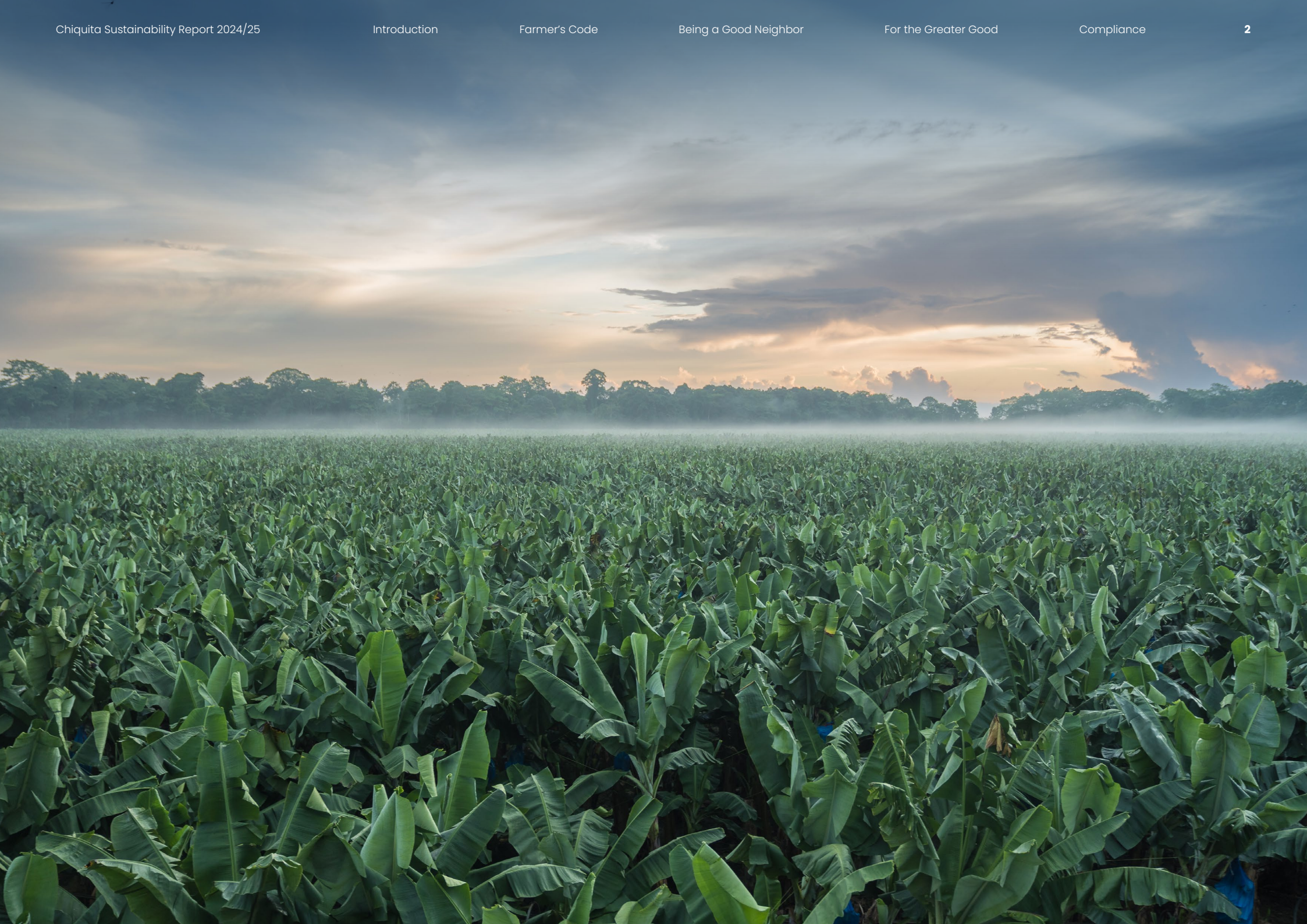





Behind the Blue Sticker

Sustainability Report
2024/25





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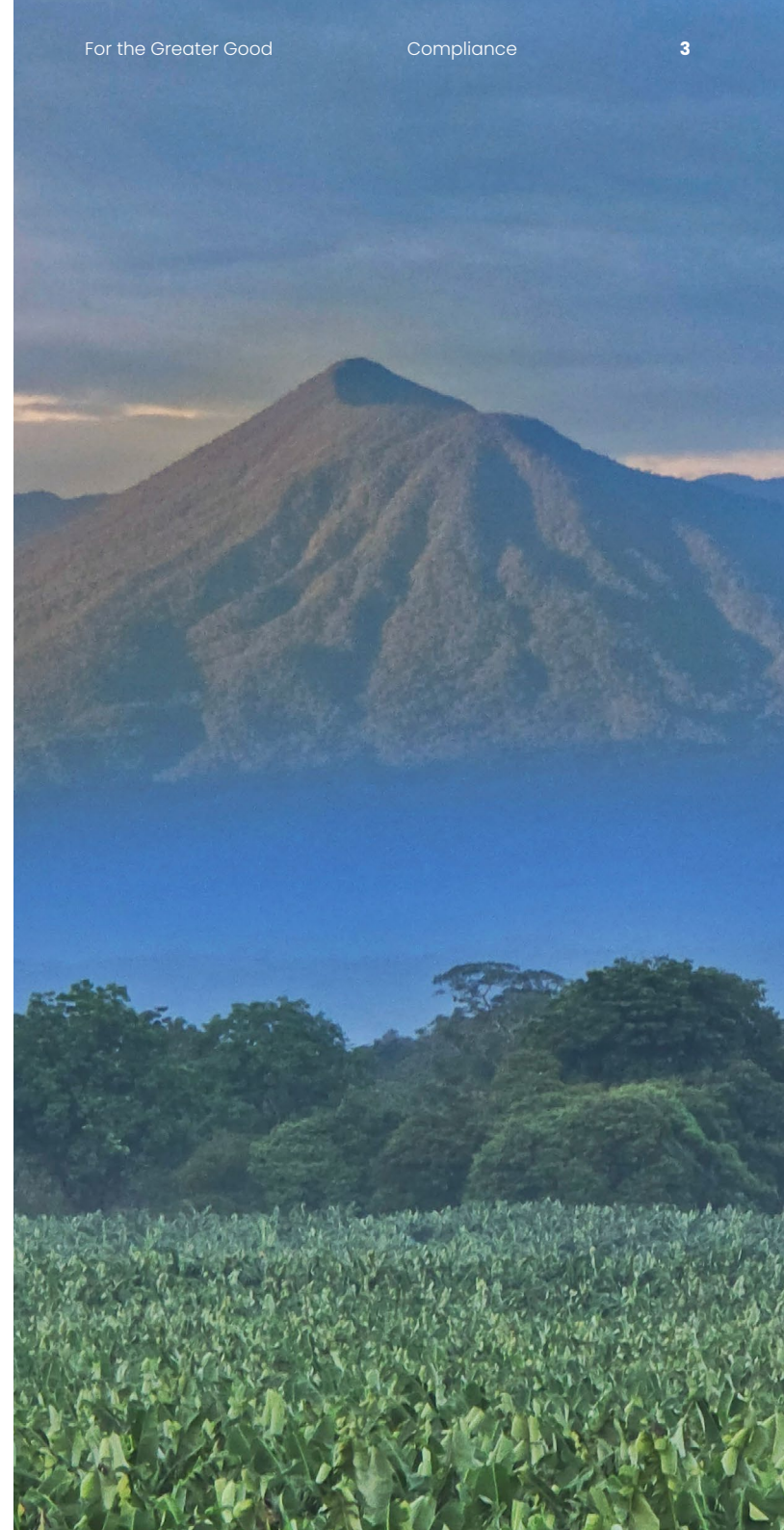
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Welcome to our 2024/25 Sustainability Report

For 70 of the 150 years of our company, the Blue Stickers that are an icon of our brand have been the seal of high quality fruit, a celebration of fun, and a way to help tell our sustainability story. In this report, we're going behind the iconic Chiquita Blue Sticker to share our goals, successes, challenges, and future ambitions – documenting our progress across the two years.

About this report

Since 2015, when Chiquita entered new ownership and underwent a transformation, the organization of our sustainability efforts has remained consistent. This moment drew a line under many of the practices that started with the United Fruit Company in 1899. Its long history was not always something to be proud of. We cannot change the past – only learn from it.

Chiquita's new leadership, governance, and actions bear no resemblance to past times. We are focused on the future, taking care that our actions reflect the best we can do with the knowledge we have today.

