



# The SVZ Sustainability Passport

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# Foreword from our CEO

Pieter Spanjers, CEO  
SVZ International B.V.

**The role we all play, as individuals and as a business, in addressing climate change is central for us at SVZ, as well as for our clients and consumers. SVZ's purpose is to deliver high-quality, delicious, and nutrient-rich fruit and vegetable ingredients. Sustainability is an integral part of bringing our purpose to life as sustainable agriculture, efficient operations, and valuing people ensures we can meet the needs of our clients and consumers, today and in the future.**

Our **farm-centric approach** has been a driver of success. The ingredients we create are tailored to our customers' requirements, and it's only by working closely with our partner farmers that we can ensure that their needs are met with a great taste and high nutritional value. Plus, our connection with growers also means that we can guarantee sustainability credentials in our ingredients, through initiatives like a reduction in pesticides and water usage.

A great achievement has been the Supernova Project in Rijkevorsel. The new pasteuriser has been operational since 2023, and it has given us the opportunity to increase capacity and reduce energy consumption through heat recovery. Another success has been the addition of renewable energy sources to our processing sites, for example solar panels in Spain, and our intention of expanding this to other sites. But all of this could not happen without our people. Our portfolio of premium purees, concentrates, NFC juices and IQFs relies on the reliability and industry expertise of our employees and the strong relationship we have with our partner farmers.

Major concerns in our industry include farmers' needs, energy and water efficiency, and climate change, and addressing these is key to solving a major challenge ahead of us: **an affordable and sustainable food system**. By working together, food and beverage businesses can create a more sustainable industry that delivers healthy, delicious, nutritious, and — above all — affordable food for everyone in the world.

I am excited for what the future holds, and I look forward to continuing to collaborate with our clients, partners, employees, and other stakeholders to enhance our impact, reduce our footprint, and remain at the forefront of our industry — not only for today, but also for generations to come. We are passionate about establishing partnerships to ensure that we can deliver natural ingredients that are sustainable and delicious. After all, we can only **grow better, together**.



# Introduction from the sustainability manager

**At SVZ, it's clear that sustainability is not only the correct course of action for society and the environment, but it is also an essential element in delivering high-quality, competitive, and value-add solutions to our clients and consumers. We emphasise sustainability in all aspects of our business. It is part of our philosophy, embedded in our relationship with suppliers, farmers partners, and clients, as well as being integrated across our operations.**

This Sustainability Passport highlights the impact we deliver across our sustainability pillars: from testing alternative mulching materials in Spain and supporting farmers with our expert agronomy team, to reducing GHG emissions through the Supernova Project and prioritising employee wellbeing with our Diversity & Inclusion initiative in Rijkevorsel. It is a chance to step back and reflect on how much has been accomplished, as we continue our efforts to deliver a more sustainable tomorrow.

This reflection brings us the opportunity to welcome innovative approaches and potential partners for our next efforts. We are not done yet — our goal is striving for continuous improvement while being transparent about our efforts, even when initiatives do not turn out to be a success. The key is being honest and persevering; for example, with our ongoing three-year trial of a compostable, affordable and durable mulching material in Spain. Looking to the future, we are driving our sustainability approach forward by setting targets based on the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive whilst accelerating our on-the-ground efforts.

**Silvi Navarrete**  
**SVZ Sustainability Manager**





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SVZ champions sustainability through the dedicated work of our agronomy and purchasing teams to secure a resilient and fair supply chain. Their dedicated time and effort contributes to a better living environment for people and the planet.

**Monique Behrend**  
**SVZ Director of Procurement and Agronomy**



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# Our path to progress: Welcome to the SVZ Sustainability Passport



**In every fruit, field or farm, processing plant or office; sustainability is at the heart of everything we do at SVZ.**

100% natural and always tasty, our unmatched portfolio of premium fruit and vegetable purees, concentrates, not-from-concentrate (NFC) juices and individually quick frozen (IQF) solutions brings sustainability to life — but that's just the beginning. Our three production sites, strategically located in Belgium, Poland, and Spain don't just follow our sustainability strategy, but help form and further our goal of building a healthier, more sustainable future for all.

This document is our passport to a sustainable tomorrow, detailing each of our long-standing sustainability commitments and initiatives in one handy guide. From how we harness our agronomy expertise to protect vital ecosystems and habitats, to our single-minded focus on providing traceable, reliable, and ethically produced products. Read on to discover the SVZ sustainability story so far, and how you can help write our next chapter.



# The big picture

Our commitment to the planet goes beyond just words. SVZ has been recognised with an EcoVadis Gold award, placing us in the top 5% of most environmentally responsible businesses in the food and beverage industry.

