not cover non-food items. It aimed to have non-food items covered by RSPO by the end of 2018.

Lidl stated that it aimed to have achieved 100% RSPO-certified palm oil by the end of 2017 for own-branded products. However, its ACOP only presented figures for its German operations, therefore it was not possible to verify its claims.

Packaging

In January 2018, a Guardian investigation found that Britain's leading supermarkets create more than 800,000 tonnes of plastic packaging waste every year – well over half of all annual UK household plastic waste of 1.5m tonnes.⁶

In response, the government has proposed policies including plastics-free aisles in supermarkets, while retailers and consumer brand companies have promised to tackle plastic through the



Clare Anderson, Now and For Always Photography.

Keynsham Plastic Re-Action taking back their plastic bought from Waitrose.

UK Plastic Pact initiative. This voluntary initiative brings together waste and resources specialist charity WRAP, the UK government and companies to tackle the scourge of plastic waste.

By 2025, The UK Plastics Pact hopes to have transformed the UK plastic packaging sector by meeting the following four targets:

- 100% of plastic packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable.
- 70% of plastic packaging effectively recycled or composted.
- Eliminate single-use packaging: take actions to eliminate problematic or unnecessary single-use packaging items through redesign, innovation, or alternative (reuse) delivery models.
- 30% average recycled content across all plastic packaging.

Currently Asda, Aldi, Lidl, M&S, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Tesco and Waitrose have all signed up to the initiative.

The Co-operative has set its own target of 80% of its products having packaging that is easy to recycle by 2020.

However the supermarkets could go further. Joanna Blythman in the Grocer recently called out M&S and Waitrose's use of excess plastic arguing that it "didn't sit well with their premium positioning".⁷

Customers have voiced their dismay at the over use of packaging by highlighting examples on Twitter. Others, such as Keynsham Plastic Re-Action Group, have taken this one step further by ripping the excess wrapping off their goods and dumping it at the tills (see picture above).

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) and Greenpeace UK have just announced they are conducting a survey of major UK grocery retailers, their use of single-use plastic packaging and their targets to reduce it. The results are due out in the autumn.

On-pack recycling label

In addition to the supermarkets signing up to voluntary packaging targets, retailers and consumer brands have also signed up to another initiative called On-Pack Recycling Label which shows consumers whether packaging is recyclable or not. All the supermarkets in this guide have signed up to the initiative.

Sugar

In August 2016, the Government published 'Childhood obesity: A plan for action'. The commitment – to be overseen by Public Health England (PHE) challenges all sectors of the food industry to reduce by 20% the level of sugar in all of the categories that contribute most to children's sugar intake, by 2020, starting with a 5% reduction by August 2017.

The eight categories are biscuits; breakfast cereals; chocolate confectionery; ice cream, lollies and sorbets; puddings; sweet spreads / sauces; sweet confectionery; and yogurts / fromage frais.

In May 2018, PHE released its first report⁸ into the industry's efforts, showing that the food industry has failed to cut sugar by 5%. The results varied across different food categories, with sweet

spreads, yogurts, and breakfast cereals achieving the reduction. However very little or no sugar reduction was achieved across biscuits and chocolate bars. Puddings have actually become sweeter.

The Guardian reported "By contrast with the voluntary 5% sugar reduction in foods, the tough measure taken against sugary drinks in the form of the sugar tax is getting results."⁹

The PHE report said that sugar has been reduced by 11% in soft drinks and the average calories in a single drink are down by 6%.

Of the big four supermarkets Tesco has cut sugar content across the largest number of categories, including soft drinks. For example, it has reformulated 49 soft drinks products, reducing the average sugar content from 9.2 g to 4.5 g sugar per 100 ml – a staggering 47.8% sugar reduction across the range. PHE said this meant that by "October 2017, 23,000 tonnes of sugar were removed from customer diets".

Morrisons has reduced sugar content across six categories, and Asda, seven.

Sainsbury's appears to have reduced sugar content in two categories.

PHE said "Work is continuing to move forward in other areas of the wider reformulation programme which will ultimately lead to a broader programme covering more areas of concern in relation to UK diets and the public's health. This work includes the setting of calorie reduction guidelines and reviewing progress on salt reduction."

The next report on sugar reduction is due out in Spring 2019.

References: 1 The Guardian, Sainsbury's and Asda to reveal details of shock £15bn merger 29 April 2018 2 The Guardian, Sainsbury and Asda agree merger, but MPs warn that jobs are at risk 30 April 2018 3 The Independent, Asda-Sainsbury's merger puts more than 2,500 jobs at risk, warns think tank 7 May 2018 4 Thompson Reuters, Government decides not to extend remit of Groceries Code Adjudicator 16 February 2018 5 The Guardian, Move by UK supermarkets threatens to bring Fairtrade crashing down 25 June 2017 6 The Guardian, Nearly 1m tonnes every year: supermarkets shamed for plastic packaging 17 January 2018 7 The Grocer, M&S and Waitrose need to get over their addiction to plastic packaging 30 May 2018 8 Public Health England, Sugar reduction and wider reformulation programme: Report on progress towards the first 5% reduction and next steps May 2018 9 The Guardian, Food industry in England fails to meet sugar reduction target 22 May 2018

LUSH Spring Prize 2018

Celebrating global action on regeneration, voicing grave concerns.



The 11 winners of the Lush Spring Prize 2018 were announced as part of a three-day event taking place in the UK this May. The three days saw a diverse group of strangers form connections over common struggles, fears, dreams and hopes for a more regenerative world.

Ethical Consumer has partnered with Lush to coordinate the prize process, since its launch in December 2016.

"I have been resisting for 518 years. Resisting is in our people's blood...We are trying to get back our way of life, which is why we resist."

Zicca, AAQ

Prize categories

Prizes were awarded across four categories: Intentional, Young, Established and Influence:

Intentional: four prizes were awarded to newly formed groups and organisations to help establish a strong foundation from which to grow.

Young: a prize for young community groups, organisations, networks and businesses that have a proven track record and which are seeking more funding to expand or develop.