Substantiating our best requires transparency. Recognizing this, in this report, we share our successes over the past two years, but we also share the work we still have to do. We have waste, we have accidents, we have industrial disputes, and we have shortages in supply. At the same time, we pay living wages to all our employees, invest millions of dollars in banana disease research that will aid food security in banana-growing regions, and donate millions of bananas each year to the charity Feeding America. On balance, we believe we create shared value for all our stakeholders while delivering healthy, affordable bananas to consumers all over the world. We've structured this report around our three key strategic pillars: The Farmer's Code, Being a Good Neighbor, and For the Greater Good.

Where we claim something, we only do so with independent verification. If you would like to know more about anything within this report, please contact us at sustainability@chiquita.com.

If you are reading this report in print form, as long as you recycle it when you're done, it took 450g of carbon to produce. This has been included in our 2024 carbon inventory. It is made from 90% recycled material, and all inks used are water-based and biodegradable. The report is fully recyclable through normal wastepaper streams.



A message from our Sustainability Director

Being transparent depends upon sound data; during 2023 and 2024, we invested in a cloud-based solution that links to our operational systems and creates an auditable, secure repository for sustainability data. This means that now, farm-level consumption data is stored alongside its accompanying carbon footprint.

As supply chain corporate responsibility starts to become enshrined in law across many of our markets, we believe the transparency our systems enable will be key. Through this, we can demonstrate to our customers that we know and understand the risks within our operations and supply chain and that we have effective mitigation in place.

In this report, we aim to demonstrate that we have been – and continue to be – focused on the material issues that have greatest impact, but also issues toward which we can make meaningful positive change. These issues are food waste, Tropical Race 4 (TR4), and carbon emissions.

We've also continued our long-term reporting on topics such as wages, safe working conditions, grievance mechanisms, and the use of plant protection products.

"We are in an intense period in which our collective actions are having highly significant impacts on our planet's agricultural systems and climate. We must carefully choose the changes that we make, and not seek to overly simplify processes that have taken generations to develop."

Peter

Peter Stedman

Sustainability Director



A message from our President

Today, a state of stress seems to be the new norm in global supply chains. In our last sustainability report, I detailed my personal experience of the impact of two extreme weather events – hurricanes Eta and Iota, both caused by climate change – and their impact on my home country of Honduras. We are farmers at heart and the devastation of thousands of hectares of land was extremely upsetting for me personally and our entire team.

Two years later, the challenges are different, but the level of uncertainty remains high. Conflict is spreading to more areas of the world, and several key countries for banana production in Latin America have experienced social upheaval. Simultaneously, TR4, a soilborne fungus that Cavendish bananas are highly susceptible to, has spread to three confirmed countries in Latin America. TR4 is only detectible once it has been in the soil for 12 to 24 months, so it is highly likely the spread is greater than we currently know.

The challenges are all set against the backdrop of the race against climate change. We have ever-less time to make meaningful changes to our global production and consumption models if we are to keep global temperature increases within 1.5°C of preindustrial levels and avoid their worst impacts.

Climate change and the imperative to fight it is creating real costs. In 2021, we reported that average rainfall across our operations fell by 16% between 2000 and 2020. This is leading to increased costs for irrigation, and the costs of establishing it in areas that were previously 100% rain fed. The investment needed to nurture soil health and biodiversity is also increasing as we seek to reduce carbon emissions from inorganic nitrogenous fertilizers. Alongside this is the trend that all agricultural operations face – agriculture is hard work and as real incomes in Latin America continue to rise, the costs of labor, due to fewer people wanting to work in the sector and general wage inflation, is having a significant impact on costs.

Throughout this report, we reflect on the strength of our business to mitigate some of these short-term challenges and the investments that we are making to help address the long-term ones. This includes the positive action we are taking to decarbonize our production, to preserve biodiversity, and to promote bananas as a part of a low-carbon, plant-centered diet.

Above all we will continue to prioritize the health and wellbeing of our people and communities. They are the heart of our business and their success is our success.



"If sustainable choices are only accessible to the few, then our efforts to tackle climate change will fail."

Carlos

Carlos López Flores
President

¹ <https://www.fruitnet.com/eurofruit/is-it-time-for-a-fresh-look-at-bananas/249150.article>

About Chiquita

Although we are 150 years old, the heart of Chiquita is still young. At Chiquita, we always strive to lead with our vision for the future, and to that end, we are proud to say that sustainability and respecting people and the environment are among our top priorities.



At Chiquita, we operate through “principled embeddedness” – the idea that our actions aid sustainability, because they are at the core of our business operating model, delivered by all our teams. This model is grounded in a sense of place – within the communities where we are located. It also hinges on a sense of time – we act for the long-term benefit of our business, communities, and broader industry.

We want Chiquita to be the banana of choice in every market we are in, providing our customers with the very-best-quality product and service right from our farms to retailers’ shelves. Together, we want to create shared value for the Chiquita brand and our customers, suppliers, associates, and community. We want to do this in the spirit of doing well and giving back, with respect for the environment and everyone involved in our business – embodying the idea that the Chiquita seal outside means the best inside.

150

years of history, nine years of heritage²

70

years of our brand

20,000

employees

10

countries of operation

47

countries where we sell bananas

² Chiquita was acquired by Brazilian companies Cutrale and Safra in 2015.

Our strategic vision

Every day, every minute, somewhere in the world, someone is eating a Chiquita banana. Those bananas come from farms in Latin America, and we work to ensure that, from farm to consumer, our business processes are sustainable and efficient.

Chiquita has a long-term strategy in place to increase the sustainability of banana production: It is called the "Behind the Blue Sticker" approach. The program grows and evolves each year, but since 2015, we have consistently reported on our three focus pillars.





Farmer's Code

Our work on our own farms and in all our operations

Our farms, and the thousands of people who work on them, are at the heart of our business. We promote farm rejuvenation and reengineering, aiming to improve efficiency, increase yield, reduce waste, and make a more positive impact. We empower our employees by fighting discrimination and by ensuring representation and decent livelihoods for all. We also run initiatives that make sure our employees get the right training and support and are healthy, safe, and motivated in their daily work.

[Read more on page 14](#)



Being a Good Neighbor

The commitment we make to our communities

Being a Good Neighbor means more than just providing employment. We have a duty and commitment to our communities, and we know that their success translates into our success. We protect, restore, and foster biodiversity and reforestation in the areas in which we operate. In addition, we feel that helping children is where we can have a significant positive and long-lasting impact. Helping children get a good primary education through our "Children and Education" initiative is one of the ways we do this.

[Read more on page 23](#)



For the Greater Good

The actions we take for the betterment of the industry and our planet

400 million people in 135 countries rely on the banana industry. We owe it to them to preserve and maintain the banana crop, including by doing our part to help protect the planet and eradicate banana diseases. We are committed – in cooperation with associations, scientists, academics, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders – to pursuing our "30by30" carbon-reduction program and finding a global solution for TR4.

[Read more on page 31](#)



Highlights 2023-2024



All Chiquita employee wages

are above the national benchmark published by the Global Living Wage Coalition

[Read more on page 16](#)



0.81% lost time rate

for our logistics function, well below the average of 4.6% for port operations

[Read more on page 17](#)



60% reduction

in pesticide application per hectare since 2015

[Read more on page 22](#)



120,000 social media interactions

for our Small Changes, Big Difference breast cancer awareness campaign

[Read more on page 27](#)



New biodiversity project launched

in partnership with S Group to enhance connectivity of the Notal Reserve in Costa Rica

[Read more on page 25](#)



5.5 million bananas

donated to Feeding America in 2023

[Read more on page 30](#)



Yellowway One created

a new banana variety with TR4 and Black Sigatoka resistance

[Read more on page 42](#)



Less than 1.5% of bananas

are wasted during our ripening, port, shipping, and distribution operations

[Read more on page 32](#)



Reduced our Scope 2

greenhouse gas emissions since 2019

[Read more on page 39](#)

Where we operate

Chiquita's own operations



Farms and packhouses:

Costa Rica, Guatemala, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama

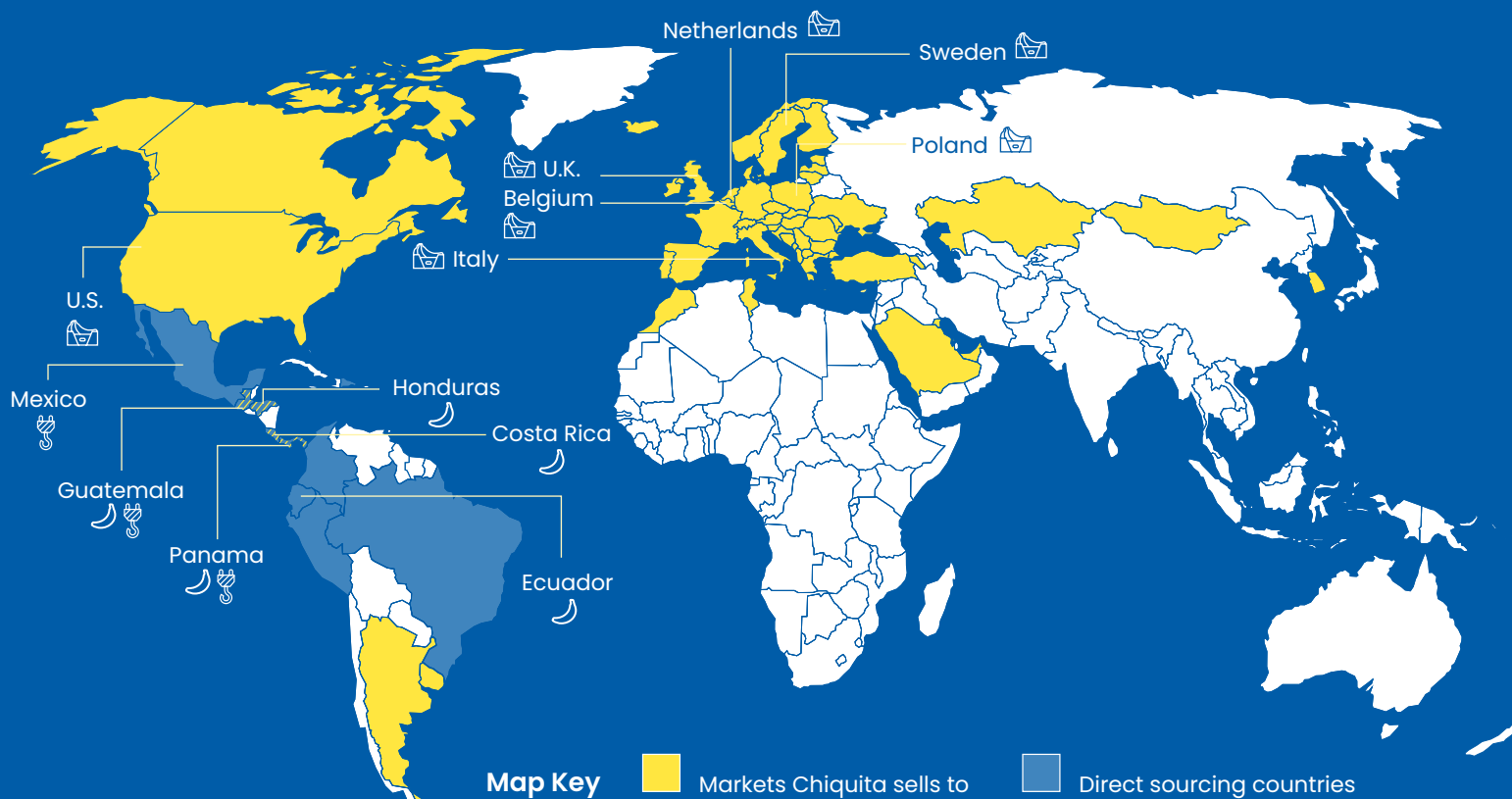


Port operations: Guatemala, Mexico, Panama



Ripening and distribution:

U.K., Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Poland, Italy, U.S.



Our chains of activity

Supplier farms and packhouses (bananas) 93 suppliers

- Brazil
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Guatemala
- Mexico
- Panama
- Peru

Supplier farms and packhouses (pineapples) 16 suppliers

- Costa Rica
- Guatemala

Shipping and logistics 5 suppliers

- North America
- Transatlantic
- Intra-European
- Middle East
- Far East

Agrochemicals and fertilizers 17 suppliers

- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Costa Rica
- Panama
- Ecuador

Packaging 38 suppliers

- U.S.
- Mexico
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Costa Rica
- Panama
- Ecuador
- Colombia

Merchandising 10 suppliers

- Italy
- U.S.
- Mexico
- China

Materiality assessment

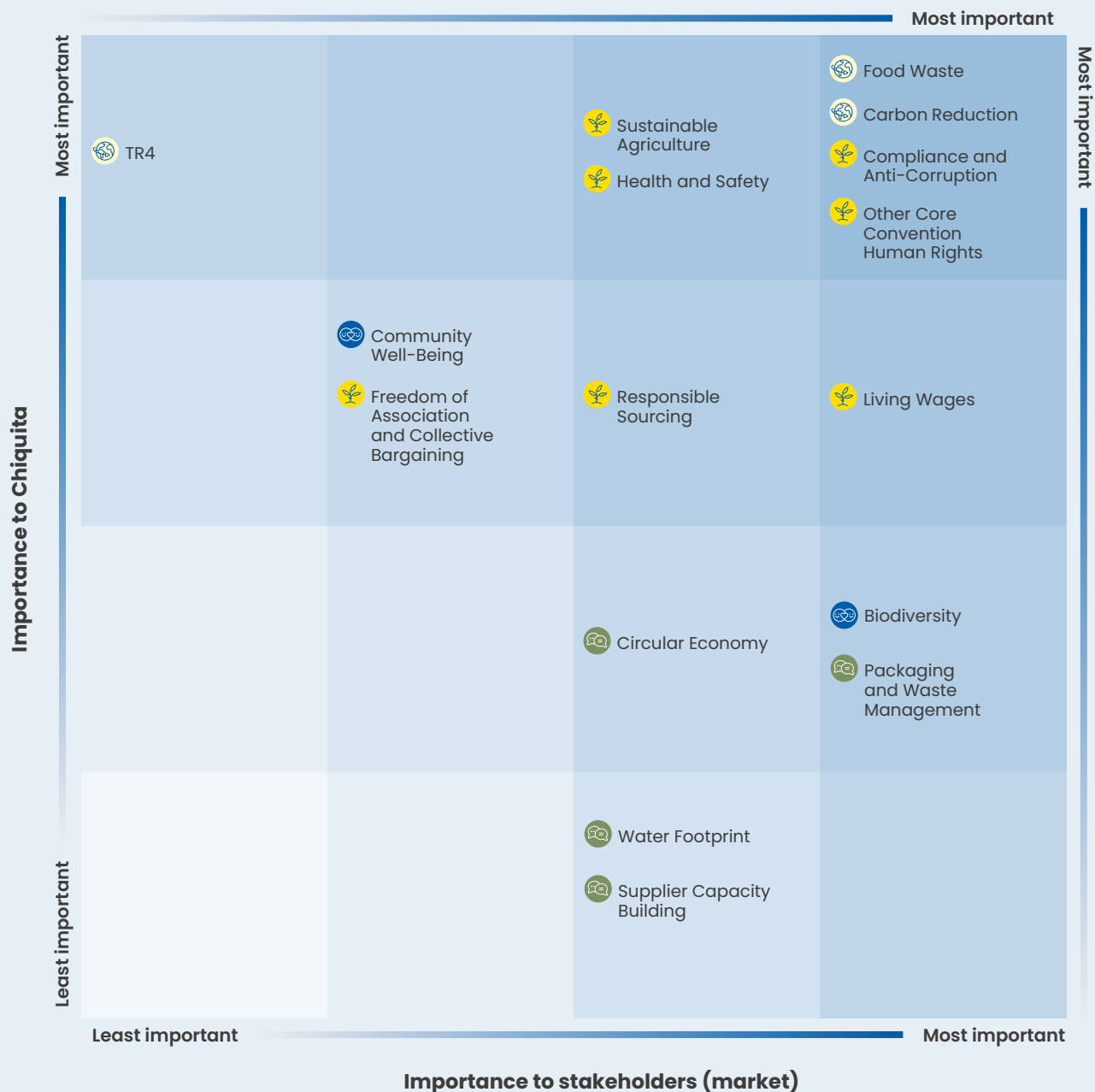
Global banana production occurs in 35 countries and has both direct and indirect impacts on 400 million people. The export banana industry is a very small part in this. It is important therefore to clearly identify, define, and assess the scope of any impact, as the production models and interaction with the operating environment vary widely between sectors.