Every one of our processing sites has been awarded an internationally recognized SMETA 4-pillar certificate, asserting that our facilities adhere to the highest standards of ethical and environmentally responsible food production. We believe good in, equals good out. Our agronomy teams move mountains to preserve the environments in which we operate to deliver delicious fruit and vegetable ingredients packed with natural goodness. Our 150-year heritage across the supply chain has taught us that truly sustainable food production goes far beyond the farm.

That’s why we split our overall sustainability strategy into three core pillars:

Sustainable Agriculture

Efficient Operations

Valuing People





# Empowering the food & beverage sector

We launched the c2030 initiative to call upon the entire food and beverage sector to grow better together and create a greener, healthier, and fairer industry for all.

By joining stakeholders across the sector together, we hope to make an impact that is greater than the sum of our parts. Discover our findings in the c2030 report [here](#).

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The road to better and brighter things is calling — are you ready to answer?





# Sustainable Agriculture

**Our first sustainability pillar is dedicated to nature.**

Just as the rain, sun and soil nurture the fruits and vegetables that make our products, we do everything we can to care for the natural world in return. Let's explore how we honour the land at each of our partner farms and processing facilities, dotted across Europe from east to west.

Our Tomaszów plant is strategically located in Central-Eastern Poland — right in the heart of the country's main agricultural belt. SVZ maintains close connections with a number of growers in this area, allowing us to support environmentally responsible farming from the ground up.



# Sustainable agriculture

## Agronomy for all: How our team serves farmers

**One of our top priorities as a business is to source high-quality fruit and vegetables while supporting our growers.**

That's why our in-house team of expert agronomists work in the fields across our partner farms in Poland and Spain year-round to provide essential advice, whatever the season. Our suppliers count on our input at every stage of fruit and vegetable cultivation — from sowing and planting seedlings, right through to harvesting. In some cases, we even provide the seedlings and offer free-of-charge soil analysis to help farms develop a robust planting plan.

Our agronomists continually monitor crop condition, advise on soil-friendly fertilization techniques, and offer agronomy expertise and knowledge to our farmers throughout the growing season. In recent years, trainings around sustainable agriculture and its benefits have formed an essential part of our collaboration with growers. SVZ Tomaszów has long organized annual training sessions for our fruit and vegetable suppliers, focusing on plant protection products (PPPs), fertilization, and improving soil quality.

These trainings are conducted by representatives of scientific institutions, agricultural advisors, and our in-house agronomy team in Poland. In 2022, we hosted two large training sessions in Tomaszów, in which more than 160 farmers participated. The popularity of the trainings among growers was clear, so in 2023 we hosted three sessions in both Tomaszów and Opole in the Lubelski region of Poland, with a total of 290 farmers signing up to discover the insights.

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Technical assistance and knowledge exchange enables farmers to do their job in the best way possible. We can't live without farmers and our job is to support and care for them and value what they do.

**Anna Sereda,  
Purchase Manager Vegetables/Contracted  
Fruit Crops & Agronomy SVZ Tomaszów**



# Sustainable agriculture



## Social, sustainable, and responsible sourcing

Every year, we strive to increase the share of sustainably grown fruit and vegetables supplied to us through our grower networks.

To help achieve this we ensure our Polish growers are fully supported during their annual SAI FSA Sustainable Agriculture Certification, encouraging them to make the incremental improvements that add up to significant impact. Since 2020, we have helped almost 2,000 Polish growers to acquire their SAI FSA Silver Level Certification by preparing documentation and even covering any associated costs. Our joining of The Sustainable Juice Covenant (SJC), an international initiative of leading players in the juice sector, is a further demonstration of our commitment to achieving the ambitious target of 100% sustainable sourcing by 2030.



# Sustainable agriculture

## Tales from the farm

### Nadija's story:

**Nadija is a female farmer, originally hailing from Ukraine, who has lived and worked in Poland since the year 2000.**

In 2007, she leased five hectares of land in the Lubelski region of Poland where she has been farming raspberries ever since. Nadija's collaboration with SVZ Poland began in 2009. She not only provides us with raw ingredients, but consistently joins our farmer training sessions and has established a close relationship with our agronomy teams in Poland. Nadija is a true self-starter, having equipped herself with knowledge and expertise to run her farm independently and have full control over the cultivation process, something she extremely values.

Nadija looks to the future with optimism. She plans to increase her acreage for raspberry cultivation while maintaining the traditional farming methods that keep her in close harmony with nature. As a mother and grandmother, she has seen firsthand how healthy, safe, and tasty fruits help feed the body, and nourish the soul.

