

2020 Corporate Sustainability Report



NOBLE
FOODS



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Introduction

At Noble Foods, we recognise that our business does not exist in isolation.

We know that our colleagues depend on us. We know that our customers, suppliers and local communities are all affected by our business and what we do. We know that our products, and the way we produce them, has an impact on our environment.

Above all, we know that animal welfare, including the care of all animals within our supply chain, is central to all our activities as we grow and develop.

At Noble Foods, our corporate social responsibility ensures we understand the impact we have on the world around us, and how we can positively make a difference.

We aim to maintain Noble Foods as a business fit for purpose within an ever changing world, operating sustainably both now and in the future.

Our workplace

Our People

Our colleagues are our most valuable asset. We constantly strive to provide a workplace that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment.

A workplace where training opportunities are available for every individual to make the most of his or her potential. Above all, a working environment where outstanding performance is recognised and rewarded.

At Noble Foods, it is important for employees to be involved in health and safety decision making processes. So we designate employee representatives who can liaise with colleagues, to ensure all safety matters for both employees and areas of work are always monitored. Every point is discussed during regular EHS committee meetings, with the overall aim to further enhance workplace safety.

We are dedicated to providing a place of work that is safe and without risks to health. We endeavour to protect customers, visitors and members of the public who may be affected by our operations and products, on all matters within our control.

As part of this ongoing programme and our commitment to providing a safe place to work, in 2020 we achieved ISO 45001 certification for all of our farms, mills and factories. Certification to ISO 45001 demonstrates our commitment to implement, maintain and continually improve the way in which we manage our health and safety systems.



Recipe for Safety



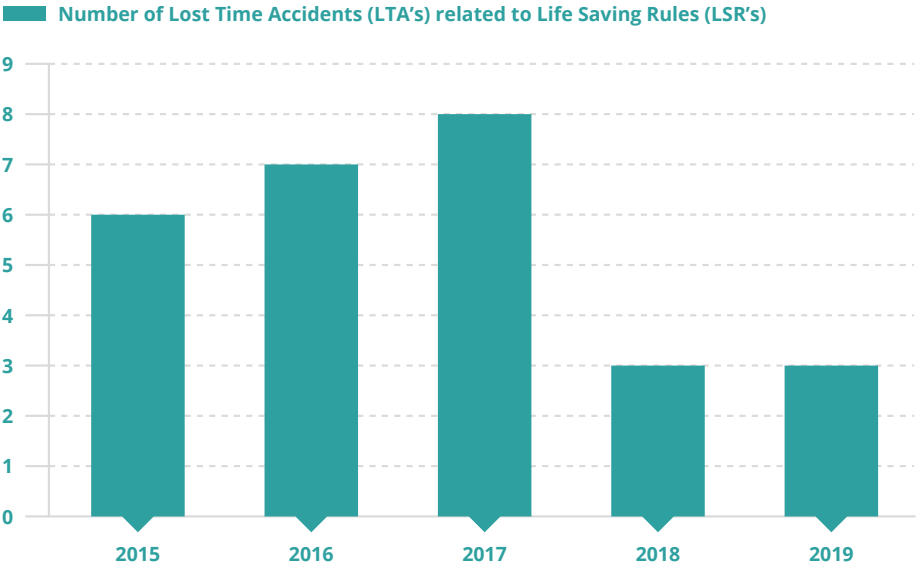
Another facet of our drive towards health and safety improvements is our “Recipe for Safety” initiative. A joint venture between the food industry and the Health and Safety Executive, with the aim to reduce accidents in the food industry workplace.

The “Recipe for Safety” guidance identifies 12 key accident areas, including machinery safety, slips and trips, falls and being struck by objects. These 12 areas cover 96% of all food industry injuries.

Noble Foods aim to reduce the occurrence of accidents within these key areas by focusing on what causes them, consequently reducing the number of lost days associated with accidents, year on year.