Identifying key issues

In 2023, we updated our materiality approach and assessment, reaching out to a wider pool of stakeholders. During the materiality assessment process, we reviewed key sources of information from each group. Given the very broad set of stakeholders involved, we have produced two matrices, the first representing the views of stakeholders in our markets and the second representing the views of stakeholders in our producing regions.

-  Farmer's Code
-  Being a Good Neighbor
-  For the Greater Good
-  Emerging Issues

Represents the view of stakeholders in Chiquita's markets



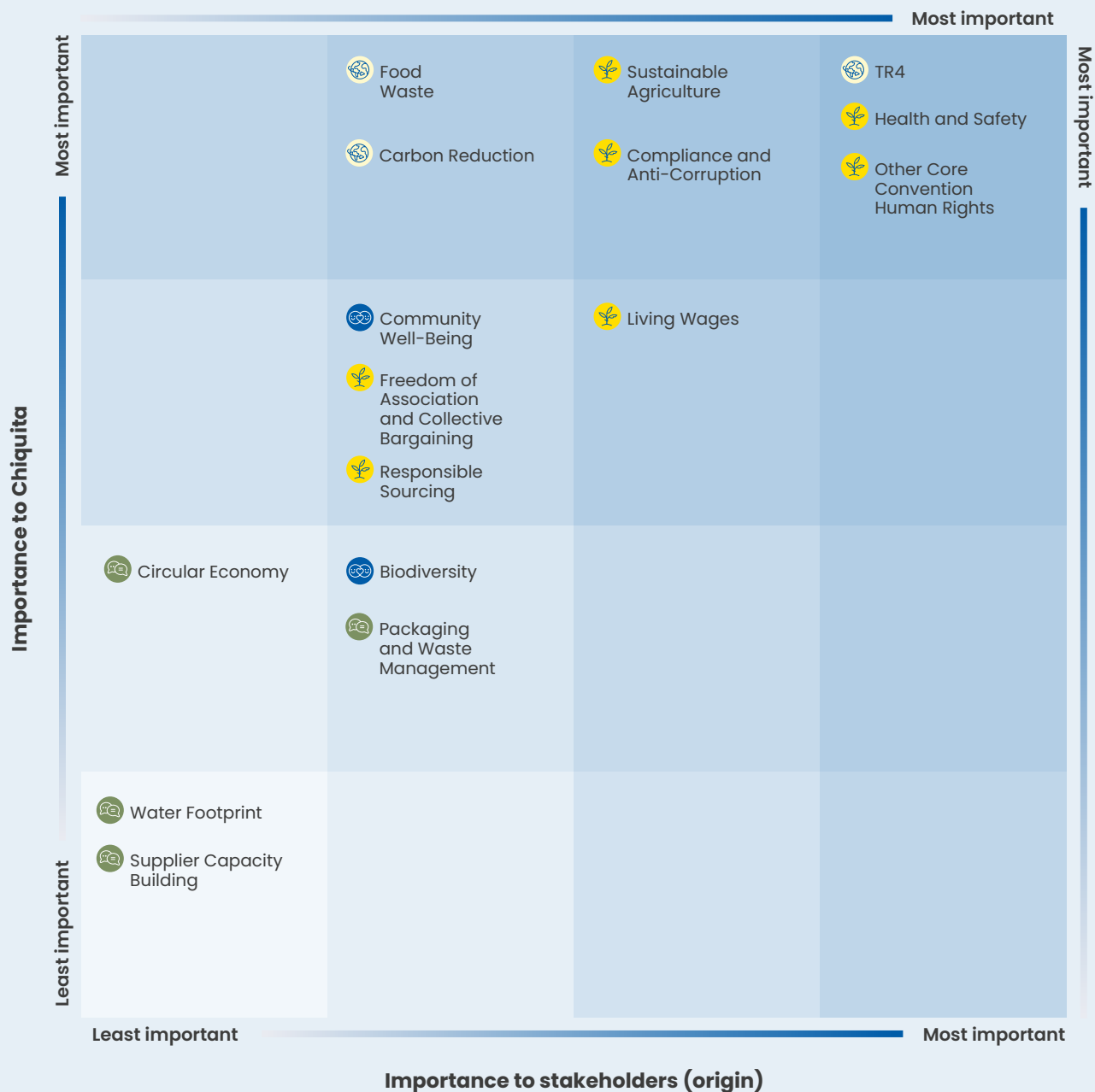
Our stakeholders are the governments in the countries where we operate, industry representative groups, multistakeholder initiatives such as the World Banana Forum, NGOs, worker representative organizations, our suppliers, our competitors, our employees, and our customers and consumers.

Where our assessment has identified a gap, it has helped inform either a change to our sustainability strategy or, more often, a change to our communication strategy – better informing stakeholders of the steps we are taking to address issues that matter to them. An example of this has been the introduction of a social responsibility checklist with our grower suppliers in 2024, based upon customer stakeholder feedback on increased desire to understand access to grievance mechanisms in the supply chain.

This process has also strengthened our business's clear sense of what our most important issues are – both now and going into the future. This has been informed by science, advisers, our wealth of experience, meteorological records, and the strategic direction of our business leaders.

-  Farmer's Code
-  Being a Good Neighbor
-  For the Greater Good
-  Emerging Issues

Represents the view of stakeholders in Chiquita's producing regions



Farmer's Code



We are farmers at heart. We strive to maximize production and productivity while safeguarding the environment and employees' rights through increasingly sustainable farm practices.

The Farmer's Code, our standard way of operating, is what we hold ourselves to. Many of these practices have been developed from decades of experience in our business.

In this section:

15 Welfare, representation, and wages

20 Sustainable agriculture



Welfare, representation, and wages

Chiquita is committed to the fair and equitable treatment of all our employees, and we aim to provide everyone with a platform to reach their full potential.

Our workforce

Globally, Chiquita employs around 20,000 people. This is generally steady across the year due to the broadly consistent harvest cycle of bananas. This enables us to offer stable employment for daily, as well as salaried employees.

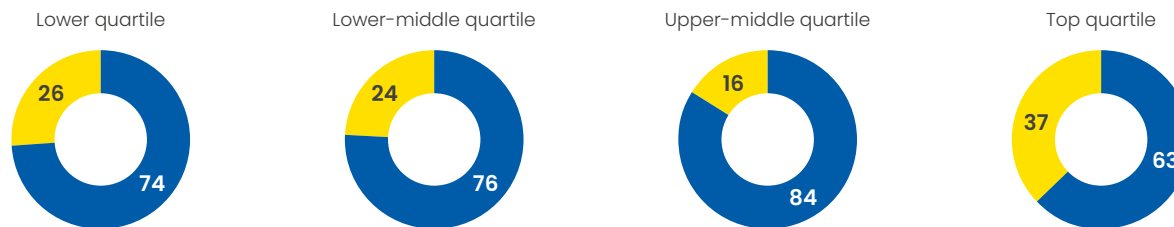
On our farms, 85% of employees are daily workers, and on average, 25% of them are female. The percentage of female employees varies slightly across pay scales, from 22% for the lower pay quartile to 32% for the upper pay quartile. Salaried employees have a similar gender makeup.

While we strive to ensure that, at every tier of employment, our management reflects the diversity of our workforce, one area where we see gender underrepresentation is in our executive group.

Gender demographics across employee groups and pay scales

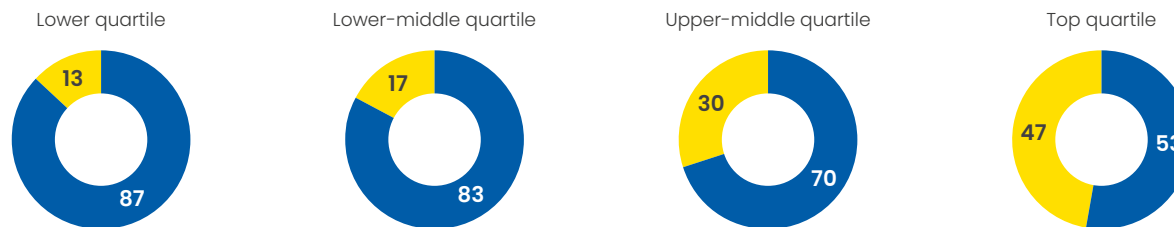
Operative group, 2023³

Operatives perform manual work in our operations.

