ALPRO’S APPETITE FOR CHANGE REACHES BEYOND ITS OWN CUSTOMERS

As a WWF climate positive leader, Alpro directly influences the eating habits of both its consumers and elements of the general public, and impacts heavily on sustainability up and down its value chain.

THE COMPANY

Alpro makes non-genetically modified soy food and other plant-based drink products. With headquarters in Belgium and manufacturing plants in Europe and the UK, it is one of Europe’s leading plant-based companies. It is also the first European food company to join WWF Climate Savers.

Alpro’s plant-powered products are naturally better for the planet but, not willing to stop there, Alpro is always looking to extend its impact beyond its own customer base; be more sustainable and eco-friendly; and lighten the footprint it leaves behind.

WHAT MAKES ALPRO A CLIMATE POSITIVE LEADER?

With a world population of seven billion people and growing, the balance between food supply and demand is coming increasingly under pressure. That is where Alpro plays a vital role. As well as using less land (to graze the cows or cultivate crops for animal feeding), Alpro’s soy and plant-based meat and dairy alternatives also use significantly less water and emit less CO2 than their animal based alternatives (the livestock industry is responsible for 18% of all green house gas emissions, which is more than all transport emissions combined).

A SHORTER VALUE CHAIN IS A MORE PRODUCTIVE AND RESOURCE-EFFICIENT VALUE CHAIN.

ALPRO

- Is the first European food company to join WWF Climate Savers.
- Is a corporate sponsor of the ‘Thursday Veggie Day’ campaign in Ghent, Belgium, and ‘Join the Movement’, both of which advocate one meat-free day each week to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Intends to be carbon neutral by 2020.
- Can trace every soya bean through its hand-picked ‘family’ of soya farmers.
The key innovation of Alpro’s non-dairy, plant-based products is that they eliminate an important step in the production process - the animal. Rather than feeding soy to animals for the production of milk and meat, the plant-based ingredient is processed immediately into a final consumer product. In this sense, Alpro’s products have a shorter, more productive and resource-efficient value chain.*

Alpro also impacts heavily up and down its value chain, from encouraging restaurants to have regular days when they do not serve any meat to its hand-picked ‘family’ of sustainable soya farmers across the world.

THE CASE

In line with our objective to promote healthy plant-based nutrition, Alpro supports research in this field through the Alpro Foundation Award for Bachelors and Masters. Each year, the Alpro Foundation awards a €2500 prize to a student for his/her Master’s thesis in plant-based nutrition in four countries (Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and the UK). In addition, the best thesis of these four winners is granted an extra €2500 with the European Alpro Foundation Award. This initiative supports innovation and research and raises awareness about plant-based nutrition amongst future nutritionists and the scientific community.

Alpro actively supports and runs communication campaigns to raise the awareness of European citizens that what they eat matters as much as the car they drive in terms of sustainable development.

One such initiative is for meat-free days that are taking shape in various cities in Europe. In Belgium, in the city of Ghent where our headquarters are located, the Flemish Vegetarian Association (EVA) has been at the center of a groundbreaking initiative to introduce a veggie-day in the schools and in the administration of Ghent. The ‘Donderdag-Veggiedag’ (‘Thursday Veggie Day”) campaign is based on promoting sustainable vegetarian diets. By making a small change in their diets, even if it is only one day per week, consumers can make a significant contribution to the fight against climate change. Although it is not compulsory, the campaign has enjoyed growing support since it started in 2009, with more than 35 schools, 100 restaurants and even IKEA Ghent getting involved.

Alpro fully supports this initiative in Ghent through direct sponsorship of the EVA project, but also at national and international level through the promotion of veggie-day initiatives.

Another similar online campaign that Alpro supports is, ‘Join the Movement’ (www.jointhemovementnow.org). This also encourages people to reduce their carbon footprint by replacing meat and dairy with plant-based foods just once a week.

Alpro and WWF have launched a retail project to promote soy products as a more sustainable alternative to dairy and meat products. This initiative, entitled ‘naturally, we love nature’, is targeted at consumers.

• ALPRO organised with the Belgian government a conference on this topic
• ALPRO promotes alternatives through their advocacy/lobbying work at the ENSA (European Natural Soy Manufacturers’ Federation)

THE IMPACT

Grazing animals need space, putting pressure on farmers to gobble up the world’s forests; and simply growing feed for hungry herds uses around a third of all arable land. In total, dairy milk uses three times more

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space than its soya equivalent. And for every single liter of water that goes into producing soya drinks, it takes 2.5 liters to produce the same amount of dairy milk. Not only that, producing a liter of soya drink emits five times less CO2 than cows’ milk. And a soy burger needs 45 times less land, 20 times less water and emits 10 times less CO2 than a beef burger!

Therefore, Alpro is an active promoter of rebalancing diets, as consuming more plant-based foods, even once a week, makes land available for renewable energy, reduces stress on scarce water reserves and significantly reduces CO2 emissions.

CO2 savings due to consuming Alpro products rather than similar animal-based products amount to 1.7 million tons over the 2008-2013 period, which is significantly higher than the cumulative CO2 emissions linked to the overall business of Alpro (approximately 0.7 million tons) over the same period.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

• Alpro focusses on changing general deep-rooted consumer eating habits, rather than just on promoting its own soy products. It achieves this by building on consumer and related industries’s (such as restaurants and schools) awareness of plant-based alternatives to dairy and meat, as well as the negative environmental and health impacts of consuming meat and dairy products.

• Building a sustainable supply chain is inherent to Alpro’s philosophies of reducing its carbon footprint and widening its general impact.

• Alpro has adopted a long-term vision and is ready to invest in it. It does this by staying deeply committed to its end-goal, regardless of setbacks en route; and by channelling energy and resources into one well-scoped, dedicated vision.

*As confirmed by life cycle analysis

“Although the labeling of non-GMO on packs is common in many European countries, Alpro is the first company to use the ProTerra logo as a non-GMO and sustainability ‘trustmark’ to enable consumers to make a choice about the kind of products they buy. The ProTerra certification mark gives consumers assurance that the soy in Alpro is of the highest standard, and its provenance from the farm to the chiller cabinet is carefully regulated.”

Richard Werran, Chief Executive, Cert-ID Europe.

**CONTACT**

Koen Bouckaert  
VP Strategy & Business Development Alpro  
koen.bouckaert@alpro.com  
T + 32 (0) 9 260 21 02  
www.alpro.com

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