### Piotr's story:

**Piotr can confidently be called a 'life-long' farmer, having operated a farm in Strzyżowiec (Lubelskie region) since his youth.**

He initially received his first few hectares of land from his parents, before gradually acquiring more land over the years. Today, he owns over 100 hectares, while leasing another 50 from outside investors. Piotr's crops include vegetables, such as beetroot, pumpkin, and carrots, as well as corn, wheat, and rape seed. He has been supplying SVZ for over a decade, providing approximately 700 tons of orange carrots per year. He deeply appreciates the relationship he has built with the company over the years, particularly the agronomic support and the opportunity to participate in numerous trainings. Piotr, as an experienced farmer, approaches his work with calmness and distance. Despite the unstable market, he always strives to glean satisfaction from caring for his fields and is dedicated to constantly developing his skills as a farmer.





# Sustainable agriculture

## Boosting biodiversity

Trusting in nature is at the core of our business. We understand the immense value and importance of maintaining healthy and diverse ecosystems in the regions from which we source our ingredients.

Just one of the many ways we help support biodiversity is by establishing flowerbeds around the perimeter of our processing plant in Rijkevorsel, Belgium. This one small step will go a long way to improving natural pollination in the area, as well as creating a beautiful workplace where the richness of nature is never far away. Our bee hotel and biodiversity lanes too offer a great habitat for insects and foraging species like bumblebees, butterflies, and wild bees. They also provide nesting spots for birds, resulting in a more complex, biodiverse ecosystem with in-built natural pest control.



## Compostable mulching

**Mulch is any material that is spread or laid over the soil's surface to conserve moisture, improve soil health, and control weed growth.**

It is a crucial part of sustainable agriculture because it is a decisive factor in on-farm waste management. Traditionally, strawberry growers in Spain use plastic mulching as the primary technique for strawberry cultivation but over time, this has resulted in a significant increase of plastic waste surrounding the Spanish strawberry fields.

To tackle the issue, SVZ Spain launched a pilot to test alternative mulching materials specifically designed for strawberry cultivation. The teams tested a paper-based mulching material during the 2020-21 and 2022-23 harvest, but this method unfortunately proved less than successful. Undeterred however, we started a new mulch test which ran during the 2022-23 harvest. In collaboration with AgroMartin and its organic farm Valleponce, we tested three different biofilm widths (BASF 18  $\mu$  and 20  $\mu$ ; Pati 18  $\mu$ ) in the three rows of strawberry macro tunnel (0.2 ha plot).

Our primary parameter for the tests was that the BASF biofilm needed to last the entire season. By May, some degradation was present, but at a low enough level that it would not affect the development of the crop. With these encouraging results behind us, we're looking forward to continuing and evolving our mulch testing for the 2023-24 harvest.



# Sustainable agriculture

## Soil disinfection and health program

**Finding a viable alternative to synthetic pesticides is a top — perhaps even the top — priority for sustainable farming initiatives.**

One of the many solutions we have explored at SVZ is the potential of microbiological control as an alternative pest management strategy for strawberry farmers in Spain. The first step was to take soil samples from the test fields, before setting up control and experimental plots where we could assess the impact of soil disinfection.

We tested the effectiveness of a soil disinfection product in a plot size of 0.3 ha featuring four macro tunnels at one of our organic farm partners from AgroMartin in Spain. Soil disinfection revolves around increasing 'good' microorganisms and/or their metabolites through irrigation to prevent diseases in strawberries from soil pathogens.

The experiment proved that after applying SOIL SET (a non-chemical disinfection product) there was an improvement in soil functionalities related to the uptake, assimilation, solubilization or mobilization of macro and micronutrients.

## Super supplier events

**Our teams across Spain and Poland regularly host supplier events and trainings throughout the year.**

Such regular contact with our growers not only helps us improve standards of sustainable farming but allows us to better understand our supply chain and give our partner farms the right support when they need it most. During our 2022 Spanish grower visits for instance, we monitored five sustainability topics, ranging from worker's accommodations and emergency numbers publicly displayed in the farm, to transport, freedom of association and inductions. Visits like these give us an invaluable opportunity to spot risks and issues early and establish a deeper level of trust and accountability with our growers.







# Efficient and sustainable operations

**Our second pillar is all about efficiency.**

Many of our operations at SVZ, including washing, sorting, milling, separation, filtration, concentration, freezing, and packaging among others, are inherently energy- and water- intensive activities, making it even more critical for us to search outside the box for innovative solutions.

In 2022, we stepped up our efficiency ambitions with a renewed focus on energy conservation through establishing GHG Emissions Scope 1 & 2 accounting and the 2019 SVZ baseline, as well as an accelerated decarbonization plan. These may be the headline initiatives, but there's so much more we do to show the food industry a path to a waste-free future:



# Efficient and sustainable operations

## Rescuing ‘imperfect’ fruits and veggies

**Extracting the maximum value from each fruit and vegetable. This is the beating heart of our business, but it’s also the secret to ending food waste.**

As much as a third of the produce grown on some farms is rejected because it doesn’t meet ‘beauty standards’ expected on the supermarket aisle. Our farmers supply us with fruit that meets those requirements, which we process into our IQF production line. Equally important however, is the high-quality produce we receive that doesn’t reach the visual standards of the fresh market.

