



WEETABIX FOOD COMPANY

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2024



FOREWORD

I am delighted to be taking over the reins of the Weetabix Food Company and very proud of how we continue to stand by our belief that better breakfasts create better lives.

As home to some of Britain's most famous and iconic brands including Weetabix, Weetabix Minis, Alpen, Ready Brek and Weetos we aim to set a high bar for the category through our commitment to British wheat and to tasty, nutritious products. Our 'Change for Even Better' strategy continues to make progress, with key sustainability highlights this year including:

- ◇ Pioneering work with our growers to explore ambitious plans to further reduce the carbon footprint of the wheat we use to make Weetabix.
- ◇ Reductions in energy consumption, material usage and waste across our business, as well as the way in which we operate our factories and choice of packaging.
- ◇ Ongoing commitments to our colleagues, 74% of whom see us as an inclusive place to work, alongside a focus on future food industry talent.
- ◇ The 10th anniversary of our partnership with Fareshare and Magic Breakfast, which has so far filled over 23 million breakfast bowls for those in need.

While 2024 is a fresh start for me, it is just the latest step on our ongoing journey and I am excited to share this update on our progress.

Colm O'Dwyer

**MANAGING DIRECTOR,
WEETABIX FOOD COMPANY**



CHANGE FOR EVEN BETTER

- ◇ Our sustainability strategy guides us to make progress in four key areas – Sourcing Responsibility, Product Responsibility, Operational Responsibility and Social Responsibility.
- ◇ We know progress on sustainability remains important to all our stakeholders. ‘Change for Even Better’ remains our framework for action, but it is the energy of our people and partners that deliver progress, ensuring sustainability remains part of the Weetabix DNA and creating shared value for our colleagues, communities, customers and consumers.
- ◇ You can find more about our strategy, the governance structure we have in place and how we turn our commitments into action on our website. [weetabixfoodcompany.co.uk](https://www.weetabixfoodcompany.co.uk)

OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 1932 we've focused on producing better breakfasts, and unlike Weetabix itself that takes a lot of different ingredients. From the training and support we offer to our experienced team, through to how we power the ovens to bake perfect biscuits, each offers opportunities for continuous improvement. Here are some of the key ways in which we are putting change for even better into practice.



SOURCING RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ Sustainable wheat – In trials we've successfully demonstrated 50% lower carbon emissions relating to the growing of our wheat.
- ◇ Supplier engagement – We hold all our raw materials suppliers to Weetabix sustainability standards.
- ◇ Certified high impact raw materials (palm oil, cocoa, soy) – Sensitive ingredients are certified by the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) and the Rainforest Alliance (for cocoa).



PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ Plastic & emission reduction – Current trials of reduced plastic wrap are expected to be in stores by 2025.
- ◇ Environmental labelling – 1,000 customers a month have followed our on pack QR codes to learn about how Weetabix is produced.
- ◇ Nutritional best in class – Weetabix Original has all green traffic lights.



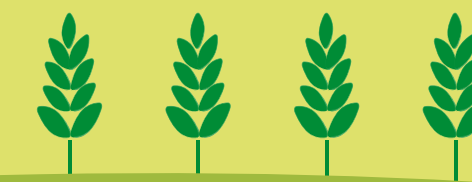
OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ Energy & emission reduction – Upgrading our combined heat and power plant means that 85% of the power for our factory is now produced on site.
- ◇ Environmental stewardship (water) – We now save 5m litres of water per annum and continue to look for ways to continue reduction.
- ◇ Environmental stewardship (waste) – We donate surplus food to FareShare and have had no waste to landfill since 2015.
- ◇ Carbon footprint & Science Based Targets – Scientific trials are reducing nitrogen fertiliser use for wheat.



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ Apprentices & employee wellbeing – We have welcomed 10 apprentices across manufacturing, engineering HR & IT.
- ◇ Belonging - 74% of our colleagues see us as an inclusive employer which is up 5% year on year.
- ◇ Local & national charities – Through Magic Breakfast and Fareshare we have donated 23 million bowls of cereal to those in need.
- ◇ DEI – Our mean gender pay gap is just 0.5%.



PILLAR 1 SOURCING RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ Scope 3 emissions constitute 79.6% of our overall carbon footprint, with 37% linked to our most important ingredient, wheat.
- ◇ The wheat for Weetabix Original is grown within 50 miles of our mills, by circa 120 growers in our Growers' Group. Since 2021, we have followed a clear roadmap to explore ways of producing wheat with a lower carbon footprint.
- ◇ This year marks the third anniversary of our ongoing Carbon Footprint Study. Supported by agricultural data firm, Map of Ag, we have achieved a thorough understanding of carbon emissions linked to our wheat production. This programme won the FDF Net Zero Initiative in 2024.