Established: a prize for established community groups, organisations, networks and businesses that can demonstrate successful and inspirational work over more than 5 years. We hope that prize money will spread the word of their work to inspire more people to get involved with the regenerative movement.

Influence: aimed at supporting those who are changing the context in which we are all working; who are helping to build and strengthen the regenerative movement.

"If we will not act, who else will? If not now, when?"

Dorothy Guerrero

Three of the 11 winners:

Algeria



Jewels in the Desert is supporting the creation of enterprises that leverage existing waste streams, closing loops and nurturing collaborative growth in Saharan refugee camps.

Greece



AgroEcoPolis is supporting networking and skill-sharing amongst agroecological practitioners in Greece's tough economic environment, whilst developing solidarity trade initiatives

Nicaragua



Center for Justice and Human Rights in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua (CEJUDHCAN) supports food security work that allows people to stay on their traditional lands while fighting for their rights.

You can find out more about all the winning and shortlisted projects in 2017 and 2018 by visiting springprize.org and vimeo.com/lushspringprize

The event

The pre-awards event took place at Emerson College, in east Sussex, which is surrounded by organic farms and social enterprises, demonstrating the regenerative practices embedded in parts of the English rural economy. This part of the event was designed to give members of the winning projects the opportunity to share their stories, expertise and ideas in an inclusive, safe and collaborative environment.

The event was supported by many organisations:

- Creative Connections supported us in drawing out the event's story and philosophical journey.
- COATI, a collective from Spain, joined a team of interpreters in supporting the Spring Prize team in breaking down language barriers. COATI was formed in 2009, coming out of the international anti-capitalist, free-spaces and NoBorders networks, and brought their experience of free and open source software.
- The International Permaculture Education Network (IPEN) created four case studies of 2017's Spring Prize winners, and will be translating these and developing more over the next year. You can view these online at: www.permaculture.org.uk/ipen/education-resources#Case



"We burn from causality. We die from necessity. The only thing we sing for is social justice" **Lottie, CEJUDHCAN**



Gamelihle Sibanda, a Biomimicry professional and one of the Spring Prize judges, hosted a panel on 'resisting whilst regenerating' with Dorothy Guerrero from Global Justice Now; Zicca from Agentes Agroflorestais Quilombolas (AAQ), International Prize winner; Lottie from the Center for Justice and Human Rights in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua; and Daniel Wahl, author of *Designing Regenerative Cultures*.

A number of social events were held during the evenings to allow for cultural sharing, including a bat walk, a song circle and an open mic night.

The final awards ceremony took place at the LUSH Studio in central London. It was hosted by Ruth Andrade from LUSH, who introduced the love story that first brought the roots of regeneration to LUSH's business:

"Paulo Mellett arrived at [LUSH] through a connection of passion and love, where he met his soon-to-be wife Ruth [Andrade] ... Paulo was quite clear about one thing: activism was never going to change the world without one key factor. He [paraphrased] Buckminster Fuller: "To make the system obsolete, you must build a new one to replace it."¹



Open letter to governments

As part of the awards ceremony Spring Prize judges Andy Goldring and Precious Phiri read an open letter to governments written in response to issues raised in Spring Prize applications:

"Whilst the projects were solutions orientated, the challenges they are working on paint a picture of a world teetering on the edge of crisis. Projects reported a closing of the democratic space in which civil society operates. Undemocratic, and even allegedly democratic states are making it harder than ever to challenge the dominant 'growth at all costs' economic systems.

Corporations are lobbying hard to keep their special interests and exclude the voices and needs of the poor and marginalised. Refugee populations are at historic highs with over 63 million people displaced around the globe.

Many of these affected people languish for years or even decades in refugee and IDP camps with little hope or access to tools that would enable them to create long term resilience and stability. Indigenous people are being murdered, kidnapped and removed from their land. Ecosystems are being torn up and discarded in the pursuit of short term profits.

Why should communities and pioneers offering such positive solutions face so much opposition?"

"According to Joanna Macy there are three dimensions to the great turning: 1. Holding actions (resisting and stopping more damage from happening.) 2. Building new systems that make old systems obsolete. 3. Seeing things with new eyes and re-telling the story of who we are and what we are capable of."

Daniel Wahl



Ecover and Method

Naturewatch has launched a boycott call against the mainstream eco and cruelty-free cleaning brands, Method and Ecover, after they were purchased by SC Johnson in 2017.

The US company SC Johnson openly admits to testing on animals, and owns other non-Naturewatch-endorsed household cleaning brands such as Duck, Shout, Glade, Pledge and Windex.

Naturewatch announced that it was revoking its endorsement of the Ecover and Method brands on World Animal Day in April. The campaign is asking supporters and the general public to contact Ecover and Method, expressing their disappointment

and pledging to no longer buy their products until SC Johnson is cruelty-free.

Caroline Ruane, Naturewatch Foundation CEO, says: "It's hugely disappointing to compassionate shoppers when favourite brands compromise their cruelty-free credentials by selling out to multinationals that continue to benefit from animal testing. We sincerely hope that Ecover and Method will stand up for animals by using their new position of influence to convince SC Johnson that the way ahead is cruelty free."

Until then, Naturewatch is asking compassionate consumers to boycott all SC Johnson brands.

Sign the petition: <https://naturewatch.good.do/householdproducts/Ecover>

Adidas: end sponsorship of 'Israeli settlement teams'

130 Palestinian football clubs and sports associations have joined calls for Adidas to end its sponsorship of the Israel Football Association (IFA), which holds football matches in illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank.



The IFA allows teams based in the settlements to participate in its leagues and competitions. The 130 Palestinian clubs have written to Adidas highlighting the UN's judgement that the Israeli settlements in the West Bank violate international law. They warn that Adidas may be eligible for inclusion in the UN's database of complicit companies doing business in or with Israel's illegal settlements.

BDS, which leads the campaign, states, "Under International Law, Israeli settlements are war crimes. Adidas' sponsorship of the IFA directly whitewashes these crimes."