These fruit and vegetables are typically rejected for aesthetic reasons: a leek that grew in curvy, apples dented by hail. Such imperfections happen all the time on the farm, and they don’t fit the standardized version of fruits and vegetables consumers have come to expect. At SVZ, we buy delicious fruit and vegetables regardless of how unsightly or defective they are considered and turn them into delicious concentrates and purees.

This doesn’t mean we accept absolutely every fruit or veg that comes our way, however. We maintain a strict product index that catalogues each raw material (fruit or vegetable) and defines which production line it should serve. If any piece of produce does not meet the index requirements or any of our other quality standards, it is rejected and sent to the biogas plant — so even then, it never goes to waste.





# Efficient and sustainable operations

## Continuous improvement, consistent success

**True efficiency is rarely achieved overnight. Oftentimes optimization happens over months if not years, through a series of small improvements that combine to make a big difference. At SVZ, we apply this continuous improvement approach to the running of our processing plants around Europe.**

The history of the SVZ Tomaszów plant dates back to 1962, when the “Tomasovia” Fruit and Vegetables Processing Plant was founded. In 1993, “Tomasovia” established its connection with SVZ International B.V. and three years later was acquired by the company and renamed SVZ Poland. The site began production of vegetable and fruit concentrates in 2005, with an upgrade to include IQF and a new puree line coming in 2013. Yet another updated puree concentrate production line was installed in 2016, when the plant was also honoured with the TPM — Total Productive Maintenance Excellence Award.

The production plant that would become SVZ Belgium achieved the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety basic quality level in 2001, followed by BRC high level by the end of 2002. The next year saw the addition of a cold storage area to cover a total of 12,500 pallets, as well as additional investment in converting the steam boiler installation from heavy fuel oil into natural gas, and an upgrade to the deep-freeze filling line. 2003 also marked the installation of new-at-the-time ERP software, helping improve

logistical support and provide a smooth transfer of information to the purchasing, sales, and quality departments. Twenty years later and the improvements are still going, with the plant's acquisition of a new, more efficient, and eco-friendlier pasteurizer that extends our capacity while protecting the planet.

There has been a similar story of gradual optimization at our SVZ Spain processing plant. Starting construction in 1985, the site became operational in 1987 with its IQF line. An aseptic puree line was added in 2005, followed by a major upgrade in 2017, including the installation of LED lightning in our production areas to help lower energy consumption. Our latest improvements to date have been an overhaul of our aseptic puree line to reach a higher capacity (10.000 litre/hour) along with the building of a -18 degrees storage room with a capacity of up to 2,000 pallets, an important investment given the growing need for effective cold storage.



# Efficient and sustainable operations

## Cutting energy consumption

**One of the biggest challenges we face as a company committed to sustainability, is energy usage.**

Big issues often require big solutions, so over the past decade we have implemented dozens of strategies aimed at reducing electricity, gas, and water usage all with the goal of lowering emissions.

## A non-exhaustive list of our action in this area is as follows:

- LED lighting installed as standard in all the production and storage areas in each of our three main processing plants.
- Machinery insulation added to all heat-producing equipment (i.e., process tanks, pasteurizers, blanching machines, and heat exchangers) at SVZ Tomaszów, reducing energy waste and removing the need for additional air conditioning.
- Investment in a system that recovers heat from ammonia waste at SVZ Tomaszów. Thanks to this investment in 2022, we expect that gas consumption will be reduced by approximately 200,000 m<sup>3</sup>/year. As a result, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be reduced by 360 t/year.
- The introduction of steam accumulators — essentially extensions of the energy storage capacity of the boiler — to help avoid unnecessary energy loss by supplying extra steam during peak times without the need to heat additional water.
- Gas furnace burners replaced regularly to increase efficiency and maximize heat recovery.
- 220 solar panels installed on the plant roof at SVZ Spain, producing 200MWH each year — close to 3.5% of the plant's total energy consumption, equivalent to 44 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.



# Efficient and sustainable operations

## The Supernova Project

**A supernova is a powerful and luminous explosion that signals the start of a major transition process within a star.**

Embodying this idea of powerful, immediate impact, in 2022 we launched a new strategic investment initiative to acquire a new pasteurizer for our Belgium processing plant, named The Supernova Project. The goal here was to boost capacity at Rijkevorsel and reduce our heat consumption. The pasteurization process involves heating liquids at high temperatures for short amounts of time to kill harmful microbes without affecting the taste or nutritional value of the end product. The new pasteurizer significantly increases the capacity of our aseptic puree filling line, while reducing our heat consumption and consequently our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Indeed, we expect the new pasteurizer will reduce emissions by 19% — a crucial step in SVZ's journey to decarbonization.