We have also continued to promote the “Life Saving Rules” as a crucial element of the management system. The procedures covering “Lock-Out Tag-Out”, “Machinery Safety”, “Confined Space Safety”, “Electrical Safety”, “Vehicle Safety” and “Safety at Height” have all been strengthened.

Since 2016, our focus on the causes of lost time accidents, alongside the introduction of the Life Saving Rules in 2017, have been instrumental in our reduction of lost time accidents, specifically associated with the six safety areas. The below graph showcases this reduction.



We continue to target lost time accidents within our annual objectives, with our aim to achieve zero lost time accidents relating to our Life Saving Rules. This will ensure our employees return home safe and sound every day, and help maintain and encourage a positive health and safety culture across all our facilities.

Targeting Behavioural Safety

In 2020 we have developed a “Behavioural Safety” training programme. This programme ensures all Managers encourage good behaviours within the workplace, and helps them lead by example with the aim of reducing accidents. The programme equips Managers with the necessary knowledge to identify unsafe acts, and promote safe behaviour through the Safety Watch Observation Programme (SWOP). This has improved the health and safety culture of Noble Foods, and in 2021 we will extend the programme for all employees, including being part of the induction process.

Training

We want to help new recruits settle into their roles quickly, and feel part of the Noble team. To facilitate this, every employee receives comprehensive induction training, and we provide a range of programmes at all levels across the company. These equip every individual with the skills and knowledge required to perform their job roles. This ranges from practical on the job training, to manual handling training, and detailed training tailored to the individual, such as task specific work instructions. We also utilise our external training partners, to develop and deliver bespoke training packages, all unique to Noble Foods. We also use Litmos Heroes, a comprehensive training platform which can be used to provide specific training pathways for individuals.

Company Values

Our Company Values are paramount to all Noble Foods employees, and they summarise how we work and what is truly important.





Community

At Noble Foods, one of our key CSR objectives is to support both local communities and those in countries less fortunate than ourselves.

At Noble Foods, one of our key CSR objectives is to support local communities and those in countries less fortunate than ourselves. We are an active member of Business In The Community (BITC) which helps businesses tackle key social and environmental issues – more information is available at www.bitc.org.uk. Through working with BITC, we can identify opportunities to reduce the impact our operations have on the environment, and ensure we conduct those operations in a sustainable way.





Feeding the minds of the children of Malawi

It has been a challenging year worldwide, and charities have been hit hard by the fallout from Covid-19. We are dedicated to supporting charities now, more than ever, during these testing times.

Noble Foods have supported the UK charity Fisherman's Rest for almost 10 years, and continue to do so. Our fundraising has improved educational and agricultural projects in Malawi, and with help from our suppliers and staff, we funded and built three schools. We have also supported the development of agricultural classes, all with the ambition to combat poverty.

In 2020, our fundraising efforts helped open the Horton Community District School (CDSS), changing the lives of thousands of children in Malawi, through the provision of education and food. With the support of the local community, we are working to build additional schools, libraries, kitchens and boreholes, through a variety of funding streams.

We shipped 50 of our previous Noble Foods employee laptops to Malawi on 24th August, to equip the new Horton Community District School. Local children now have the ability to widen their knowledge base, and access technology, which is often taken for granted in our everyday lives.

We have received confirmation from The Malawi Examination Board, that the Horton Community District School (CDSS) has been chosen to become an examination centre of excellence for the region specialising in Science, Technology and Sport.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Fisherman's Rest or want to donate, please visit

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/SomeoneSpecial/NobleFoods>.

At Noble Foods, we are proud to feed 1,700 children across 7 schools in Malawi, reducing hunger and allowing a focus on their education.

Noble Foods have a number of charitable initiatives, including working with organisations closely linked to our products. All employees who participate in charitable activities have the support of the business, as we part match the money they raise. Despite the current pandemic, we continue to contribute to all activities which raise funds for worthwhile causes.