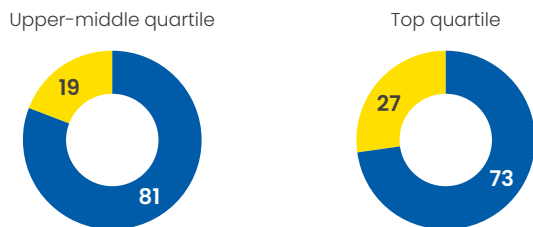


Professional group, 2023³

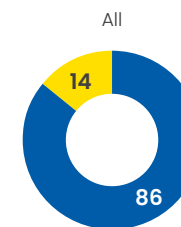
Professional-level employees work in administrative roles throughout the company.



Manager and supervisor group, 2023³



Executive group, 2023³



Key
 ● Male
 ● Female

³ Quartiles refer to the spread of pay.

Employee remuneration

Since 2020, stakeholder focus on wages in bananas has increased, leading to several commitments to enable a move toward living wages by retailers in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, and the U.K. We welcome the intentions with which these commitments have been made.

Chiquita's position on living wages is that they can only be measured over the long term, not year by year, and only be recognized as sustainable if they are freely and fairly negotiated through a process of collective bargaining.

We accept that an independent, systematic, science-based assessment of what a local living wage is can aid this process. That is why, in 2023, we started to sponsor the Anker Research Institute, which exists to bring clarity to living wages and living incomes around the world. The more living wage benchmarks are locally relevant, with the participation of all local stakeholders, the more the industry will use them for guidance.

We sponsor the Anker Research Institute to help bring greater clarity to living wages and living incomes globally.

We do not agree with a blanket approach or any language that talks about being above or below benchmarks based on desktop assessments. We have measured Chiquita employees' remuneration against the SA8000 living wage benchmark since 2004 and the Global Living Wage Coalition (GLWC) benchmark since 2020. Where retail customers request it, we submit salary information to Dutch NGO IDH, The Sustainable Trade Initiative. This information is then independently verified by third parties.

In 2022 and 2023, all Chiquita employee wages continue to be greater than the national benchmark published by GLWC. Key for us is also that all collective bargaining agreements are up to date.

All Chiquita employee wages are greater than the national benchmarks published by the Global Living Wage Coalition.



Employee safety

Our goal is for our employees to work in a hazard-free environment with no workplace safety incidents. That is why our long-term goal is "Target Zero" – no incidents at all. We measure our performance in line with the American Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards.



Safety performance

We monitor and track safety performance across our logistics and agriculture operations.

Safety in our logistics operations

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics average for port operations lost time rate is 4.6%;⁴ our logistics function has less than one workplace incident per 200,000 hours worked, a rate of 0.81%. Each incident on average (2021–2023) resulted in 17 lost days.

At the end of 2023, one of the main ports from which we operate – Puerto Chiapas in Mexico – achieved 11 years without a recordable incident.

Safety in our agriculture operations

Since 2019, when the severity rate was 258, we have achieved a 54% reduction in the average severity rate for incidents in our agricultural operation. This is in line with our ambition for an annual 10% improvement. 2023 rates have risen slightly against the overall trend of reduction.

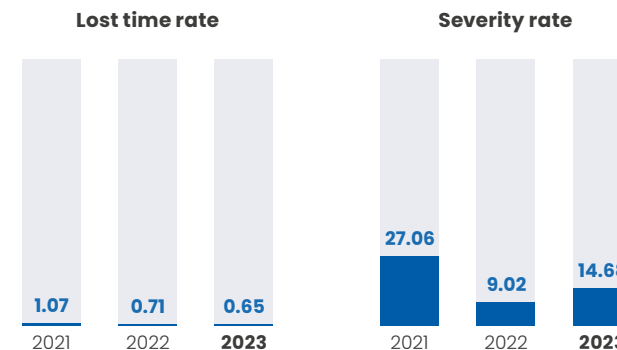
Our average lost time rate of 16% remains above our target of 8%. The main drivers for this have been situations in Honduras and Costa Rica, where a combination of terrain and intense rainfall events has led to many minor slipping incidents on farms and led to employees requiring time off. We continue to monitor this and hope that increased levels of farm-based training on safety practices by our central certification team will help reduce this.

⁴ Source: <https://www.bls.gov/web/osh/table-1-industry-rates-national.htm>

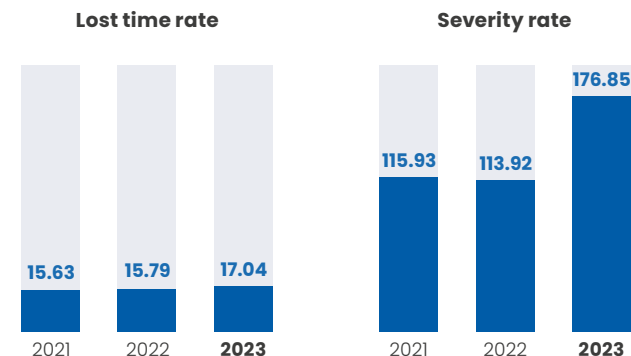
⁵ Lost time rate – lost time incidents (LTIs) per 200,000 hours worked. Severity rate – lost days per number of recorded incidents.

Safety performance snapshot

Safety performance in our Latin American logistics operations⁵



Safety performance in our Latin American agriculture operations⁴



Our global logistics function's **0.81% lost time rate** is well below the average of 4.6% for port operations.

Grievance mechanisms

The existence of grievance mechanisms within our operations allows employees to raise issues where and when they find them. As well as fostering and encouraging social dialogue, we have provided our employees with a Global Helpline to report concerns and ask questions, from what to do in a certain situation to reporting a questionable incident. The Helpline is operated by a third party, Syntrio, and is a highly confidential way to report any concerns. This hotline is a global tool that Chiquita employees can use via phone, fax, email, or web – as explained in the posters located at every office or farm. Trainings are always ongoing to raise awareness and encourage employees to raise their voices.

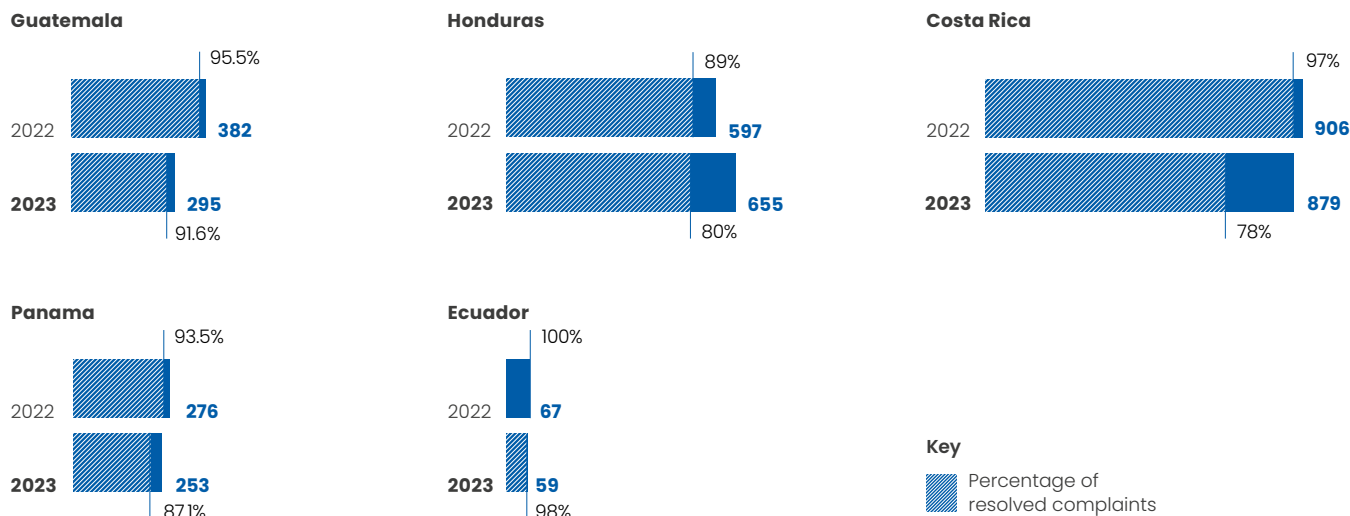
We also monitor our grower suppliers to ensure they have comparable mechanisms.

Lower-than-expected resolution rates in Costa Rica in 2023 are due to the slow progress of infrastructure improvement projects in the Sarapiquí zone farms. These complaints have been raised through the Comités Permanentes in several farms where the work is expected to be completed in 2024.