Sign the petition: <https://bdsmovement.net/adidas>

Avaaz launches petition for sanctions on Israel

An Avaaz-led petition is calling for international sanctions against Israel, after the country responded to Palestinian protests with live fire and tear gas, leading to 100 deaths and over 12,000 casualties.^{1,2}

The organisation launched an earlier campaign in response, targeting companies with links to the Israeli military. It is asking campaigners to write to the CEOs of ABP, HP, Veolia, Barclays, Caterpillar, and G4S, asking them to "withdraw investments and respect international law."

700,000 people have also signed the new petition, which calls on Foreign Ministers, Trade Ministers and Heads of State "to bring sanctions on key Israeli industries until Palestinians are granted full and equal civil rights."³

Palestinian protesters were demanding the right to return to homes and properties from which Palestinian refugees were displaced during the war following Israel's foundation in 1948. The UN Human Rights Chief has called Israel's response "wholly disproportionate". The Human Rights Council has voted to set up an independent investigation into the country's use of force.

Over 75% of the Avaaz membership voted in favour of launching the campaign, despite laws in parts of the US, Germany, Israel and France which mean that it could be a criminal offence. In Israel, Germany and the US, specific anti-boycott laws restrict businesses and individuals from publicly supporting boycott calls. In France, activists calling for an Israel boycott have been prosecuted under anti-discrimination laws.

Avaaz has said, "Backed by an overwhelming vote of our membership, Avaaz, for the first time, openly and proudly refuses to obey these laws, which violate our basic human and constitutional rights to free expression and democracy."

Avaaz joins other international campaigns, such as BDS and War on Want, in calling for a more robust international response.

Sign the petition at https://secure.avaaz.org/campaign/en/gaza_end_the_massacre_loc

Caymans & Co about to go public



Pressure is mounting on the territories at the heart of the global tax avoidance industry, with new UK legislation requiring British Overseas Territories to introduce public registers by the end of the decade.

The move came in a cross-party amendment to the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Bill, which was tabled by Labour MP Margaret Hodge and Conservative MP Andrew Mitchell. It required that Britain's 14 overseas territories, including the British Virgin Islands (BVI) and the Cayman Islands, introduce publicly available ownership registers by the end of 2020. If they don't, the UK government will impose it.

BVI and the Caymans are key nodes in the global web of secrecy jurisdictions through which dirty money flows unchecked. Supporters of this shady system argue that public registers are unnecessary as the information on ownership is already available to the tax authorities.

Andrew Mitchell described this as insufficient: "Public registers allow reporting and discussion of these matters by the media and civil society."¹

Some territories complained that the amendment would damage their economic interests, and were angered that the crown dependencies of Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man were not included in the legislation. However, the crown dependencies' reprieve is likely to be temporary:

"We are going to go after the crown dependencies", said Mitchell, "we expect the crown dependencies to adopt the same policy [as the overseas territories] and to share the same values". Margaret Hodge echoed this sentiment,

calling it "unconscionable that these measures should apply to one set of territories and not the other. We need consistency between them all."²

The Tax Justice Network highlighted the significance of forcing secrecy jurisdictions to disclose ownership:

"the Panama Papers ... could just as well have been called the BVI Papers since so many of the front companies were registered there. It fuels industrial-scale tax evasion and avoidance, corruption and crime, with consequences around the world, often for the poorest. The BVI had 417,000 companies last year – 18 for each inhabitant, and the Tax Justice Network estimates that this jurisdiction alone might be responsible for global tax losses of \$37.5 billion. It's a massive shift that owners of such companies come into the light."³

Richard Murphy commented: "Honest business [has] no problem with disclosure. They know it reduces risk, and that's good for everyone. Secrecy is all about increasing risk for others. And that is precisely why it has to be tackled. It is abusive. And that abuse has to be stopped."⁴

Tax belief

A new campaign for a fairer tax system was launched in April by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Rowan Williams, and the former Bishop of Oxford, Lord Richard Harries. The campaign, Church Action for Tax Justice (CAT), is seeking to persuade all churches of the urgency of creating fairer and more effective tax systems to fund healthier public services, both in the UK and internationally.

The campaign is pursuing a 'holy trinity' of reforms: ending financial secrecy in UK tax havens like the British Virgin Islands, changing the way large multinational companies are taxed, and calling on Churches themselves to use their power as investors in major companies to bring about change.

The campaign developed out of the Methodist Tax Justice Network and seeks to be more ecumenical, embracing all church denominations.

Revd Michaela Youngson, President-Designate of the Methodist Church, said: "Tax justice matters to Methodists ... Church members across London are at the forefront of tackling the dramatic inequalities in wealth and well-being, which trap

...we need to see [tax] as a positive tool to build a more just society where resources are more equally shared and good services exist for all.

people in poverty and debt. We want to not just lament the outcomes of unjust tax and resource distribution, but challenge our political and financial authorities to do much, much better."

Paul Parker, Recording Clerk for Quakers in Britain, said: "Quakers believe that there is something of God in everyone and all are of equal worth. Our faith leads us to say that all too often tax is seen as a burden to be minimised. In fact, we need to see it as a positive tool to build a more just society where resources are more equally shared and good services exist for all."

Also attending the launch was Fair Tax Mark's Richard Livings, who welcomed the new campaign saying, "faith groups were instrumental to the rise of the fairtrade movement and to have these voices coming together again on the issue of tax is a significant moment."

For more information, visit www.catj.org.uk

References: 1 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/apr/27/theresa-may-faces-cross-party-push-company-public-registers-overseas-territories-amendment> 2 UK crown dependencies targeted by transparency campaigners, ft.com, 2 May 2018 <https://www.ft.com/content/77169c7a-4e23-11e8-a7a9-37318e776bab> 3 <https://www.taxjustice.net/2018/05/04/yes-britain-is-closing-its-tax-havens-but-lets-not-forget-it-created-them-in-the-first-place> 4 <http://www.taxresearch.org.uk/Blog/2018/05/04/honest-business-has-no-problem-with-disclosure>

Our new tax havens list

When Ethical Consumer rates a company, we make an educated guess as to whether it is likely to be involved in tax avoidance activities.

