

How McCain is working towards a sustainable food chain in SA

The world's population is expected to increase by more than 35% by 2050. Therefore, it is crucial that food producers find ways to support this growth while minimising their environmental impact and adapting to disruptions in the food supply chain brought on by climate change.



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Colleen Francis, category and marketing director at McCain Foods South Africa, says that along with the above, and in South Africa specifically, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted shortcomings in the country's food supply chain and shone a spotlight on food security and the plight of vulnerable communities.

As such, it is now more important than ever for food producers and supply chains to accelerate efforts to build a sustainable future - one in which they produce less waste, address food security, and adapt to changing consumer behaviours and disruptions in the food supply chain.

With this in mind, McCain recently released its 2019 Sustainability Report, in which it outlines its sustainability commitments in alignment with the United Nation's key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which the company believes it can make a positive contribution to by 2030.



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Lauren Hartzenberg 7 Aug 2020



Seven global goals

"We've mapped our key sustainability initiatives to the 17 SDGs and identified seven goals where we believe we can maximise our resources and relationships to the greatest effect globally and in South Africa in order to address and mitigate these challenges," says Francois Tasmowski, senior director McCain Global CSR.

By delivering its Global Sustainability Strategy, the company says it aims to make a positive contribution to these seven global goals. As such, Tasmowski outlines the United Nations SDGs below and how the company aims to make a positive contribution to them in South Africa:

Zero hunger (SDG 2): "Ending hunger, food security and malnutrition for all will require continued and focused efforts. As such we have ongoing community feeding programmes with Food Forward SA as well as regional beneficiaries, whilst we also assess the opportunity to launch a pilot project, leveraging sweet potato to address malnutrition and support local livelihoods."

Clean water and sanitation (SDG 6): "We have committed to achieve a 15% improvement in water-use efficiency in our two potato and vegetable processing plants in South Africa by 2025, especially due to the fact it is a water-scarce country. In addition, we will be contributing significantly in funding towards the Safe Water Project in Delmas, which will positively impact the lives of the people in the community."

Affordable and clean energy (SDG 7): "To reduce our carbon footprint, we have planned solar panels at both the Springs and Delmas sites, which will result in a reduction of 9 000 tonnes of CO2 emissions."



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Decent work and economic growth (SDG 8): "Increasing labour productivity is essential for financial growth. We promote this by stimulating employment and developing knowledge and employability skills in rural areas. In South Africa, we will also finalise 225 learnership and graduate programmes by 2025."

Responsible consumption and production (SDG 12): "McCain has committed to four goals in support of promoting smart and sustainable farming in South Africa, which it intends to achieve by 2025. These include reducing average transport distance from farm to plant by 16%; increasing potato crop usage from the current 93% to 97% through a combination of varietal and local speciality potato production; implementing optimised soil irrigation systems on 1,500 hectares per year; and increasing the number of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)-certified growers from 39% to 100% by 2025."

Climate action (SDG 13): "This is one of the single largest threats to humanity as well as the business. Tasmowski says the company's sustainability journey is underpinned by its purpose to celebrate real connections through delicious, planet-friendly food. "This articulates our belief that connecting people through delicious food that is produced responsibly is how we create enjoyment today and a more sustainable planet tomorrow."

Partnerships for the goals (SDG 17): "We aim to establish and evaluate partnerships for onsite solar and wind generation in our plants in South Africa. We will also continue to identify new projects that will help us reach our 2030 target such as our partnership with Pick n Pay in their participation in the [global 10x20x30](#) which aims to reduce food

waste."



RCL Foods joins global food waste and loss initiative 10x20x30

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A large focus for McCain is also to partner with its growers to provide advice and help to future-proof their operations when it comes to sustainable practices.

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