Complaints received and resolved through Chiquita's Global Helpline

| Action taken | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|-----------------------|------|------|------|
| Disciplined | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Improvement plan | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| No action necessary | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Reassignment/transfer | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Termination | 1 | 5 | 0 |
| Training required | 3 | 0 | 0 |

Claims and complaints filed, and resolution rate facilitated through dialogue



Employee representation

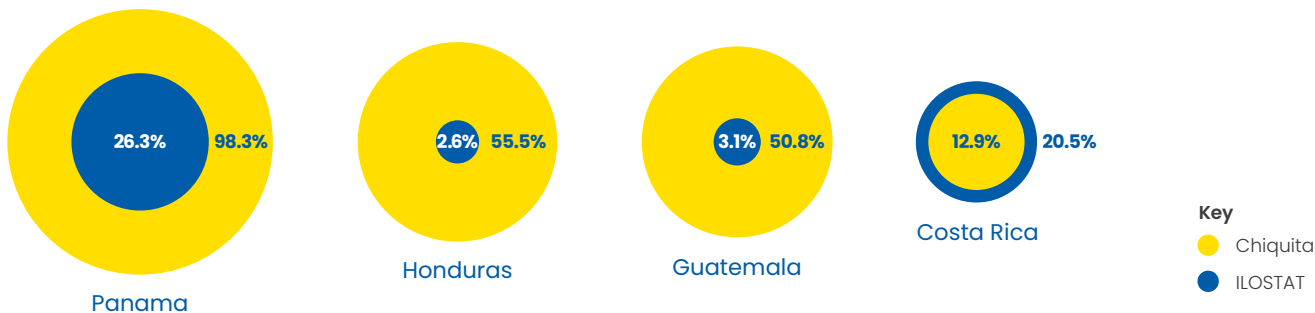
Chiquita supports and encourages employees to be part of organizations that speak for their needs and concerns. Overall, our employees are represented by 31 different organizations. We measure their representation by the trade union density rate,⁶ in line with the guidance from the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Excluding other forms of worker representation, the current average trade union density rate was 59% for 2023. This figure varies significantly between countries.

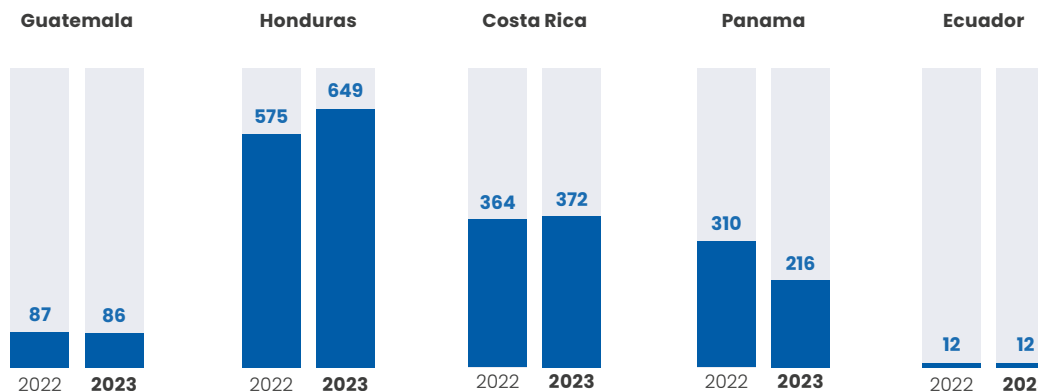
Costa Rica has additional forms of representation. When we consider the engagement of workers through Comités Permanentes, over 95% of workers in Costa Rica have elected representatives engaged in social dialogue with Chiquita. Across the company, this figure is 81%.

We collaborate closely and meet regularly with employee representatives from trade unions and Comités Permanentes. We measure collaboration by the number of meetings in each area, and these are recorded. There are around 1,300 meetings each year, an average of 25 per week. If the number of recorded meetings drops, it does not necessarily mean collaboration has reduced. On the contrary, it often means that collaboration has led to improved communication and that issues have been resolved, and therefore fewer meetings are needed.

2023 trade union density rate compared to latest ILO national average figures



Employee representative meetings per country



It is through this process of social dialogue that collective bargaining takes place. There are seven collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) in place, one of which is the longest-standing CBA in Costa Rica. CBAs detail the remuneration and terms and conditions of

employment for workers. It is very important to Chiquita that this is negotiated between the two parties in a fair and transparent way.

⁶ Trade union density rate shows the number of employees in trade unions as a percentage of the total number of employees.

Sustainable agriculture

We take action to minimize the impact of our agricultural operations on biodiversity, including by employing product rotation, good agricultural practices, and pest monitoring.

Achieving high standards on our farms

Our Behind the Blue Sticker approach is exclusive to Chiquita. To give our stakeholders confidence, we maintain multiple certifications and conduct many audits. Our program includes five standards on our farms:

- Social Accountability International SA8000 Standard
- GlobalG.A.P. (Good Agricultural Practices)
- GlobalG.A.P. GRASP (Good Agricultural Practices – Risk Assessment on Social Practice)
- Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Farm Sustainability Assessment (SAI FSA)
- Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard

No single certification can cover our whole approach

To complement this work, we carry out third- and second-party audits for a range of retail customers, typically aligned to the Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA) format – which measures business practices across four pillars: labor standards, health and safety, environment, and business ethics.

We welcome the transparency that these audits provide, but they do require an increasingly large certification team in each country where we operate. These teams have three main functions:



Undertake internal audits on all our operations



Undertake training for all farm staff on our policies and code of practice



Facilitate and accompany all those conducting second- and third-party audits



Standards in our supply chain

Fruit suppliers

A total of 45 out of our 65 fruit suppliers (bananas and pineapples) hold GlobalG.A.P. certification, and the remaining 20 are organic-certified growers.

Among our banana suppliers, 28 out of 53 suppliers are organic certified and contribute around 12% of our overall volume. Of our conventional (nonorganic certified) banana suppliers, 24 out of 25 maintain Rainforest Alliance certification and all have GlobalG.A.P. certification. Also, 10 out of 12 of our pineapple suppliers hold Rainforest Alliance certification.

While the level of certification in our supply chain is high, following our materiality assessment and in response to retailer stakeholder feedback, we have initiated our own annual check with fruit suppliers to extend our due diligence.

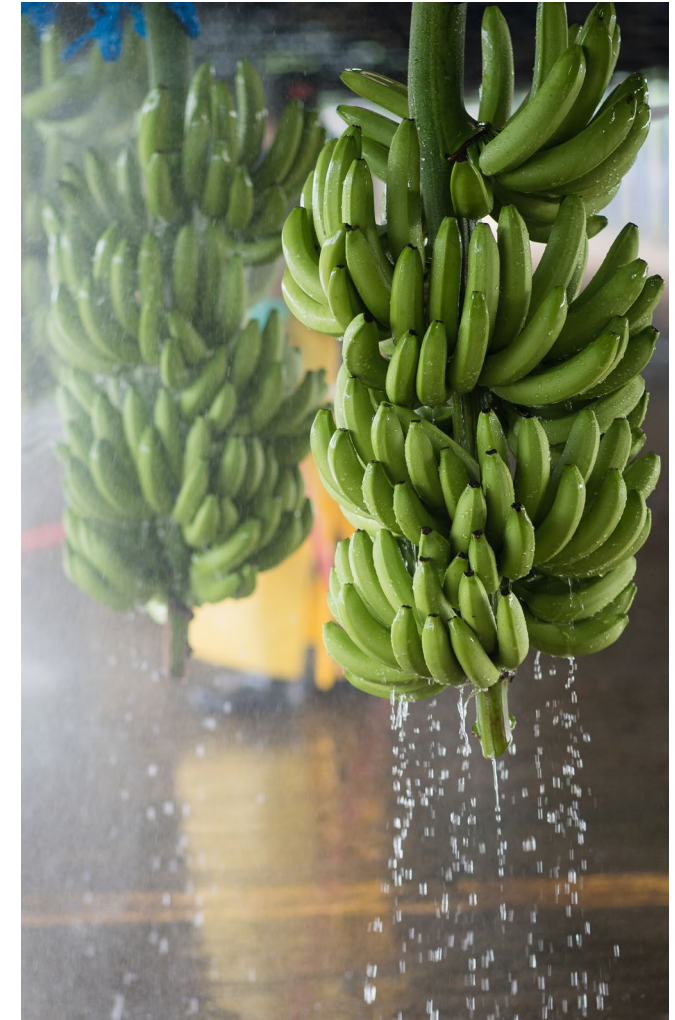


Our quality teams visit grower packhouses and farms each week that they are packing for Chiquita. In January 2024, we initiated a social responsibility checklist to be carried out annually for every grower farm supplying us. The checklist asks management to confirm their understanding of Chiquita's expectations, as stipulated in the supplier contract, for social and environmental standards. It also checks on the presence of a functioning health and safety committee and functioning on-site grievance mechanisms. By the end of Q2 2024, 75% of grower farms had had this check.