We don't have the resources to do a detailed assessment of every company's accounts, so our main method is to look at its family tree and find out if it has two or more 'high-risk' subsidiaries – ones that don't appear to be serving the local population, such as holding companies – in any jurisdictions that are on our tax haven list.

Since Ethical Consumer's tax havens list hadn't been updated since 2012, we thought that it was high time for a refresh.

Our methodology

To construct our new list, we used the same methodology we used last time, which is largely based on the Tax Justice Network's Financial Secrecy Index (FSI).

The FSI index estimates the proportion of international tax avoidance taking place in each jurisdiction. However, our purpose is somewhat different – we want to know the chances that a subsidiary is being used for tax avoidance, versus the chance that it is there legitimately. The latter is determined partly by the size of the country in question, so we always adjust the FSI value for population.

This gives us a list of jurisdictions with high rates of tax avoidance and low populations, like the British Virgin Islands and Bermuda.

However, if we aren't going to miss an awful lot of corporate tax avoidance, we then need to add back in crucial tax havens with larger populations. We did this using a recent academic paper that used a huge amount of data to identify 24 'sink' tax havens and 5 'conduit' jurisdictions.¹ The UK is on this list as a 'conduit'. We removed that, as including it would lead to too many false positives, since we are in the UK. We added all the others.

We also then added in three US states: Delaware, Nevada and Wyoming. These are well known tax havens, but they wouldn't be appearing on the other lists as they aren't separate countries, so would just be categorised as 'USA'.

That gave the list opposite, which is our new tax havens list.

Checking the list

The list matches up well with the jurisdictions that get identified in discussions and books about tax avoidance.² However, for rigour, we checked it specifically against two other sources. First, a paper by Oxfam, which identifies what it sees as the top 15 corporate tax havens in the world.³ All of these are on

our new list, which reassures us that we aren't missing any important ones.

Secondly, we checked the tax rates and rules of all of the jurisdictions on the list. Many of those on the proposed list have a corporate tax rate of 15% or below. In all cases where it is higher than that there are substantial exemptions, particularly for non-resident companies. In other words, it is no mystery why they are corporate tax havens. That reassures us that nothing untoward has sneaked on to the list.

You may notice that Panama is not included. However, while Panama is a well-known tax haven, it is largely a tax haven for individuals, not companies. Thus, we are happy with its exclusion.⁴

Anguilla	Luxembourg
Aruba	Macao
Bahamas	Malta
Barbados	Marshall Islands
Belize	Mauritius
Bermuda	Monaco
British Virgin Islands	Montserrat
Cayman Islands	Nauru
Cook Islands	Netherlands
Curaçao	Nevada (US)
Cyprus	Samoa
Delaware (US)	San Marino
Dominica	Seychelles
Gibraltar	Singapore
Guernsey	St. Kitts and Nevis
Guyana	St. Vincent & the Grenadines
Hong Kong	Switzerland
Ireland	Taiwan
Isle of Man	Turks and Caicos Islands
Jersey	US Virgin Islands
Liberia	Wyoming (US)
Lichtenstein	

References: ¹ Garcia-Bernardo et al, 2017, Uncovering Offshore Financial Centers: Conduits and Sinks in the Global Corporate Ownership Network, Scientific Reports (7), 6246 ² Eg. Nicholas Shaxson, 2012, Treasure Islands: Tax Havens and the men who stole the world ³ Oxfam, 2016, Tax Battles, The dangerous global Race to the Bottom on Corporate Tax ⁴ Garcia-Bernardo et al, 2017, Uncovering Offshore Financial Centers: Conduits and Sinks in the Global Corporate Ownership Network, Scientific Reports (7), 6246

Bangladesh Accord renewed

Debenhams, Next and Sainsbury's have signed the renewed 2018 Bangladesh Accord following a SumOfUs petition. However, many companies are still to sign the Accord.

The Bangladesh Accord was put in place to stop another tragedy like Rana Plaza, the garment factory that collapsed in 2013 killing 1135 people, from happening again. It was a legally binding accord promising to uphold new safety standards for workers and, on June 1st, it was renewed.



Since the Accord's creation, factory upgrades and staff training have improved the livelihoods of nearly two million workers.

Companies that have not signed the 2018 Accord include Abercrombie & Fitch, Edinburgh Woollen Mill and IKEA. Other garment companies have never even signed the first Accord, either creating their own, less credible and binding alternative or sticking to completely voluntary measures. These companies include VF Corporation (The North Face), GAP, Walmart and many others.

See a list of all the clothes companies that have and have not signed the 2018 Accord – <https://cleanclothes.org/safety/no-one-should-risk-their-life-at-work-which-companies-have-not-signed-the-2018-bangladesh-accord>

Labour exploitation in Leicester

The garment trade in Leicester is witnessing a revival as upstart British online retailers, such as Boohoo and Misguided, source half their clothes in the UK. They rely on quick production cycles to churn out cheap fast fashion: "Speed is our main USP and the UK is as quick as you can get", said Nitin Passi, founder of Misguided.

But the workers in these factories are often not paid the minimum wage of £7.83 for over-25s. One factory owner commented that "£5 an hour is considered the top wage". Mick Cheema, who owns a factory in Leicester, said that factories often under-record hours, so people's payslips look as if they have been paid the minimum wage.

Dispatches, a Channel 4 programme, sent an undercover worker into various factories in Leicester in 2010 and 2017 and found that workers were paid well below the minimum wage. In 2017, workers were making clothes for New Look, River Island, Boohoo and Misguided. All the retailers said their orders had been subcontracted to the factories without their permission or knowledge.

Ethical brands for Fashion Revolution

Ethical Consumer joined 30 ethical brands during Fashion Revolution week to celebrate sustainable fashion brands making a difference.



Heather Webb, our lead researcher on the Fashion Industry, joined a panel discussion on the 'true cost' of ethical fashion. She addressed the myth that ethical fashion is always more expensive than high-street clothing and instead praised its fair price, commenting: "Ethical brands are quite comparable to some of the high-street shops. There is a misconception that ethical brands' prices are automatically a lot higher."