## Side streams, not waste streams

**We are committed to valorising every part of every fruit and vegetable, not just the juice or pulp.**

The materials left over from our processing operations may seem like waste to some, but we see the potential in what others would throw away. The side streams that result from fruit processing for instance are high in naturally occurring sugar, which can be used in brewing and beverage production to accelerate the fermentation process — making peel and pips a valuable resource.

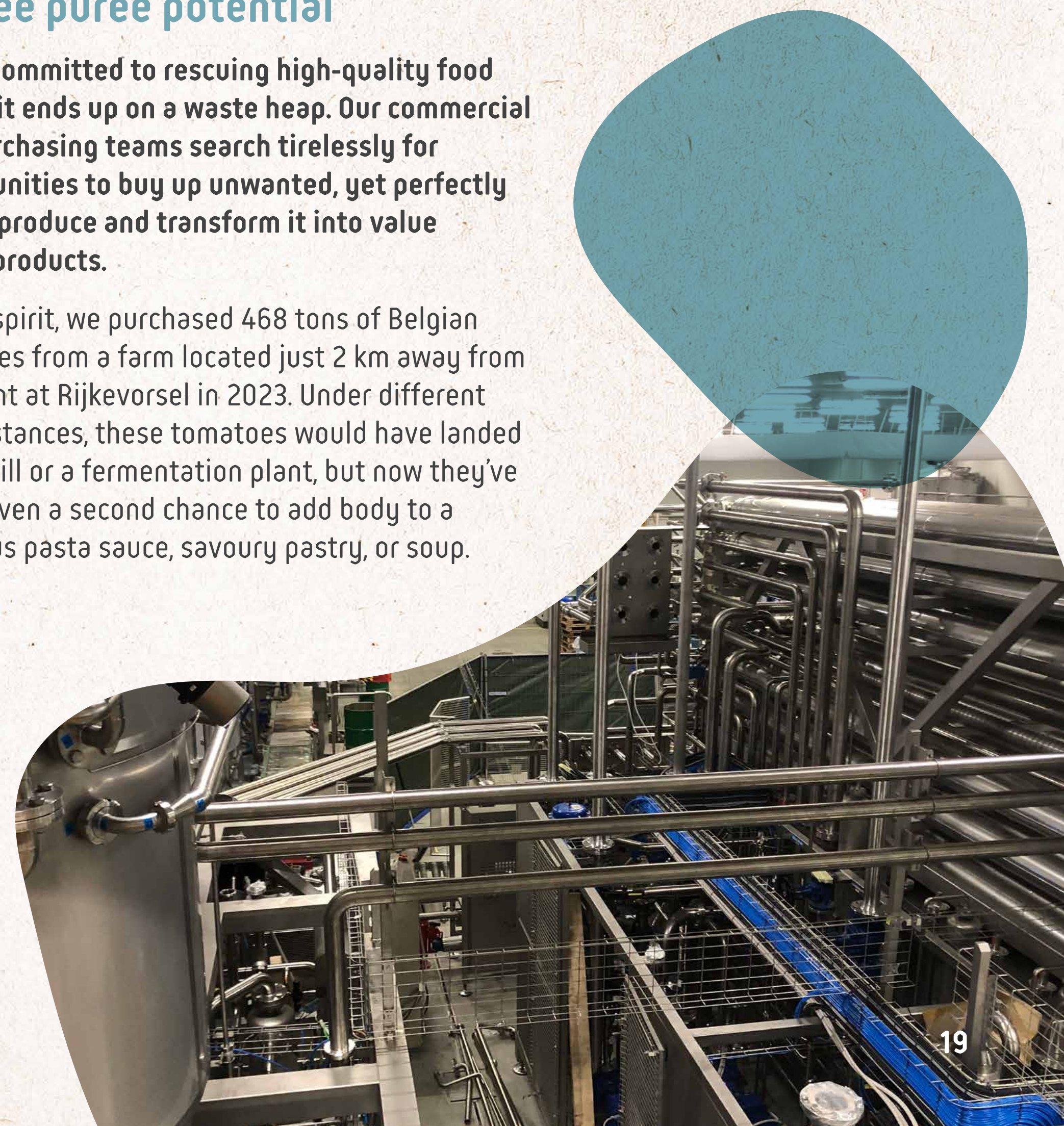
In Belgium, the waste streams from our organic processing line are picked up by a local farmer, who uses them as an active ingredient in their bio-fermentation activities. The organic side streams produced at our SVZ Poland plant are first filtered to separate out seeds and small impurities before beginning a new chapter as raw material for biogas production.