Packaging suppliers

In addition to their contractual obligations, we ask our packaging suppliers to undertake the SMETA process every two years.

In 2024, we launched a social responsibility checklist to be conducted annually on grower farms supplying Chiquita.



Our use of agrochemicals

We only use agrochemicals when pests pose a risk to the crop, and then we only use products approved by regional or country regulations. Chiquita also closely follows the supplier guidelines provided by our retail customers from across the globe.

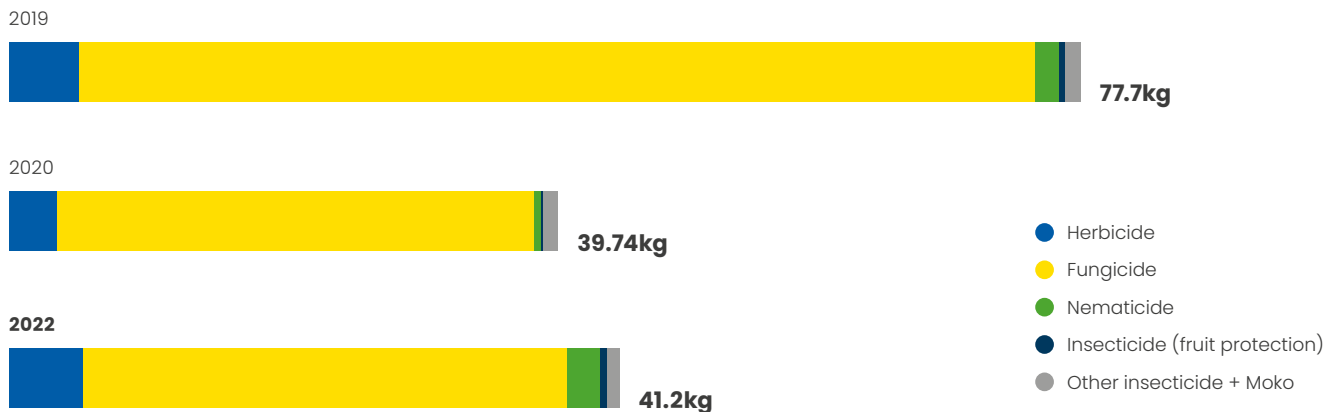
We monitor agrochemical use carefully through our farms' certification by the SAI FSA and GlobalG.A.P. We use the best possible application techniques and schedules and rotate active ingredients to avoid resistance. Of the products we use, 91% are low toxicity (World Health Organization (WHO) category III and IV).

We have reached a point where our plant protection use per hectare has plateaued and is 60% lower than when our current leadership took over in 2015.

Toxicity levels remain static, with WHO 1a- and 1b-categorized chemicals fluctuating between 2% and 5% of consumption per year. The reason for the variability is that nematodes, a major pest, do not reach threshold levels for nematicide application each year.

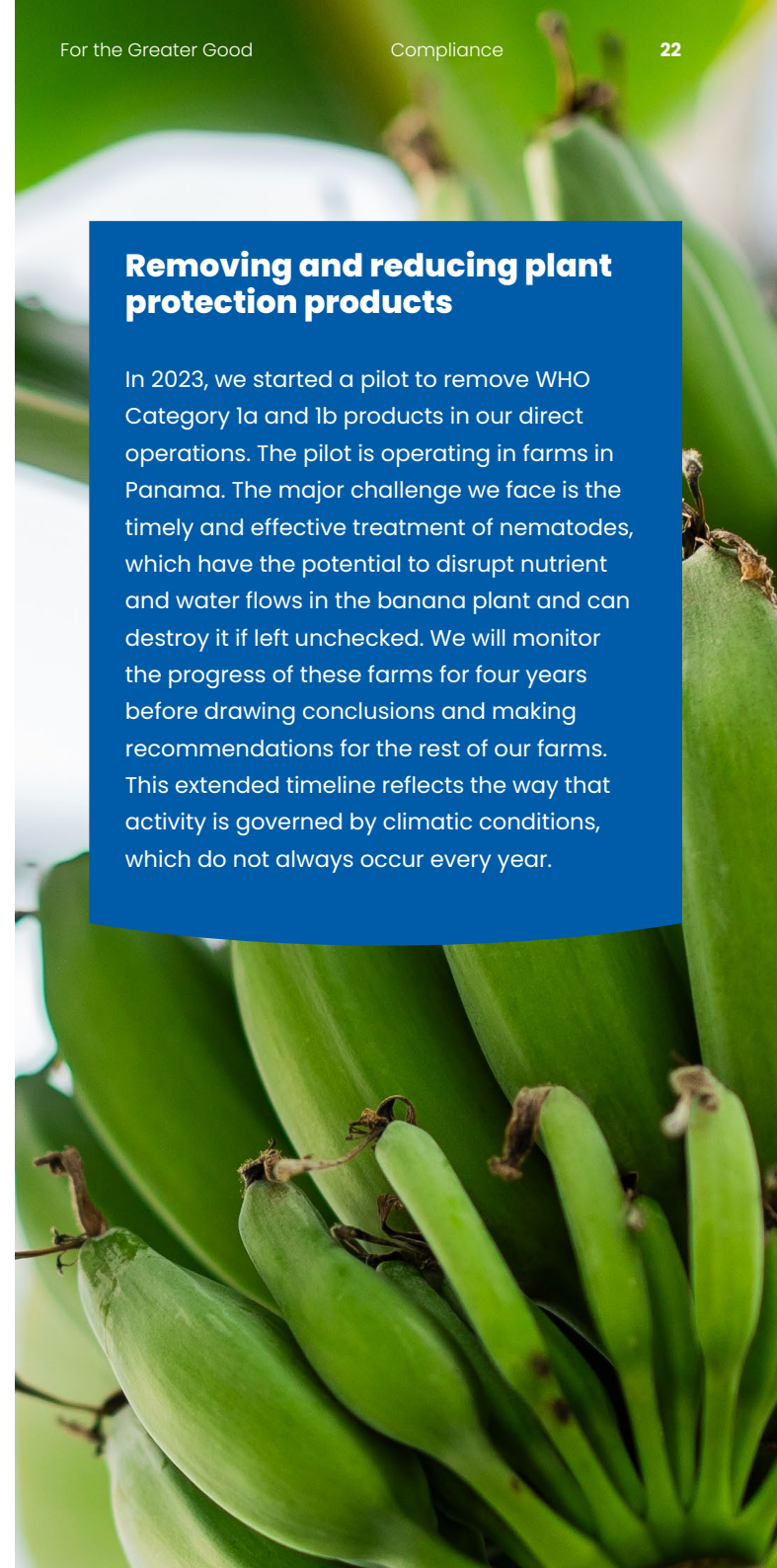
Our pesticide application per hectare has **reduced 60% since 2015.**

Pesticide use across Chiquita-owned farms (kg/ha/year)



Removing and reducing plant protection products

In 2023, we started a pilot to remove WHO Category 1a and 1b products in our direct operations. The pilot is operating in farms in Panama. The major challenge we face is the timely and effective treatment of nematodes, which have the potential to disrupt nutrient and water flows in the banana plant and can destroy it if left unchecked. We will monitor the progress of these farms for four years before drawing conclusions and making recommendations for the rest of our farms. This extended timeline reflects the way that activity is governed by climatic conditions, which do not always occur every year.



Being a Good Neighbor



Our communities are spread across the world – in our markets as well as the countries where we farm.

We believe that positive impact cannot be measured in only a year or two, so we have developed a few long-standing community-based activities, which we are committed to for the long term.

In this section:

24 Biodiversity

27 Community well-being



Biodiversity

We want to lead the way in biodiversity. Our actions aim to preserve and enhance biodiversity when growing and delivering our bananas.