She also commented: "Ethical brands are going beyond certification. It's about the transparency story and that's really resonating with consumers".

Ethical Consumer was a sponsor of the event. You can watch the video from the panel discussion here: <http://bit.ly/EthicalBrandsPanel>

Wind-powered pants!

New investors buying shares in Welsh community wind project YnNi Teg will receive a new pair of 'powered by wind' pants sourced from Greenfibres.com

YnNi Teg got the idea of offering free pants after reading about ethical issues in our fashion special issue. Our Best Buy brand Greenfibres agreed to supply the wind project with mens and womens pants. A social media competition was held in order to choose the slogan, with the winning entry 'Powered by Wind' on the underwear in Welsh and English.

To coincide with Community Energy Fortnight, all new applications to join YnNi Teg before July 8th will receive a free pair of the underpants. But pants aren't all you get. Investors will also earn a target annual rate of return on their investment of 5% over 20 years, with a minimum investment of just £100.

Find out more <http://www.ynniteg.cymru>



Journal of Consumer Ethics

The third issue of Ethical Consumer's academic journal (Vol 2 Iss 1) contains discussions of slavery, ivory, boycotts and consumer motivation.

Dilemmas for our ethical markets report

This paper discusses the methodological choices made in Ethical Consumer's Markets Report: our measurement of the size of the UK market for 'ethical' products, which has now been published annually for 17 years.

The researchers face many dilemmas. In the Ethical Money section, for example, the report does not currently include Building Societies (except the Ecology) as they do not always market themselves as ethical choices. Is this right? And in the vegetarian foods section, it reports the sales of meat substitutes but not fresh vegetables. Does this make sense?

In addition, although the Report records annual sales of all organic food and all meat substitutes, we know that some individuals are choosing these items primarily for health reasons. Are these properly ethical purchases, or something else? This issue is even more apparent in the case of energy efficient lightbulbs where they are now pretty much the only choice for everyone. Is it right to record these as ethical purchases still?

The article explores these issues and proposes some common sense answers, but also asks for feedback.

Future Issues

We have two special issues planned, one on food and ethical consumption due for October 2018, and one linked to the 11th–12th September 2018 Leeds University conference on Engaging Business and Consumers for Sustainable Change.

We welcome submissions though, at any time, on subjects linked to ethical consumption. More details and contact information is on the website.

Journal of Consumer Ethics content is currently freely available online at: <https://journal.ethicalconsumer.org>

A history of ivory consumption



This article provides a brief account of elephant ivory consumption from the ancient world to the early twenty-first century. It explores, for example, how the rate of hunting during the Roman empire created the first recorded extinction of local herds. It looks at how the rise of animal welfare and animal rights ideas have

affected the ivory trade, and how the current precipitous decline in remaining elephant numbers is being addressed by global regulators. With much modern consumption occurring in China and Japan, the author suggests that campaigns to reduce consumption should challenge the idea that ivory items are somehow traditional.

This article is fully illustrated, with pictures including the image of two American buyers sitting on approximately 50 ivory tusks in Zanzibar, around 1890-1910.

Traffic lights for Modern Slavery?

In this extended version of the article on the Modern Slavery Act (MSA) which appeared in the last issue of Ethical Consumer, we look at how civil society groups have begun to analyse and comment on the modern slavery statements that companies are starting to publish.

Only a third of these meet the legal minimum requirements, and although over 5000 statements have been published, it is estimated that over a third of the companies required to submit statements have failed to comply.

Encouragingly, a consortium of civil society organisations have established a UK Modern Slavery Act Registry. But more needs to be done to digest the data created by the MSA to make it practically useful to most consumers. A simple score or traffic light system might help ordinary people differentiate bad from good in this complex environment.

Book reviews

Do Good

This journal also contains an extract from the new book by US brand strategist Anne Bahr Thompson. As global issues become of increasing concern to consumers, Do Good joins a growing call for companies to move beyond acting sustainably, to making and demonstrating positive impact. Using the framework of Brand Citizenship, Anne provides tools for taking responsibility into a company's core purpose.

Protest Politics in the Marketplace

Caroline Heldman examines the explosion of consumer campaigning in the USA in the pre and post Trump era. She looks at how social media has revolutionised the use and effectiveness of consumer activism, and also investigates the use of these tactics by conservatives as well as liberals.

No faith in fracking

An unusual week of resistance to fracking took place at the gates of Cuadrilla's Preston New Road site at the end of April, held as part of Frack Free Lancashire's ongoing United Resistance.¹

Under the 'No Faith in Fracking' banner, people from a range of faiths and spiritualities came together to celebrate the sacredness of creation and to protect air, soil and water, the very building blocks of life. The No Faith in Fracking Week offered a space for people moved by faith and spirit to express, in their various ways, our shared resistance to fracking and our care for Earth.

This distinctive multi-faith style of resistance was spirited, colourful, determined and even joyful. Silent vigils, walking meditations, chanting, prayers, rituals, talks, dancing, and colourful, life-affirming banners disturbed Cuadrilla's peace and operations.



Faith groups on the move for climate justice.

Inspired by the national Quaker call to keep fossil fuels in the ground, and by Pope Francis's inspiring encyclical *Laudato Si'*, the small co-ordinating group worked to bring together different faith voices and spiritual practices to show that the widest range of people, silent hitherto, are now on the move to resist fracking and to tackle the causes

of climate injustice everywhere. This is a voice that is not likely to go away.

No Faith in Fracking Fridays will continue on the last Friday of every month, meeting at the gates of the Cuadrilla site at Preston new Road at 1pm. To find out more see www.nofaithinfracking.org

EU institutions taken to court

A French lavender farmer and members of the indigenous Sami community in Sweden joined litigants from eight countries in taking EU institutions to court over their inadequate climate change targets.

The European parliament and the council of the European Union are facing trial for setting climate targets that fail to limit greenhouse gas emissions to those needed to limit temperature rises to 1.5°C – an ambition laid out in the Paris Climate agreement.

