



SUSTAINABLE
FOOD LAB

A GLOBAL NETWORK FOR PARTNERSHIP & INNOVATION

The Sustainable Food Lab is a consortium of business and non profit organizations with a mission to accelerate the shift of sustainable food from niche to mainstream. Market-based solutions require strong and growing networks and collaborations, personal leadership qualities and deep content knowledge. The Sustainable Food Lab is the hub for all three.



THE FOOD LAB IS CHARACTERIZED BY:

- **Action-oriented** cross-sector collaborations, platforms and pilots
- **Excellence** in project and workshop design, facilitation and management
- **Deep networks** of private sector, research, and NGO partners

THE LAB USES THESE CAPABILITIES TO:

- **Prototype** supply chain innovations
- **Support** the development of effective leadership qualities and organizational strategies
- **Host** industry collaborations built on action and iterative learning

“Sustainable Food Lab brilliantly brings together diverse stakeholders to develop actionable solutions. They strike the balance between realism and idealism, pushing us to stretch our thinking and willingness to collaborate for shared benefit.”

—Anna Swaites,
Head of Water &
Food Security Policy,
SABMiller



THE FOOD LAB APPROACH

Given the urgency, complexity and passion surrounding the challenges of creating a more ecologically sustainable food system that works for farmers, farm workers, consumers and businesses, the Food Lab approach is to create space for the truly new. The innovations that spring from this space capitalize on diversity in perspectives and commonality in goals. The Sustainable Food Lab's approach is applied in three content areas:



“There is real value in the Food Lab’s work convening companies engaged in measuring the status of their smallholder supply chains. By sharing our learning and collaborating to measure performance we avoid duplication of efforts and gather actionable data more efficiently.”

—Duncan Pollard,
Nestlé



AGRICULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

The Food Lab engages with global supply chains that include small-scale producers and farm labor because this is the intersection of rural poverty; high value, at-risk landscapes; and, demand from companies aligned with potential supply from smallholders. The Food Lab supports companies in linking small-scale producers to markets with a focus on building income diversification and on-farm resilience. Specific activities include:

- **Supply chain projects** that optimize commercial advantage for lead companies and benefits for small scale producers
- **A research partnership** with the Centre for Development Innovation at Wageningen University on the keys to scaling inclusive supply chains
- **The development of a global framework** for measuring supply chain performance for small farm commodities



“Through Food Lab organized activities both Unilever and Oxfam have enlarged our views of each other’s goals and developed practical projects to collaboratively achieve those goals. The Food Lab intentionally cultivates cross-sector leadership, and these leadership capacities benefit our organizations.”

—Jan Kees Vis,
Global Director Sustainable
Sourcing Development,
Unilever



AGRICULTURE AND ECOLOGIES

The Sustainable Food Lab supports food and beverage companies to operationalize their environmental goals and commitments through impact measurement and collaborative initiatives in sourcing regions.

Among these projects are:

- **The Cool Farm Alliance** a forum for building standardized industry-wide sustainable agriculture tools and methods starting with The Cool Farm Tool
- **A Water Risk Collaboration** co-managed with SAI Platform that enables global companies to join forces in shared sourcing regions with high water risk
- **A Small Grain Initiative** to explore the viability of increased small grain production in the US as a means of diversifying corn and soy rotations, meeting demand in US markets and improving soil health
- **An Organic Grain Collaboration** among U.S. based organic brands and retailers to increase the supply of organic grain for people and livestock



LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Sustainable Food Lab is designed to build not just the projects and networks but also the personal leadership capacities of those working towards a more sustainable global food system. A close partnership with the Sloan School of Management at MIT has always been at the core of the Food Lab's offerings including:

- **Facilitating** strategic planning, organizing supply chain summits, and supporting pre-competitive industry groups , learning journeys, and working conferences
- **One-on-one** professional coaching and facilitation of coaching groups among peers in businesses or NGOs
- **Direct links** to state-of-the-art leadership development opportunities from the Academy for Systemic Change, the Society for Organizational Learning, and the Presencing Institute





JOINING THE SUSTAINABLE FOOD LAB

Critical to the effectiveness of the Sustainable Food Lab is a committed core of member organizations who support and guide the work of the Lab. Members are global thought leaders from different sizes and kinds of organizations. Members identify and prioritize issue areas and engage the diverse organizations needed to break new ground toward mainstream food system sustainability.



BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP INCLUDE:

- **Complimentary registration** for Food Lab Annual summits and Learning Journey, two registrations for \$20K member organizations, one for all other members
- **Participation** in a collaborative project at a reduced cost
- **Discounted rates** on professional services from the trusted and respected Food Lab staff team
- **Opportunities to nominate** colleagues for peer-to-peer leadership coaching groups
- **High quality relationships** with diverse and influential leaders from companies, civil society, and government
- **Participation in the Food Lab Advisory Board** – with quarterly planning calls to review progress, suggest specific invitation-only events, and shape the communities of practice facilitated by the Lab around topics such as measurement, inclusive business with small scale producers, climate change in agriculture, and water risk



“The necessity of industry collaboration is clear as we consider the inherent complexity of managing biology-based production systems. That’s why Mars has joined the Sustainable Food Lab.”

—Kevin Rabinovitch,
Global Sustainability Director,
Mars, Incorporated



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