Our support for retailer agricultural events, such as open farm days, help to educate both children and adults on the everyday life of a working, Free Range farm.

We supply eggs weekly to “City Harvest”, who gather surplus food and direct it to the right people, at the right time. Born 6 years ago, “City Harvest” have successfully delivered the equivalent of one million meals annually, since 2014. Despite the additional challenges from Covid-19, they have excelled, delivering the equivalent of six million meals, all within the last year! They continue to grow and provide food for those who need it most, supported by Noble Foods and other likeminded businesses. Our delivery driver for the charity, Ashley, has created a great rapport with the volunteers, and he took a week of holiday to volunteer himself. A true “Noble Hero”. If you would like to find out more or want to contribute, please contact Info@cityharvest.org.uk.

Furthermore, we aim to support projects in the local communities surrounding our larger Noble Foods sites. The local charities are all recommended by our colleagues, and our focus is on forging links with local schools, all across the country. These charities include John “Eastwood Hospice”, “Nottinghamshire Women’s Aid”, and “The Beacon”, who support the homeless within the Nottinghamshire area.

Finally, we provide support for the “Aegir Specialist Academy School”, and the “Warren Wood” schools in Lincolnshire, alongside sponsoring local children in need.

**Together and with your
support we are changing
lives for generations**





Environmental
Sustainability
Programme

Environment

Noble Foods are committed to conduct all business operations in a sustainable way.

We face a number of global environmental challenges and we want to play our part, adopting sustainable practices to be fit for the future.

Our Sustainability Programme

In 2019, Noble Foods introduced the Environmental Sustainability Programme (ESP). You can watch the video on our website. The ESP initiative focuses on three key areas which are Energy, Waste and Biodiversity. Fully endorsed by Senior Management, it aims to reduce our environmental impact.

In 2020, we enhanced the ESP initiative through upskilling ESP Leads (employee volunteers), allowing them to champion environmental projects for their respective sites and divisions. All ESP Leaders were provided with IEMA approved sustainability training, equipping them with the necessary knowledge to identify projects and share their insights with peers. Together, we are working to improve the sustainability of our operations.

In addition to employee training, the Noble Foods Group are committed to reducing our environmental impact, through decreasing our overall energy consumption and CO₂ output. This paves the way for us meeting our targets under the Climate Change Agreements.

As a Group, our commitment to sustainability and continuous improvement is demonstrated through our achievement of ISO 14001:2015 certification across our divisions. A number of our sites are covered under the Environmental Permitting requirements, and we see our relationship with regulators as a partnership. We work together to ensure all sites are operated in an environmentally conscious and safe manner.