Our focus on proper waste handling equally extends to those side streams which can't go on to a second life in another industry. At SVZ Poland, we measure and register our total annual segregated and mixed waste streams, including hazardous waste, on the BDO ledger to ensure the fulfilment of our recording and reporting obligation.

## They see landfill, we see puree potential

**SVZ is committed to rescuing high-quality food before it ends up on a waste heap. Our commercial and purchasing teams search tirelessly for opportunities to buy up unwanted, yet perfectly usable produce and transform it into value added products.**

In this spirit, we purchased 468 tons of Belgian tomatoes from a farm located just 2 km away from our plant at Rijkevorsel in 2023. Under different circumstances, these tomatoes would have landed in landfill or a fermentation plant, but now they've been given a second chance to add body to a delicious pasta sauce, savoury pastry, or soup.





# Efficient and sustainable operations

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In 2023, drought hit the strawberry farms and it is expected to happen again in the 2024. By demonstrating our proactive strategy on water usage, SVZ is showing farmers that we, as their industry partner, are prioritising the issue - and we can only survive if both parties work together to tackle the same sustainability challenges.

Maarten Lameire,  
SVZ Director of Operations

## Efficient water cycles

**We are constantly looking for opportunities to reuse water within our operations where possible.**

In 2023, SVZ Spain established a plan to reuse part of the plant's processing water and give it a second life in our cooling units, before discharging it. Based on learnings from this activity, we expect to save 5,000m<sup>3</sup> water per year.



The Flanders region of Belgium where SVZ Rijkevorsel is situated is an area which experiences high water-stress. Our technical teams based at the plant therefore recognized the need to accurately account for our water streams, and plan for the possibility of potential future water shortages. In 2023, we launched a pilot project in Rijkevorsel to foster an understanding of where water flows in our processing site and the areas where it could be saved. We are confident that with a better picture of our water input, use, output, and loss, we will be able to create a consistent water balance, even when the natural table is low.

The pilot project uses the **Water Barometer**, a tool developed within the SmartWater Use project, financed by VLAIO and supported by **VITO** — an independent Flemish research organization. The Water Barometer provides a deeper insight into our water streams through approximate 20 water meters expected to be installed at key points around the plant. The data collected by these devices will be invaluable in establishing an actionable water reduction plan based on actual water usage in washing, sanitation, maintenance, cooling, and more.



# Efficient and sustainable operations



## On-site wastewater treatment

We're not just concerned with the water that flows into our plants.

With the exception of our Spain facility, all our processing plants feature an on-site wastewater treatment plant including strainers, a sandbox, and flotation units to remove large particles from the wastewater, allowing it to be safely disposed without any negative impact on human, animal, or plant populations.





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# Valuing People

**If nature is the heart of our business, then people are its soul.**

The human side of sustainability is too often overlooked during discussions of how we can build a better, more responsible food industry for the future. At SVZ, we place people and their needs on par with our responsibility to the natural world, ensuring every person from grower to picker, to drivers and distributors is treated with respect, compassion, and equality.

Here's how we make fruit and vegetable processing, personal:



# Valuing people

## Ethical sourcing in everything we do

**Many core agricultural regions across Spain are currently witnessing mass emigration due to high unemployment rates, food insecurity, poverty, or vulnerability to climate change.**

Temporary or seasonal farm workers play a pivotal role during peak farming periods, ensuring there are enough hands to gather the harvest and maintain food supplies. Establishing responsible employment practices therefore is not just a moral obligation for farms but a practical necessity.

At SVZ Spain, we use the Ethical Trade Forums platform to self-assess and improve our employment processes and those of our partners, including grievance mechanisms, accommodation guidelines, and the establishment of anti-harassment protocols especially designed for temporary workers.

For some specific examples, in addition to its work with the Ethical Trade Forum, a multi-stakeholder collaborative initiative that promotes fair working conditions and respect of human rights in the Spanish agri-food sector, SVZ Spain's partnered with Conexión Social — an independent body that oversees companies' social responsibility to ensuring grower welfare. Collaborative efforts like these offer a great example of our commitment to ethical employment in action.





# Valuing people

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Diversity is our strength. Our tagline at SVZ Rijkevorsel is: “Everybody is welcome,” and we ensure that this is acted upon. This means “practice what you preach on the shopfloor”. As management, we lead by example: we are visible during daily operations, we are open to new ideas, and we encourage camaraderie among our colleagues.

Peter Heijnen,  
Plant Manager at SVZ Rijkevorsel

## Diversity, equity, and inclusion

**It is often believed that an inclusive workplace is one where everyone receives the same treatment.**

However, this could lead to inherent inequity, holding employees back from reaching their full potential. Our plant at Rijkevorsel maintains a commitment to ensuring every employee feels valued, while also acknowledging their unique strengths and how these differences contribute to the success of our organization’s culture and business activities.