The legal complaint states that "the EU's existing climate target to reduce domestic greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030, compared with 1990 levels, does not protect [the claimants] fundamental rights of life, health, occupation and property".²

Climate Action Network (CAN), Climate Analytics, and Protect The Planet are supporting the court case as part of a strategy to get the EU institutions to increase their targets.

"It is clear that the existing EU 2030 climate target is not enough to respect the commitments taken in the Paris agreement and should be increased. The EU needs, under the agreement, to confirm its target by 2020. This legal action initiated by normal families impacted by climate change is underlining the urgency and the necessity to increase it," commented Wendel Trio, CAN's director in Europe.

Greater Manchester Pension Fund's BP links challenged

In 2017, the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF) invested over £820 million in companies that are involved in fracking in the UK and worldwide.

GMPF's second largest investment holding is BP.³ Although BP is not involved directly in the UK fracking industry, it is a key backer of the Vaca Muerta mega fracking project which, according to local community organisations in Argentina, is being forced through by the Macri government and major fossil fuel corporations at the expense of the indigenous peoples living in Patagonia. The project is also reported as being associated with countless environmental and human rights abuses, including the deaths and disappearances of known local activists and community members.⁴

Campaigners from Fossil Free Greater Manchester and from Latin America held a vigil outside BP's Annual General meeting in Manchester in May, calling on BP to stop fracking in Argentina and elsewhere.

Ali Abbas from Fossil Free Greater Manchester said: "the consensus in Greater Manchester is against fracking, and yet the Greater Manchester Pension Fund continues to invest huge sums into the fracking industry and dirty fossil fuels. We need the Pension Fund to show leadership on climate change and to divest from all fossil fuel companies".

References: 1 <http://frackfreelancashire.org/the-united-resistance> 2 <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/24/families-take-eu-court-climate-change-emissions> 3 <https://www.gmpf.org.uk/documents/investments/holdings/2017/mar/mainstream.pdf> 4 <http://www.opsur.org.ar/blog/2018/02/05/vaca-muerta-megaproject-a-fracking-carbon-bomb-in-patagonia>



Avoiding palm oil

Colin Birch with a light-hearted guide to trying, and sometimes failing, to be ethical.

“You’ve got to try to use less palm oil or avoid it completely”, I keep being told. “Don’t you know its production is devastating the rainforest in South East Asia?” Well, yes I do, but using less is impossible, isn’t it?

Palm oil is in pretty much everything. Supermarkets may as well have a palm oil aisle selling palm oil sandwiches and palm oil crisps, along with special palm oil soaps that can wash away the guilt you feel about buying it. Who knows? There’s probably even a spread called “I Can’t Believe It’s Not Contributed to Deforestation in Borneo”. Basically, it’s everywhere, like a culinary version of Kim Kardashian, but slightly more dangerous.

To wean myself off it, I’ve tried appealing to the health freak in me because it’s so unhealthy. Chips made with palm oil contain 75% more saturated fat than chips made with sunflower oil so, bizarrely, by eating it I’m as likely to bring about my own early extinction as much as the Orangutan’s. It seems ridiculous that something so bad for us, and our planet, could be so popular. But, then again, this is a world that’s seen the election of Donald Trump, so I shouldn’t be surprised.

Palm oil is loved by food manufacturers because it’s ‘stable’, although the irony of them liking it for that, when it’s destabilising so much of the environment where it’s grown, is apparently lost on them. As far as they’re concerned, it gives things a longer shelf-life, assuming the ‘thing’ in question isn’t a Sumatran tiger.

So, how do I try to become more ethical with my consumption of this ‘Devil’s Grease?’ Well, I could switch my diet to one of wholly unprocessed foods only, but there are two obstacles to this: firstly, there are convenience and storage issues, and secondly, I don’t want to spend the rest of my life crying bitter tears and feeling like I’ve had my very soul ripped out from within. I like cakes and biscuits as much as the next man – in fact, given the chance, I’d like to have the next man’s cakes and biscuits as well.

...palm oil is used to give biscuits a slightly more moist texture – are we really going to lose some of the planet’s most precious and beautiful creatures because we want slightly softer custard creams?



The key, as always, is to find products that use palm oil from sustainable sources – not easy when the cynical me is dubious as to whether the giant corporations can produce anything in a responsible manner. I wouldn’t even trust them to get me a glass of tap water these days without strangling half a dozen kittens in the process.

Obviously, the products containing sustainable palm oil need clearer labelling, so that I can see if I’m allowed to eat them with a clear conscience. This isn’t easy to achieve, mainly due to my sight now being shot to pieces through struggling to check the tiny font of the ingredients listed in everything else I buy. As for foods that contain the bad stuff, they need more guilt-inducing labelling, such as “This product contains unsustainable palm oil and by buying it you are personally responsible for the death of the world’s last remaining orangutans, you heartless murderer” – that might help.

However, it’s hard to be sure if all sustainable palm oil is genuinely sustainable. I’m sure I could scour the internet and eventually discover if the cake I’m planning to eat is acceptable. However, getting through that arduous task would almost certainly require the consumption of a lot more cake that I would then have to check first, and to be honest, it would all get far too complicated.

So, as a food fan trying to lead an ethical life, I’m faced with the daunting task of trying to eat a little treat or two without trying to be part of some sort of far-off animal genocide. But it’s surely worth it. During the course of researching this, I found out that palm oil is used to give biscuits a slightly more moist texture. Are we really going to lose some of the planet’s most precious and beautiful creatures because we want slightly softer custard creams? Come on people – if you want to eat biscuits with a moister texture, try dunking them, for God’s sake!