SAI GLOBAL
ISO 14001
Environmental

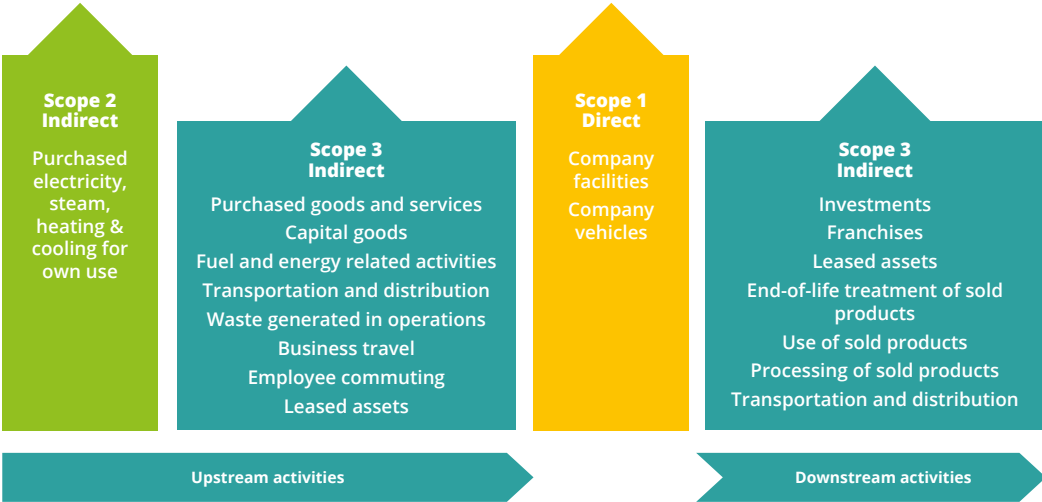


Energy

Noble Foods are large consumers of energy, and as such the impact of our energy usage is significant. We are committed to reduce our energy consumption through being more energy efficient, and generating electricity at our own facilities through renewable energy projects.

In October 2019, we decided to purchase all our electricity from certified renewable sources, leading to 100% renewable electricity across the business.

In 2020, as part of the SECR (Streamline Energy and Carbon Reporting), Noble Foods have undergone an exercise of establishing a baseline for carbon emissions for our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. We foresee this being completed by the end of the year. The adjacent diagram defines and depicts the varying emissions produced (carboncredentials.com).



Through measuring carbon emissions, we have established a baseline, drawing upon 2018's data as the baseline year. From this, we can see our carbon savings to date, against which future targets for emission reductions are set. As part of this process, we will examine our Scope 3 (indirect) emissions.

We are committed to reducing carbon emissions in line with government targets, and recognise that early action on targeting carbon emissions will ensure that Noble Foods meet the requirements of the Paris Agreement and COP 26.

Noble Foods are completing the BITC's Responsible Business Tracker. The BITC Responsible Business Map is built on the pillars on the UN's Sustainability Goals (SDG's). By completing the Tracker, we will be able to complete a gap analysis and track our progress against the sustainability goals. From this, short, medium and long term environmental objectives can be defined. **See here for the BITC's Responsible Business Map.**



Waste

The Noble Foods Group endeavours to reduce waste at every opportunity. This includes waste segregation at facilities to maximise recycling rates, avoiding landfill where technically and geographically feasible and recovering non-recyclable waste to generate energy at Energy from Waste facilities. Our waste figures and recycling rates are regularly monitored, and targets are set to continually improve recycling across the business.

In 2019, we set a target of achieving a 30% recycling rate, which we surpassed by attaining 38%*. From this, we set ambitious goals for 2020 to establish a 50% recycling rate, ensuring landfill is avoided where technically feasible. We also aim to investigate waste at every part of our process, to reduce waste and increase re-use. Therefore, 2020 saw the removal of all single-use plastics from our vending machines and water dispensers across all divisions. A small but significant step to reduce single use plastics.

*includes end of line packaging in consumer foods.

All plastic egg boxes we supply to our retail customers are made from 100% RPET, which reduces the amount of virgin plastics used across Noble Foods' operations.

We have also committed to the UN initiative Champions 12.3. Whilst we have minimal levels of food waste in our operations, in 2019 despite the increase in total food we handled, we are proud that our food waste dropped from 0.433% in 2018, to 0.338% (waste as a percentage of food handled), an improvement of 21.94%.

We report food waste figures on an annual basis and the details of this can be found on our website www.noblefoods.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Food-Waste-Submission-2020.pdf.





Biodiversity

At Noble Foods, we understand the importance of working harmoniously with the environment wherever possible, ensuring our operations are sustainable.

Pollinators as a group, and especially bees, have declined in recent years. There are a number of possible factors, one being a loss of habitat. Therefore, where possible, we aim to preserve and enhance natural habitats surrounding our sites.

In 2019, as part of our Environmental Sustainability Programme (ESP) initiative, we selected a number of sites to undergo biodiversity projects in 2020. We commissioned ecology surveys at each project site, to develop specific Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP). These encourage at risk species, and enhance biodiversity, through habitat creation and management. For example, planting perennial wildflowers annually that are native to the UK.