The team at SVZ Belgium is made up of at least 16 nationalities, many of whom are members of the Muslim community. We therefore ensure the site is equipped with a calm and comfortable reflection room employees can use during their daily prayers — a seemingly small but incredibly important consideration for making sure every person feels free to express their authentic self while at work.

As a Dutch company headquartered in the Netherlands but with sites dotted across Europe, it is critical for team cohesion that our entire team uses the Dutch language for internal business communications. To help make this a reality, we established free Dutch language lessons open to anyone working at our Rijkevorsel plant.

A highlight of every year, on par with events such as Christmas or Easter, is the plant’s annual Eid al-Fitr celebrations, in which the entire plant comes together to mark the end of Ramadan with delicious Halal food — and of course plenty of sweets!





# Valuing people

## Short-term steps taken to achieve long-term professional goals

At SVZ Rijkevorsel, we develop tailor-made training plans for every one of our new starters, but our dedication to personal development doesn't stop when the probation period ends.

All our team members are invited to follow a full rotation plan in the production department based on their skills metric performance. This is giving them an opportunity to reacquaint themselves with operations outside their day-to-day responsibilities. The aim here is to provide our employees with skills, experiences, and perspectives to build confidence and help them advance in their career.

A key focus for us now is the impact long commutes can have on employees, and what we can do to ensure team members don't spend half their life on the road. Through our mobility scan project, every employee will soon receive a tailor-made plan, detailing the fastest and cheapest way to travel to their SVZ location, hopefully meaning more time spent with family in the evenings, not stuck in traffic.

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We ensure a good work-life balance, and we celebrate successes together — from sharing fresh apples, to yummy ice-cream in summertime.

Dorien Dhont,  
Human Resources Business Partner  
SVZ Rijkevorsel



# Valuing people

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We value our employees and offer great working conditions to all. We focus on maintaining moderate temperatures in our processing site, adapting clothing to the prevailing conditions at work, offering wages higher than the mandatory minimum, and providing tasty and nutritious meals. These conditions also apply to seasonal workers, making them eager to return for the next season.

Małgorzata Cholewińska, Human Resources Manager  
SVZ Poland.



## Safe, discrimination-free workplaces

SVZ International's human rights policy is all-encompassing, comprehensive, and non-negotiable for each team member across all our plants.

During the high harvest season, SVZ Poland uses trusted employment agencies to support production needs and hire migrant workers. During peak seasons we put in place additional checks against forced labour and hiring practices which could violate our worker's human rights.

In the past year, most of our seasonal workers were of Ukrainian descent, which put them in a vulnerable position. To protect these workers, we took pains to make sure each one received their legal working benefits and were registered via the **Just Good Work App** – a digital tool that gathers simple, concise and up-to-date information for all workers or candidates searching for work in Poland in their own language to help protect migrant workers from exploitation during their job search.



# Valuing people

## Mindsets, motivation, and skills to flourish

**In 2022, we partnered with a client and Emerging Leaders to provide leadership soft skills and financial literacy training to 30 permanent staff members of the Frutas Ester — one of our Spanish strawberry partner farms.**

Managers and supervisors at Frutas Ester Farm have received a host of technical training to help them adapt to innovative farming approaches. Here however there was a prime opportunity to further invest in their skillsets and equip them with the skills to lead a culturally diverse team to bigger and better successes.

With the support of Emerging Leaders, we set up a 3-day workshop with the aim to maintain a productive, effective, and cohesive farm community where people feel valued and appreciated. We focused on improving worker and supervisor relationships and encouraging a sense of ownership and engagement among supervisors, as well as methods to improve productivity and cost savings on the farm. Participants of this training reported being very satisfied and were eager to implement their learnings to achieve a productive, effective, and cohesive team where everyone feels empowered to achieve their full potential.





# Valuing people

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The safety system in operation at SVZ Poland embraces employee involvement to work efficiently and safely. Through increased involvement, employees feel responsible for their work. As a result, we all participate in the pursuit of one goal: zero accidents, zero complaints, and zero failures.

Kaja Gardias-Gnap,  
Facility Support in SVZ Tomaszów.



## Health & safety

**Health and safety are fundamental concerns for every business, but doubly so for food ingredients producers like us at SVZ.**

Our plants at Rijkevorsel and Tomaszów, we have partially implemented the Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) approach, which optimizes production to deliver zero breakdowns, zero defects, and zero accidents. A key part of TPM is that it involves equipment operators in the daily maintenance and upkeep of machines. That isn't to say TPM eliminates the need for maintenance personnel. Instead, it teaches operators to take responsibility for the equipment they use by involving them in basic maintenance functions.

