



CoopeAgropal

Sector: Agricultural and Food



Region: Costa Rica

Coopeagropal (Cooperativa Agroindustrial de Productores de Palma Aceitera) is located at Laurel of Corredores, Puntarenas since 1986. At that time, the company only intermediates between local farmers and other companies. However, in 1993 the company set up an oil palm industry (Coopeagropal R. L., 2016a). Actually the company have more than 650 partners, and 400 employees. The fruit production is done in their own lands, as well as in partners' farmlands and in farmlands of independent producers. The products includes since rare oil that is sold in international markets to refined oil and others products that include: margarines, shortenings, regular oils, coquito flour, crude palm oil, palm stearin and olein, and fatty acids. Domestic and industrial products are marketed under the "En Su Punto" brand. At present, the cooperative has the Rainforest Alliance certifications granted by the Sustainable Agriculture Network (RAS) and Kosher. Likewise, it is a member of RSPO and is in the Certification process. The production of margarine and vegetable shortening was also out of reach for this paperwork. The company sells under the brand name **En su punto**, it is sold in oils: Vegetable Oil **En su Punto** "Mix" and Vegetable Oil **En su Punto** "Olein". **En su punto** is a third-party verified oil sustainability brand to strengthen the oil supply chain while transforming the lives and livelihoods of farmers, partners and their communities. It is grounded in actions such as providing farmer training on good agricultural practices, climate smart agriculture, additional sources of income and business management, as well as developing and implementing Community Action Plans and improving access to planting materials, seedlings and financial resources.

Mindset

Life Cycle Thinking: The impacts at the agricultural stage (cultivation phase) of the product development process are assessed, ranging from access to education and business training for farmers to empowering women. Coopeagropal is committed to hold itself and all partners along the palm oil supply chain accountable to ensure lasting, positive change. Coopeagropal has made a LCA analysis from cradle to port, for the rare oil. This oil is sold in Europe.

Hotspots Analysis Approach: CoopeAgropal always starts with a needs assessment to build the most relevant interventions in the agricultural practices in different communities across the country. The claim was based on a comprehensive product hotspots analysis, this approach is considered at the farm, industry and community levels.

Mainstreaming sustainability: "Without palm, there is no oil. Without the next palm farming generation, there is no palm oil." This is at the heart of why CoopeAgropal created the Palm Oil program in 2013. The company followed a development process based on a long-term roadmap, which includes the socio-economic and environmental aspects as crucial to improve their products' performance over time. Their goal is to be the best palm oil of the region as a sustainable product.

Principle 1: Reliability



To verify the impact on farmers and their communities, and to measure progress towards the goal of obtaining palm oil in a sustainable way, consistency in evaluations is needed. CoopeAgropal works with independent third-class verifiers —RainForest Alliance, Kosher and FSSC 22000 (Food Safety Management System). The Rainforest Alliance certification is responsible for measuring progress on the ground by conducting surveys of farmers, farmers' households, and communities. These studies are designed to evaluate CoopeAgropal in its environmental practices on farms. It also verifies the benefits palm oil farmers receive, such as premium payments and clear trade terms. FSSC verifies the industry process and the supply chain. Kosher verifies the industry process. Experts and the research and development team are involved, as well as providing evidence to generate farm-specific recommendations, which improve the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of project interventions.

The message and the logo that is transmitted in the palm oil follow and reflect the evidence that the company has what has been developed in field work. The third class of verifiers confirm this evidence.

Principle 2: Relevance



The statement underlines the elements that make the difference in the sustainable process in palm oil. Critical points in the cultivation phase include the agricultural environment, improved agricultural practices to improve the productivity of palm oil, use of biomass to produce energy for industry equipment and also a soil fertilizer, palm oil has the better yield per acre of land (compared to other oils such as corn, soybeans and coconut) and community development that supports the creation of additional livelihoods.

The claim is based on a voluntary initiative that exceeds the regulatory requirements of producer and consumer countries. It helps to maintain the best agricultural environment, which is crucial to improve palm oil productivity over time.

Principle 3: Clarity



There are two types of oils, the first is sold in bulk, which is exported to Europe, Mexico and the United States. The other is sold in local supermarkets in the Puntarenas and Guanacaste regions of Costa Rica. Oil sold in bulk has no label. The oil sold in local supermarkets includes the logo of the program. To determine the clarity of the message, an analysis of critical points was carried out, the certifications held by the company were reviewed and the site was visited. In the case of Aceite En Su Punto, the label includes a link to the website, where consumers can find detailed information, including a copy of their certifications.