Our BAPs are segmented into phases, and 2020 saw the completion of Phase One: habitat surveys at three sites (two pack centres and one mill). From this, biodiversity improvements for 2021 have been established.

Stirling University are regularly granted access to one of our sites in Scotland. They complete wildlife studies and assess the specific wildlife inhabiting our woodlands. Their findings are shared with Noble Foods, and over the coming years we will continue to learn from them, allowing us to continually enhance our habitat management, retain biodiversity and encourage new species.



Employee Participation

As part of the Environmental Sustainability Programme (ESP), we encourage employee volunteers to deliver environmental projects across the group. We invest in sustainability training to ensure they are equipped with the relevant knowledge to deliver projects alongside site management. We champion the sharing of knowledge between colleagues, working together to improve the sustainability of our operations and help make a real difference.

Raw Material Sustainability

Noble Foods have reduced the use of soy within our animal feed production in our Milling division by 20%. We have also joined the Tesco Zero Deforestation Soymeal targets to transition to sourcing from verified zero deforestation areas by 2025. In 2018, we successfully transitioned to zero deforestation soy credit schemes.

Furthermore, we are currently trialling alternative oil blends in our milling operations, which involves excluding palm oil and its derivatives.

Marketplace

At Noble Foods, we are committed to promoting a transparent and sustainable supply chain, and supporting British producers.



Producer relationships

In addition to our own farms, we foster long-term relationships with approximately 290 producers, including collecting eggs from locations across the UK, from Scotland's highlands down to Cornwall. Our producers are principally family-owned farming businesses, many of which have other farming enterprises, including arable and other livestock.

Every Noble Foods affiliated producer follows the British Lion Quality Code of Practice. Only eggs produced to the highest standards of food safety are allowed to carry the British Lion Quality mark. You can find more at www.lioneggfarms.co.uk.

Farmers



We think it's important to support employment in local communities. So at Noble Foods, we work hard to promote sustainable, long-term business for our suppliers by providing longer contracts, stable pricing and full support from our team in the field.

To maintain our high standards and protect our local suppliers, the Noble Foods audit team carry out assessments of all of our producers' farms to ensure that they meet the required criteria. Each farm is subject to a thorough annual audit, and inspection visits are conducted every 2 months, as a minimum. Alongside our audits, all of our producers' farms are certified and audited by the British Egg Industry Council Lion Code.

All pullet rearing, free range, barn and organic farms are also certified and audited by the RSPCA Freedom Food Scheme. This scheme is the RSPCA's farm assurance and food labelling initiative, which is the only scheme to focus solely on the welfare improvement of farm animals reared for food. Furthermore, all happy egg co. farms conform to British Lion regulations, RSPCA Freedom Food regulations, and Noble Foods' own strict audit procedure. Those selected are all within the top scoring Noble audited farms. We work closely with our farmers to continually improve their standards. Moreover, all our organic farms are also certified and audited by one of the organic certification bodies such as the Organic Food Federation or Organic Farmers and Growers.

Animal Welfare

At Noble Foods, animal welfare is at the cornerstone of everything we do. With our happy egg co. brand, we aim to set the standards for animal welfare.





Research

As part of our ongoing commitment to animal welfare, we are involved in a number of research projects, which aim to increase both knowledge and awareness in this area. One example study is in conjunction with the School of Veterinary Sciences at Bristol University, who are investigating ways to enhance the well-being of laying hens on farms.

A free range enrichment project carried out jointly with the Farm Animal Institute at Oxford and one of our trading partners, is looking further into the welfare benefits of providing range canopy cover. There is an increasing body of scientific evidence, to which we are contributing, which shows that free range flocks which range well, have better welfare indicators. We already take part in extensive range enrichment by planting trees, which provide shade and protection for hens. They also encourage birds to range, which supports local wildlife and increases biodiversity.