Carbon divested funds: financial performance

Carbon divested fund	5 Year cumulative growth (%) to 25/05/2018 *	Ethiscore as of June 2018
Janus Henderson Global Sustainable Equity Fund	95.7	6
WHEB Sustainability	82.4	16
Triodos Sustainable Pioneer	78.3	15.5
Liontrust Sustainable Future European Growth	72.2	7
Jupiter Ecology	65.4	6.5
Quilter Cheviot Climate Assets	52.76	4
Sarasin Sustainable Equity Real Estate	38.6	7.5
Castlefield BEST Sustainable Income Fund	26.4	15
Standard Life Equity Impact Global	n/a (fund is less than 5 years old)	3.5
Average of all funds (not ethical), for comparison	62.9	

* Data from trustnet.com

First academic analysis of Bitcoin's astronomical climate impact

Bitcoin's staggering electricity usage has been talked about for a while, but until now a rigorous estimate was lacking.

One has now finally been published. A new academic paper calculates that bitcoin is currently using – at a minimum – about as much electricity as Ireland. It is growing fast and by the end of this year it is likely to be as much as Austria, or half of a percent of the world's total electricity consumption.²

To make matters worse, because most bitcoin 'mining' takes place in China, the bulk of this electricity almost certainly comes from coal.

Dividing the total amount by the number of transactions gives a figure for "energy use per transaction". This is currently equivalent to about the average electricity used by a UK household in a month.³

However, it is important to not misunderstand this figure – it is actually holding onto bitcoin, rather than using it, that is more likely to be the most damaging thing that you can do. This is because the amount of energy used is not determined by the number of transactions, but by the bitcoin price (and a few other things such as the price of computer equipment). The price will tend to be raised more by people who hold onto bitcoin than by those who buy it and quickly sell it again.

In other words, it is those people who are speculating on bitcoin who are the real climate villains of the piece.

For more information, see Digieconomist: digieconomist.net

Greenpeace targets Italian insurance company

More AGM-based activism occurred in Italy on April 19th, when Greenpeace disrupted the AGM of the Italian insurance company Generali, abseiling down the facade of the conference hall and unfurling a banner that read: "Generali: stop insuring coal and climate change".

Generali is Europe's third biggest insurer (we didn't cover it in EC172 as it isn't a major player in the markets that we were covering).

Greenpeace calls on it to follow the leadership of AXA, Zurich and SCOR by announcing restrictions on underwriting coal projects – we described these in EC172.

Generali insures the coal industry in Poland, which – quite apart from the climate impact – has enormous local pollution impacts, being the filthiest in Europe.



Activist protest outside the annual meeting of Generali Insurance in Trieste. Greenpeace asks Italian insurance group to disinvest from coal.

Lorenzo Moscia/Greenpeace

Protests against HSBC's complicity in arms sales to Israel

Activists from War on Want and the Palestine Solidarity Campaign attended HSBC's AGM on 23rd April to protest against the bank's complicity in arms sales to Israel.

More than a quarter of the questions asked at the AGM were on the topic, while a protest was also held outside.

The action was part of the campaign which we detailed in EC172, which has seen protests at 20 HSBC branches nationwide, and over 18,000 people from around the UK writing to the HSBC Group Chief Executive.¹ As we described in that magazine, HSBC has £19.3 billion worth of loans to companies that sell arms to Israel, such as BAE Systems, Boeing and Lockheed Martin, and owns £832 million worth of shares in them.

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Next issue
published
mid-August



No Amazon here!

I have boycotted Amazon along with other tax avoiders for several years. I find myself frustrated by having to accept parcels for neighbours. I would welcome a “No Amazon Here” sticker for my door. This would make life more difficult for Amazon (apologies to drivers who already have a tough job), and provide an opportunity for discussion with neighbours.

Charles, by email

Bricks and mortar

Should more consideration be given to ‘bricks and mortar stores/branches etc’? Although no doubt with little enthusiasm, companies that have more physical stores will surely pay more in business rates, employ real people and support local high streets and local economies. Stores vary in their policies on shutting stores and branches and ripping out the heart of communities e.g. RBS shutting large numbers of branches compared to other banks/building societies.

Something like Amazon that is mostly online apart from its ghastly collect lockers, will pay I imagine very little in taxes throughout its operation, and next to nothing in business rates apart from warehouses – contributing little to the public economy. Branches therefore have a social and economic value

– not environmental I suppose, but if you think the government has (or will by 2020) cut Council funding down to nothing and that is 20-40% of their budget lost, business rates are surely important for Council services, local public services, local economy and local employment?

Mark, by email

Clothes tested on animals?

I wonder if you can answer a query for me? I am vegan and I make every attempt to buy goods that are produced ethically and not tested on animals. The problem is that even the most ethical of merchants do not talk about the process of dyeing fabrics and other materials. GOTS [Global Organic Textile Standard] is mentioned frequently, but what is their policy then, on animal testing? It seems to me that if horrendous acts of cruelty are carried out on animals for raw ingredient testing (particularly in places like China which carries out diabolical abuse on animals) then the rest of the ethical practices lose power and a great deal of impact. Can you comment on this in the light of the research you have carried out? I would be very pleased to find at least one or two clothing suppliers where this is made clear. I have contacted KTO

[Know The Origin] who say that the dyes are not tested on animals and they will pick this up on their next overseas visit but again it is not stated on their website or shown as part of the audit of their supply chain.

Geraldine Lord, by email

Ed: Thanks for drawing our attention to this issue. While we haven’t covered it so far, we intend to look at animal testing in non-cosmetics sectors in a future issue.

