

EOSTA

CATEGORY:

POLICY | RESEARCH | FIELD | CLIMATE | **BUSINESS**

LOCATION/SCALE:

Netherlands (International)

FOUNDER:

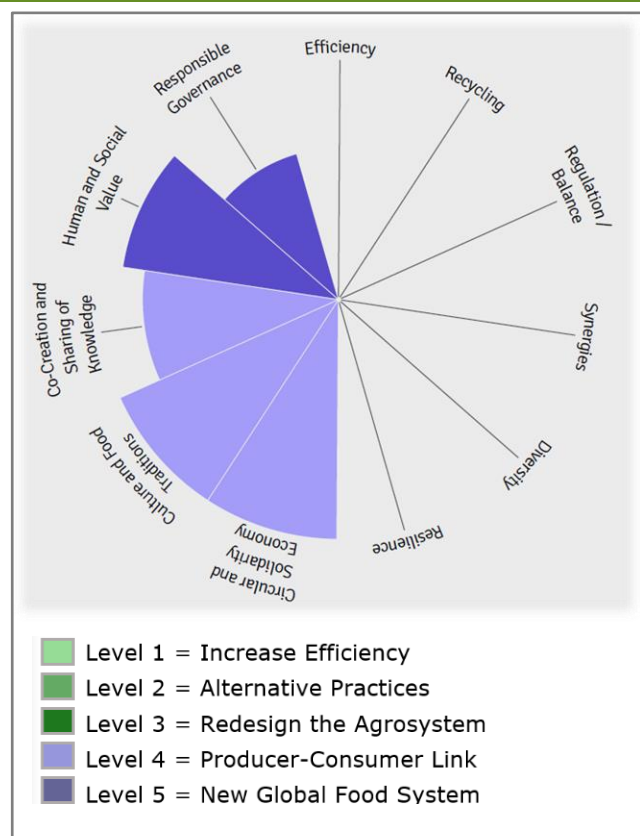
Volkert Engelsman and Willem van Wijk

PERIOD:

1990 - now

IN A NUTSHELL

This award-winning private-sector initiative is dedicated to the production and import of sustainable, organic and fair trade fruits and vegetables. Eosta is an international distributor collaborating with over 1'000 growers spread over six continents. Moreover, Eosta works with major retailers and natural food stores in Europe, the United States, Canada, and the Far East. They provide full traceability of their products, provide extension services to farmers, promote true cost accounting, and build a sustainable market with consumers. This traceability allows buyers to make well-informed purchases at prices fair to producers, society and the environment. As "orchestrators of the production and supply chain," Eosta provides agro-economic and financial advices, packaging, product innovation, logistics, marketing and distribution to their customers. Eosta believes that sustainability cannot be anchored in niches but must instead be mainstreamed and that the private sector has to align with sustainability and be the main driver towards it.



CONTEXT

As in other European countries, efforts to transform our food systems towards more sustainability can be observed in the Netherlands. However, switching from industrial, environmentally harmful, farming methods to organic or biodynamic farming requires a long-term commitment and the engagement of various stakeholders. One important trend EOSTA is building upon is the increasing awareness of sustainability in society: people and thus consumers start realising that "business as usual" is not an option anymore. Additionally, consumers are increasingly conscious of the health impact of nutrition. Thus, EOSTA challenges both food marketing and consumption as well as health rules and behaviours.

OBJECTIVE

Eosta's core values at the heart of their approach are socially responsible entrepreneurship, togetherness, and authenticity, which is further reflected in their mission: to contribute to healthy food, a sustainable environment and social responsibility, or simply stated "Healthy, Organic, Fair". The initiative aims at enhancing sustainability through a 4M approach: 1) Monitor: traceability of its products back to the farmer, 2) Manage: extension services for their growers and farmers, 3) Monetization of external costs and 4) Marketing of sustainability.

KEY INTERVENTIONS

FARM LEVEL:

- By working in close cooperation with partners in academia and different industries such as the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) Switzerland, the University of Copenhagen, the Triodos Bank and Soil and More Impacts, Eosta is able to assist its growers with a wide range of sustainable agriculture services

REGIONAL/NATIONAL LEVEL:

- Eosta products carry a unique three digit Nature & More 'trace & tell' code and/or QR-code that provides retailers and consumers with direct web access to the producer as well as the product's ecological and social impact
- The sustainability flower is a fast quantitative tool to evaluate sustainable achievements that aims at monetizing impact by applying true costs on food, farming and finance along nine separate ecological and social dimensions
- Offer TÜV certified climate neutral vegetables and fruits year-round in the European food market via Soil & More. Besides that, they were the first company to receive carbon credits on organic farming practices.
- Thanks to the integrated supply chain management from farm to retailer, they can guarantee freshness and speed of handling without neglecting the impact on the environment

LESSONS LEARNED/CHALLENGES

Food production and consumption have a massive direct positive or negative impact on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) goals. However, the agriculture and food value chains are very complex and opaque. By controlling the whole supply chain, businesses can ensure that they are avoiding to harm the environment and society.

RELEVANT LINKS & REFERENCES

- Eosta Homepage
<https://www.eosta.com/en>
- Nature & More Homepage
<https://www.natureandmore.com/en>
- Presentation about "The true cost of food" by the founder Volkert Engelsman at TEDx
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBKZ2WGEo8U>