RSPCA Assured

We are represented on the 'RSPCA's pullet standards technical advisory group' which advises on welfare standards for pullets (laying hens) – for more information visit www.rspcaassured.org.uk.

Memberships

We have joint membership with one of our customers of the European Animal Welfare Platform, which promotes best practice on key animal welfare topics.

We are also members of the 'British Poultry Council.'

the happy egg co.

We have a team of experienced fieldsmen who visit every happy egg co. farm, to ensure that our high standards are being rigorously maintained. Although we are hen experts, we constantly embrace and seek to learn new ways to improve our operations, and share our learnings with our farmers. You can find out more at www.thehappyegg.co.uk.

We're therefore proud that the happy egg co. received the leading industry accolade 'The Good Egg Award' from Compassion in World Farming. This recognises our commitment to delivering high welfare standards for all of our hens across all of our happy egg co. farms. The happy egg co. goes above and beyond free range standards to provide hens with wide outdoor spaces, apparatus and a varied terrain.

BBFAW

The Business Benchmark on Farm Animal Welfare (www.bbfaw.com) evaluates farm animal welfare within the food industry. We were delighted to be ranked within the top tier and classed as one of the industry leading companies surveyed. If you have any questions or would like to know more, please contact us.

Cage Free 2025

Noble Foods have committed to be cage free by 2025 across our supply chain. We have partnered with 'Vencomatic' to convert one of our farm poultry sheds into a multi-tiered barn unit. A new rearing system has also been designed, featuring multi-levels and high perching areas, with the objective of easing the transition to the farm for optimum bird development.

The barn trial will provide the opportunity to showcase and share learnings on the high-welfare barn system to our partners, allowing an informed decision on the future of value eggs.

At the end of October 2019, we completed work on the barn conversion, which now houses 96,000 birds. This is a major step in our commitment to be a cage free business by 2025, and will consequently encourage long-term partnerships to support a full scale roll-out.

2020 saw the recognition of our efforts in driving the leading animal welfare barn standards, when we were presented with our second Good Egg Award from CIWF.

**Noble Foods
will be cage
free by 2025**



Partnerships

To develop industry knowledge and understanding, the happy egg co. sponsored a PHD student to conduct an in-depth analysis of the design specification and management of premium housing for laying hens.

This has ultimately enabled us to develop management techniques and systems of production, which will further enhance animal welfare across all our production sites.

As well as our own farming base, we work in close partnership with our retail customers. Using our extensive knowledge and experience, we help them address any industry and welfare challenges they're facing. This allows us to improve welfare standards across the laying-hen sector, as well as the wider agricultural industry.

We were active members of the Beak Trimming Action Group (BTAG) which included the government, academics and the wider industry. Our company farms supported both Bristol University and SURC College trials on non-beak trimmed hens.

We are active members of the Laying Hen Welfare Forum (LHWF), which has been formed to push forward with the recommendations from the initial studies. We're also leading additional research into new industry challenges, such as keel bone damage, feather retention and antibiotic usage.

The LHWF has recently sent its biennial report to the Minister of Agriculture, outlining the industry's progress on the reduction of injurious feather pecking and reliance on the practice of beak tipping. You can find further information at <https://lhwf.co.uk/>.

We have partnered with Nottingham Trent University and are currently supporting a PHD research and development project assessing and improving skeletal development in laying hens.

Dairy Cows

While laying hens are at the heart of our business, we also care about our cows, who produce milk for our products, including our luxury GU puds. We care as much as our customers, so we only use ingredients which adhere to the highest welfare standards. It's also why we only partner with UK suppliers who source milk from British farms certified by the Red Tractor assurance scheme (<https://assurance.redtractor.org.uk>). In addition to regular assurance audits, our experienced farm liaison officers are always on hand to offer help and advice, to ensure that standards are continually monitored and maintained.



Noble Foods
Cotswold Farm, Standlake,
Witney, Oxon, OX29 7RB

www.noblefoods.co.uk