TPM has many components, which are sometimes called the eight TPM pillars. Our Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) plan in Belgium and Poland is aligned with the Safety/Health/Environment eighth TPM pillar, which focuses on keeping the workplace safe and accident free. SVZ Tomaszów has also implemented the Kaizen approach to improve production efficiency, safety, and quality, along with a robust safety card system.



# Valuing people

## Rewarding safe behaviour

Our plant at SVZ Tomaszów operates a reward system to promote and improve safety in a way that involves everyone.

Any and every employee is encouraged to submit safety reporting cards, threats, or simply ideas to improve plant safety. The reward system provides financial bonuses — if an employee scores at least 35 points. Employees are informed the number of points scored on a quarterly basis via email.

## The day-to-day business of keeping operations safe

Managers at SVZ Belgium and Poland conduct daily safety rounds based on deployment, meaning each round focuses on one single risk, making it the sole focus of attention.

In the event an incident does occur, we conduct on-the-floor safety rounds to recreate the accident in the environment where it took place, highlighting what went wrong and how to avoid the same outcome in future. At plant level, the SHE team hold regular group meetings with our health and safety supervisors and the plant managers to share best practices and assess safety reports.

## Focus on food safety

SVZ Spain holds the BRCGS Global Food Safety Standard, which means the site is subject to regular audits of our food safety guidelines.

Before the Spanish strawberry season gets into full swing, we deploy training sessions for temporary and permanent workers on the processing site. In these workshops we focus on safety and risk prevention as well as best practices that keep food safe. As well as undergoing an annual SMETA audit, our employees are regularly trained in first aid response procedures to ensure every department and shift are equipped with the skills to preserve and save lives.





# Valuing people

## Career development opportunities

**SVZ Tomaszów strives to improve the qualifications of its employees and broaden their interests to help them achieve goals in and outside of work.**

An example of our strong commitment to career development is the free group English courses we offer to all site employees. These lessons mean we're able to continually improve the language skills of our employees and at the same time help them achieve the next step in our internal promotion program. English classes take place during working hours and all studying materials are provided free of charge, helping remove any barriers that could prevent employees from participating in the course. In addition, each employee is encouraged to take advantage of the numerous courses available on our e-learning platform.

## Younger generations

**In 2023, our processing site in Almonte Spain hosted four promising interns, giving them the opportunity to immerse themselves in plant operations and gain valuable work experience while completing their studies.**

Each candidate was assigned a dedicated manager to support their learning processes and provide detailed progress assessments. We welcome students interested in our business to apply for a position within SVZ and are fully committed to enhancing this professional development while being part of our team.

## Building stronger teams

**Every year, SVZ Tomaszów organizes a team-building barbecue, where every member of the plant's family is invited to share a meal together before the start of the peak processing season.**

A favourite among team members, the day is an opportunity to bring together employees working in different sectors to foster closer ties between departments, as well as simply allowing our team to kick back and have fun!

SVZ Spain takes a similar approach with their annual 'Puertas Abiertas' (open day) event. On this day, the plant welcomes the families and children of its employees to give them a taste of their loved one's daily activities while sharing a meal together.

Events like this mirror those held for our suppliers because they all stem back to the same core goal: bring the plant to the fields and the fields to the plant. This philosophy grounds every operation, every product, every service we provide, helping the whole SVZ family stay connected, and pulling together to create a brighter, sustainable future for the food industry, one fruit and vegetable ingredient at time.





# Our vision

## c2030: Our vision for a better tomorrow, for everyone

**From produce to plate, creating delicious fruit and vegetable ingredients involves the hard work of hundreds of people up and down the supply chain, all pulling together to achieve the best possible outcome.**

The SVZ Sustainability Passport sets out our singular commitment as a company to uphold environmentally responsible, ethical and fair production practices – but to enact change on a global scale we need the entire food industry to work together for a common goal.

“”

**Empowering the food and beverage industry to build a healthier, more sustainable future for all.**

## Enter c2030

This initiative calls on the whole food and beverage sector to grow better together by elevating the conversation beyond just sustainable sourcing to include ethical production, true transparency and facilitating nutritious diets. With our strategic positioning right at the heart of the supply chain, SVZ is ideally placed to act as a unifying force, fostering connections and providing an example of best practice to encourage real positive change across the sector.


A successful project needs a strong foundation. So, to help establish where we are now, and where we want to be for a better future, we created the c2030 Report. Through interviews with journalists, an expert focus group, and a survey of our partners on the ground, the report draws on a kaleidoscope of perspectives to paint an accurate picture of the state of sustainability in the food and beverage sector today.



**Join us on our c2030 journey  
by downloading the report now:**

**Download report**





The road to a greener future will be long and filled with unexpected twists, turns and challenges, but the rewards will be remarkable. SVZ is ready for the ride, are you?

For sustainability inquiries, please contact SVZ's Sustainability Manager, Silvi Navarrete:

[Email Silvi](#)