The connection between the claim and the product (En Su Punto oil) is clear, the label as such does not have information on sustainability, but it does have the online link where the company's sustainability pillars can be accessed, the certifications (Rainforest Alliance, FSSC 2000 and Kosher), as well as the company's environmental policy. For bulk oil, the ICSAL program developed a type III environmental label that can be used in case a customer requests specific technical information on the amount of emissions emitted, toxicity, etc.



Nº	Impacto medio ambiental	Evaluación Ambiental	Unidades
1	Consumo de recursos de energía:		
	No renovable fósil	6456,7	MJ
	No renovable nuclear	156	MJ
	Renovable Biomasa	3540,45	MJ
	Renovable eólica, solar y geotérmica	113	MJ
	Renovable Hidroeléctrica	336	MJ
2	Cambio Climático	1215,71	kg CO2-eq
3	Agotamiento del Ozono Estratosférico	9,49x10-3	kg CFC-11-eq
4	Formación de Oxidantes	2,66	kg NOX-eq
5	Acidificación terrestre	3,24	kg SO2-eq
6	Eutrofización de agua dulce	0,51	kg P-eq
7	Uso del agua	2001,97	m3 agua consumida

Principle 4: Transparency



The fourth principle corresponds to transparency, which seeks to respond to the consumer's demand for information, without hiding information that may be important. Consumers should be allowed to evaluate the information that substantiates the claim on the label. This information must be exhaustive and the supply of information must be adapted according to the interests of the consumer and the needs of the product, it must go from general and easy-to-understand information to a more detailed and complex one. No claims should be made with information that is considered confidential.

Therefore, in the case of Coopeagropal, only the Kosher logo is included on the label; however, additional information is available on the website which is written in plain, non-technical language. Also, it is possible to access progress reports and information on the development of the principle. Coopeagropal is a cooperative that can be accessed in case of doubts or requests for additional information from consumers.

Consumers can track the information behind the principle directly on the website, they can review the certifications they have and the basic characteristics of the oil.

Principle 5: Accessibility



This principle seeks to make the information reach the consumer and not that the consumer has to search for it. In the case of En Su Punto oil, the label has the website, but it could be changed to a QR code for direct access to the sustainability information on the website, in this way it would be more visible to the consumer. The web link is on the front of the packaging. On the other hand, palm oil that is sold in bulk has a certified verification sheet. The information is available on-pack, website and social media.

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Principle 6: Three Dimensions of Sustainability



Environmental: Maintenance of oil palm ecosystems and land protection. Investment in training farmers on good agricultural practices, planting shade trees and rehabilitation of farms, mobilizing communities to prioritize forest protection and more. Fertilizers and the use of chemicals are also covered as part of the Good Agricultural Practice training.

Social: Design and supervision of multi-stakeholder collaborative programs, the youth engagement program improved access to education and the fight against child labor.

Economic: Guarantee of fair wages for farmers. Training in good agricultural practices and sources of additional income. Access to finance, financial literacy training and business management training to improve livelihoods.

All three dimensions are addressed by the company; however they are not communicated to the consumer.

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The program helps communities address the dynamic and complex challenges they face in the environmental, social and economic dimensions, all of which are interrelated and require a holistic approach to solving them. Launched its training campaigns in 2013, CoopeAgropal is investing US \$ 60,000 by 2022 to train at least 970 palm oil producers in Costa Rica.

Principle 7: Behaviour Change and Long-Term Impact



CoopeAgropal has identified that child labor (prohibited in any way by law in Costa Rica), deforestation, prevention of negative impacts on the environment, promoting environmental control practices in natural ecosystems and biodiversity, promoting adaptation measures to climate change, training in good agricultural practices for farmers are topics that also matter to conscientious consumers. CoopeAgropal deals with these, as mentioned in the sustainability principles that appear on its website.

The most important topics for consumers are mentioned on the website, but others that are not mentioned could be added, such as the use of biomass energy by the company in their facilities, the intensive treatment of solid waste they carry out and the improvement of soils with that organic material, among others.

Principle 8: Multi-Channel and Innovative Approach



CoopeAgropal talks through the brands to individual consumers. Brands such as En su Punto has started to communicate to their consumers and further action is already planned.

The on-pack claim is the first stage of consumer communications. Different additional communication channels are used to communicate the results and progress made by the programme such as website.

Principle 9: Collaboration



CoopeAgropal involves a partners to jointly develop the basis for the sustainability claim. There are informative meetings, informative talks and monthly newsletters.

The program creates partnerships with partners, besides the fact that all cooperative principle are followed, supply chain partners and communities to further support local communities. CoopeAgropal welcomes other stakeholders to participate and thereby improve the overall public acceptance of the claim by consumers.

Principle 10: Comparability



This principle states that product comparisons should be used only where it really helps the consumer to make sustainable choices. In this claim, CoopeAgropal opted for being part of National Chamber of Palm Oil producers, which is the entity in charge of addressing this aspect.