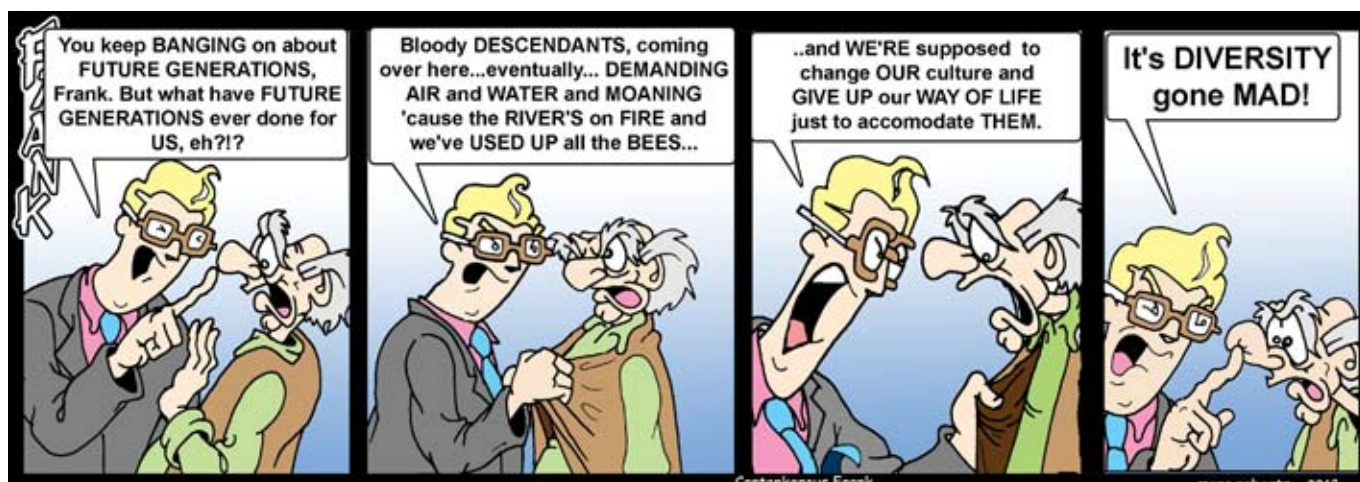
Ranking universities

I have relied on your advice for many years. I was wondering if you would consider running a feature ranking universities on their ethics. Given that you rely heavily on academic research, I am sure that you are aware:

- a) that universities now consider their students to be ‘consumers’;
- b) that universities in the UK increasingly use precarious, under-paid and exploitative labour practices in order to keep the cost of teaching students down, whilst fees and managerial salaries go up;
- c) that universities invest heavily in unethical investments (such as the arms trade, except where students have actively campaigned for disinvestment.

Onni, by email

We welcome readers’ letters. Letters may be edited for reasons of space or clarity. If you do not want letters to be published, please mark them ‘Not for publication’. Our address is on the contents page, or email us at letters@ethicalconsumer.org



Footie's junk food addicts

*With the World Cup kicking off in Moscow this summer, football has become the latest target for the global marketing of junk food, says **Simon Birch**.*

It may be our national sport, but football has some pretty unhealthy backers.

Last year Cadbury signed a three-year sponsorship deal with the English Premier League which sees the company behind products such as Dairy Milk and Creme Egg becoming the 'Official Snack' of the League, joining Carling as the 'Official Beer' and Barclays as the 'Official Bank'.

The first football tie-in for Cadbury, the deal allows the company to sponsor the Golden Glove and Golden Boot competition which rewards the League's top goalkeeper and scorer. Cadbury is now also running an on-pack five-a-side football promotion in partnership with the Premier League.

And Cadbury isn't the first confectionery brand to eye-up the lucrative opportunities that a football sponsorship offers.

The giant global brand Mars has been a long-standing sponsor of the England football team, along with the likes of Carlsberg and Lucozade.

Plus, alarmingly, one in four Premier League football clubs now have junk food sponsors.

Not surprisingly, not everyone is thrilled by these developments.

This spring the pressure group Healthy Stadia teamed up with Sugar Smart, the campaign led by the food charity

Sustain, to launch a new campaign to get football to rethink its relationship with junk food.

"Childhood obesity is at an all-time high so it is with significant concern that we see the UK's football associations, leagues and some football clubs continuing to partner with companies that are known for producing high fat, sugar and salt products," says Matthew Philpott from Healthy Stadia, which works with sports clubs and sports authorities to develop healthier lifestyles.

"We are asking football associations,



leagues and clubs not to enter into new partnership deals with high fat, sugar and salt brands as a commitment to protect children's health, in particular partnerships with energy drinks brands and high sugar 'sports drinks' brands," says Philpott, adding that:

"As the highest participation team

sport in the country, it's time football protects children against the marketing of unhealthy foods and drinks and re-thinks its commercial partnerships to address the state of

our children's health."

Whilst Philpott recognises the good work done by the Premier League and other football leagues and clubs to increase levels of physical activity among children and educate them on the importance of healthy eating, he still remains sceptical: "Sponsorship with high fat, sugar and salt brands and the resulting mixed messages do much to undermine this good work," believes Philpott.

"It is worth noting that the calorie content in a standard chocolate bar is the equivalent to the calories expended by a 14

year old boy walking the length of a football pitch 97 times. In addition, no amount of physical exercise will mitigate the damaging oral health effects of sugary products."

The good news is that some football clubs are already responding positively to the child obesity crisis and have signed up to the Sugar Smart campaign.

Charlton Athletic football club and its caterers DNC are now rolling out a series of healthy eating measures, which is hoped will start to address the obesity crisis in its community of Greenwich where more than 40 per cent of children are either overweight or obese.

"Being Sugar Smart is very important for the club," says Charlton Athletic FC Development Manager Lisa Squires.

"It gives us the opportunity to reach thousands of families in Greenwich to help educate local people on the long-term dangers of sugar. Hopefully together we can help people to make healthier choices."

So why are junk food brands so keen to sign a football sponsorship deal?

"Junk food brands are desperate to reassure the public that they are good, responsible companies," replies Barbara Crowther from Sustain's Children's Food Campaign.

"By deliberately associating themselves through sponsorship of sports, they can claim to be supporting exercise and a healthy lifestyle, when the reality is they are in the business of selling unhealthy foods that contribute to obesity and tooth decay. It's a pure PR exercise."

Crowther dismisses the argument that community sports and small clubs would collapse if junk food brands were no longer allowed to sponsor sport.

"The same argument was made about tobacco companies and sport years ago, and sports like Formula 1 are still going strong," states Crowther.

"It's simply not appropriate to suggest that eating chocolate is part of the lifestyle of an elite footballer," continues Crowther.

"We think sporting bodies like the Premier League should instead adopt a clear policy of only associating themselves and accepting sponsorship from brands that reinforce healthy living and eating messages."

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