

Press release

Nijkerk - 13 June 2022

Sustainability increasingly embedded at Vreugdenhil

In 2021, Vreugdenhil worked together with internal and external stakeholders on the new sustainability agenda that can count on broad support across the organisation. Our climate ambition is to be carbon neutral from grass to glass by 2050. A joint approach across the supply chain is essential in making this happen, whereby dialogue with our stakeholders forms the basis for a shared ambition with clear goals for the future. This is how sustainability is gradually embedded more at Vreugdenhil.

We have achieved fine results: nearly 95% of dairy farmers have joined our sustainability programme, carbon emissions from milk transport have been reduced by over 34%, and we have launched the first pilot to even better support dairy farmers in reducing greenhouse gas emissions at their farms.

'Vreugdenhil Dairy Foods is a family-run business that is sustainable from the ground up. Based on our vision on sustainability, we take our responsibility. The people who make the company have bought into our sustainability ambitions, as confirmed by the results of the employee engagement survey. Despite the fact that our employees have several highly challenging Covid-19 years behind them, they say in the survey that they feel committed to Vreugdenhil and that they work to their satisfaction in a safe environment. We are very proud of these survey results,' says CEO Albert de Groot.



Albert de Groot, CEO

Sustainable dairy farming

Our sustainability programme rewards dairy farmers with a bonus when they generate their own energy.

In 2021, 26.9% of our dairy farmers generated at least 50% of the energy they use from renewable sources themselves, compared to 23.2% in 2020. We have, therefore, hit our target of 25%. Our dairy farmers take excellent care of their animals 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, so as to ensure that their animals can grow old healthily. In 2021, this resulted in an average life span of 6 years and 26 days, which is 34 days longer than in 2020. This result is once again above the Dutch national average of 6 years and 13 days.

Stimulating outdoor grazing

In 2021, our outdoor grazing rate was 91.0%. This is a slight increase on 2020 (90.6%), putting our dairy farmers well beyond the Dutch national target of 81.2%. For us, too, the outdoor grazing rate is well above the Dutch average of 84.0%. The bonus for outdoor grazing has been high for several years now, making it attractive for farmers to switch to outdoor grazing.

Fair and environmentally conscious purchasing

In 2021, we worked with our customers and suppliers on a sustainable alternative to our sachets. We also worked on making the caps for our cans sustainable. These caps are now lighter and contain less plastic. Over the coming year, we will further scale up the use of these sustainable alternatives.

Employee engagement

In order to gain greater insight into our employees' engagement and job satisfaction, we conducted an employee engagement survey in 2021. In total, 346 employees (73%) took the survey and the employee engagement score came in at 8.4 out of 10. The three aspects with the highest score were i) commitment within the teams, ii) feeling proud of Vreugdenhil, and iii) commitment to our company. These results show that our employees are engaged, satisfied, and loyal, and that fills us with great pride.

Dairy Dialogue

In our sustainability report for 2021, we used *Dairy Dialogue* as the theme in telling the story behind the figures of our sustainability targets. In the report, one of our dairy farmers, Joke van Dijk-Terlouw, shares how she and her husband are gradually making their business more sustainable. 'Milk production from our cows is above average; they produce almost 500,000kg of milk in total per year. The cows eat a lot of grass and are not fed any corn. They do get some sugar beet pulp, because that boosts milk production. All the manure they produce is used on our own land, meaning that we don't have to dispose of manure and buy only small amounts of artificial fertilizer. This, too, helps keep greenhouse gas emissions down.'

Vreugdenhil operates from the heart of society where there is scope for dialogue. Good dialogue requires careful listening and a shared resolve to explore opportunities. 'We would, therefore, like to thank our staff and all the stakeholders across our supply chain, ranging from dairy farmers and suppliers to customers. Your commitment and trust enables us to keep our performance levels up, which is consistent with our ambition to deliver the best of milk, every day and anywhere in the world,' Albert de Groot concludes.

Note to the editor

- If you would like to find out more about Vreugdenhil Dairy Foods' sustainability performance, please get in touch with Susanne ter Wal at the Communications department on +31(0)6 58874607 or by email on communicatie@vreugdenhil.nl

We bring you
the best of milk