- ◇ In 2024 we worked with a Pioneer Group of six growers to explore how nitrogen inputs can be reduced within the annual growing cycle, helping to improve water and air quality and enhance biodiversity. The production, transport and use of nitrogen fertiliser is the biggest contributor to the carbon footprint of wheat production. Soil sampling, climate monitoring and crop testing of initial trials of using less nitrogen fertilisers in small sections of wheat fields have seen reductions in greenhouse gas emissions of up to 50 % compared to the standard emissions factor used for wheat.
- ◇ We are currently assessing the feasibility of expanding the trial to an area of 50 hectares over the next 12 months. By progressing along our roadmap through this test and learn approach, we aim to develop a robust and flexible incentive model for all our Growers Group members to significantly reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from the wheat we source.
- ◇ 2024 saw us update our Wheat Protocol, the set of standards to which our Growers Group farmers operate. This brings it into line with the latest agricultural industry developments and the revised Sustainable Farming Initiative. By offering farmers a choice of actions that reward and support sustainable food production we continue to protect and enhance both local and global natural habitats.



PILLAR 2 PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ How we develop, market and package our products is a key area of focus.
- ◇ 2024 saw us add a Navilens code to our packaging, to help those who are partially sighted to navigate the supermarket aisle more easily. We took the redesign opportunity to include the fact that we use home grown British wheat for all our Weetabix Original on pack alongside profiles of many of the farmers within our Growers Group.
- ◇ A QR code allowed consumers to learn more about the journey their Weetabix makes from field to spoon and the efforts this group puts into the protection of the environment and wildlife. In April 2024, nearly 1,000 consumers scanned this code.
- ◇ We have also worked with our Growers Group to host farm visits for buying teams from major supermarkets such as Asda and Aldi. These help them see the Weetabix Way first hand, and experience our commitment to making tasty, nutritious products in more sustainable ways.
- ◇ Our packaging also has an important role to play in minimising waste, improving recyclability and lowering our overall carbon footprint. A successful trial saw us switch the supplier for the board used for our boxes from North America to Europe, along with carton flap designs that reduce material and glue as we continue to reduce the carbon footprint of our cereal boxes. We are also currently trialling an inner bag with 30% recycled content set to be introduced across all our cereal brands in 2025.

PILLAR 3 OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ Over the past year, energy consumption across our sites has reduced as our operations have evolved. We have continued to seek out improvements through adjustments and upgrades that we can make across our sites, as well as looking to develop a Weetabix Energy Strategy, using recommendations from the Phase 3 ESOS survey completed earlier this year.
- ◇ Although we rely increasingly on renewable energy from the grid to power our manufacturing operations at Burton Latimer, we still generate a significant proportion of energy ourselves through a Combined Heat and Power Plant (CHP). Over the past year, we have upgraded the engines used within this plant to make them more reliable and efficient. Since the overhaul completion, engine availability and efficiency has increased from **75% to 85%**.
- ◇ During the past 12 months, we completed a trial to convert the motors driving equipment within our Weetabix wheat mills to see if they could be made more efficient. The investment to scale and the learnings will be further evaluated and considered in budgeting for our next financial year. We have also upgraded the burners for our gas fired boilers, which we use to create steam used in the Weetabix manufacturing process.
- ◇ Our engineering teams continue to work on expanding the number of energy and water meters we have installed across our manufacturing sites, to enhance our monitoring capability to identify further opportunities for improvement.





PILLAR 4 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- ◇ Supporting our colleagues, encouraging young people into careers and helping those in need through our charity partnerships is key to our social value.
- ◇ Through our membership of MDS, the UK's foremost provider of management training for the food industry, we welcomed nine trainees for 12-month placements. These complement six new manufacturing and engineering apprentices hired in 2024. We have also added HR and IT apprenticeships to our programme.
- ◇ Seven school engagement events were supported, including a Women in Engineering Day held in November. This followed a showcase of the achievements of employees in our Weetabix Early Careers programme in July.
- ◇ Our gender pay gap data for 2023 is just 0.5%, while our median pay gap was 2.3% against the national average of 7.7%. We will continue to focus on extending this lead.
- ◇ Our purpose is to create a culture of belonging at Weetabix where everybody can be themselves. Our sixth annual survey of business inclusivity saw 74% of our colleagues agreeing that Weetabix is an inclusive place to work, representing a 5% increase year-on-year, and reflecting the success of our leadership training programme to champion inclusion without exception.
- ◇ In the face of cost-of-living pressures, we continue to support those who face hardship through our work with charities such as Magic Breakfast and FareShare. In the last 12 months our partnership with Magic Breakfast saw us provide 1.3 million nutritious bowls of cereal to children in need. In our 10 years of working alongside FareShare, we have donated 807 tonnes of food to communities – equivalent to 23 million bowls of healthy, nutritious breakfast.

LOOKING FORWARD

- ◇ The next 12 months look set to be another busy year for our Sustainability Steering Team.
- ◇ We will be progressing our work to develop Science Based Targets and expect to set these before the end of 2024. We will also continue looking for ways to reduce our energy consumption, material usage and waste across our business.
- ◇ We expect to expand our work with the Growers Group and pioneer farmers to trial methods for growing lower carbon wheat on a commercial scale. We look forward to welcoming more stakeholders from our farming community and our customers onto farms growing Weetabix wheat so that we can share our learnings with them.
- ◇ We will also continue working on packaging improvements to deliver further reductions in waste, improved recyclability and lower our overall carbon footprint.
- ◇ And of course, we will continue to work with our colleagues to make sure that they are provided with a safe environment where they can be their best selves and do their best work.
- ◇ Thanks for taking the time to read our update this year. If you are interested in following our sustainability journey or asking questions, you can follow our brands on social media and visit weetabixfoodcompany.co.uk.