Our approach is fourfold:

1. **We directly protect and promote biodiversity on our farms.** We ensure no additional forest clearing takes place for agricultural expansion. Farms must not have burned or cleared high-value ecosystems since 2005 and must create conservation areas or plant new trees to compensate for forests cleared or ecosystems damaged between 1999 and 2005.
2. **Production must be limited to areas that can support long-term cultivation,** and land that is not suited to this purpose must be returned to its natural state.
3. **We minimize the impact of our operations on biodiversity.** We use a number of methods to minimize our impact such as product rotation, and good agricultural practices such as preventive defoliation, pest monitoring, and the use of traps.
4. **We develop pioneering reforestation partnerships with our stakeholders.**

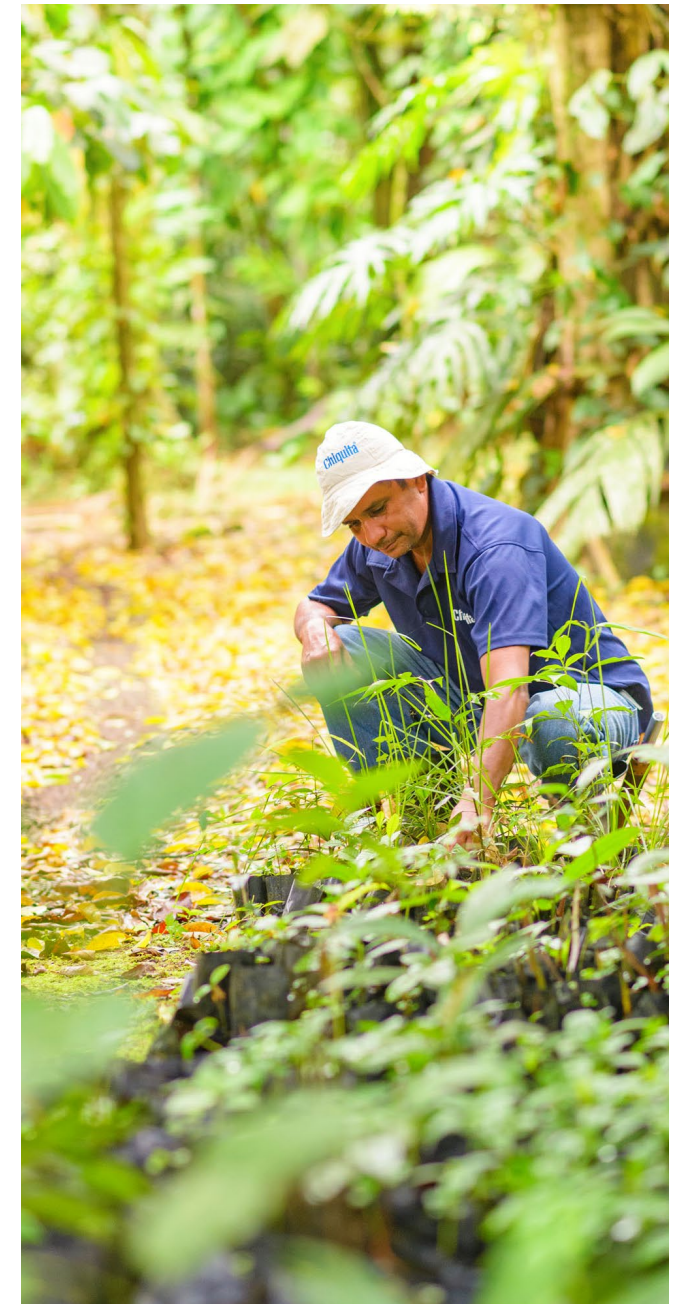
Biodiversity connectivity project

Located in Costa Rica, the Notal Reserve was established in 2004 through a joint effort between Chiquita and some of our customers. Now celebrating its 20th anniversary, we are proud to have committed to an additional 10 years of support for the project, which is recognized as a Private Wildlife Refuge by the Ministry of Environment and the government of Costa Rica.

The connectivity of the Notal and other reserves forms a "highway" that links several broader local, national, and regional biodiversity corridors. It promotes long-term conservation and biodiversity, and the project is a source of vital conservation and biological expertise. It plays an important role in Chiquita's biodiversity efforts.

With support from the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Costa Rican government, and some of our customers, we have implemented a variety of sustainability initiatives to support environmental conservation and education around the Notal Reserve, resulting in the protection of more than 720 plant and 330 animal species.

In 2024, the Notal Reserve celebrates its 20th anniversary, and Chiquita has proudly committed to 10 more years of support for the project.



Providing connectivity to the Notal Reserve

Over the years, natural forests like the Notal Reserve have become isolated, the result of deforestation for agriculture, construction use, and firewood.

As well as our long-standing commitment to zero deforestation, in 2023, we initiated a new project to further enhance the connectivity to and from the Notal Reserve. The joint project, by Chiquita and our long-standing customer S Group, aims to improve living conditions for local species, foster collaboration with landowners, and nurture supply chain cooperation related to nature.

The project will run for five years and involve planting native tree species near banana plantations, creating habitat for the diverse rainforest plant population. The first young trees were planted at the end of 2023, and reforestation will continue in 2024.

The project is being monitored and certified by a third party, Preferred by Nature, which has also carried out a baseline survey for the project.

Landowners have a crucial role in the success of the project, as the corridor will run through their land. To aid in cooperation, the project uses compensation mechanisms established in Costa Rica when the 1996 Forest Law was enacted.



We have launched a new project in partnership with S Group to enhance connectivity of the Notal Reserve in Costa Rica.

"This project will define a new methodology to enhance biodiversity connectivity. It is a collaborative project with our customer S Group and the Notal community, the majority of land being contributed to the corridor is owned by community members. We expect to learn a lot, to share this with our broader stakeholders, and to help inform our biodiversity connectivity strategy more broadly."

Peter Stedman

Sustainability Director at Chiquita

Behind the Blue Sticker

Ana Laura Masis Aguilar, Biologist, Nogal Reserve



Q. What achievement within the Nogal Reserve project are you most proud of?

A. The greatest positive impact on the Nogal Reserve has been the creation of the Nogal-La Selva Local Biological Corridor. This project has managed to ensure the connectivity of the reserve with other forest patches in the area, contributing to the conservation of flora and fauna that live in Nogal. The process of creating the biological corridor began in 2006, and today Chiquita, in collaboration with S Group, is increasing this positive impact on the conservation of species by increasing the size of the corridor.

Q. Describe in your own words the new project with S Group.

A. The alliance with S Group strengthens the objectives of the local biological corridor, increasing connectivity and offering new routes for the movement of fauna between the reserve and other forest patches. The project also has a social component since it will be developed on private properties of neighboring families. Reforestation on their land improves the environmental conditions of the farm and,

of course, the lives of the families, through a financial payment that they will receive as an incentive for supporting conservation.

Q. How else could the Nogal Reserve enhance impact on the local environment?

A. One of the most important factors in conservation issues is the environmental education of people, changing mentalities, and increasing environmental awareness. Developing and implementing a new, strengthened environmental education program in the area of influence of the reserve would undoubtedly be a great success in our work to improve our impact on the local environment.

“Reforestation supports the biodiversity of the area and improves the living conditions of animal species such as the spider monkey, the tapir, and the critically endangered great green macaw. One of the tree species to be planted is the tonka tree, which is a nesting site and a food source for the great green macaw in Costa Rica. During the dry season, it is among the few species that bear fruit, and it helps to ensure adequate nutrition for several organisms.”

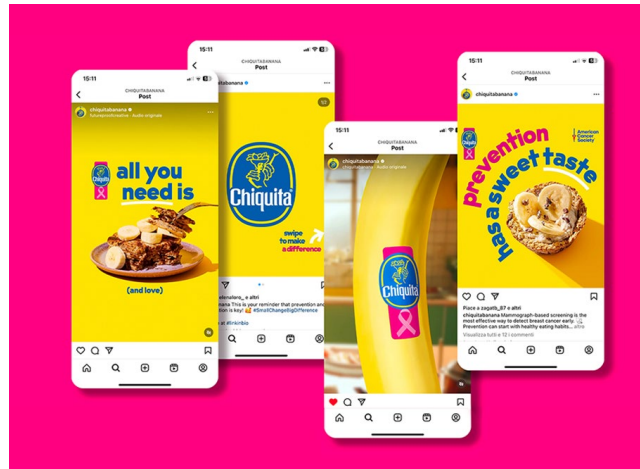
Community well-being

We work hard to create long-lasting impact in our communities. Partnering closely with our stakeholders, we are championing social progress, supporting learning and education, and helping tackle hunger.

Small Change, Big Difference

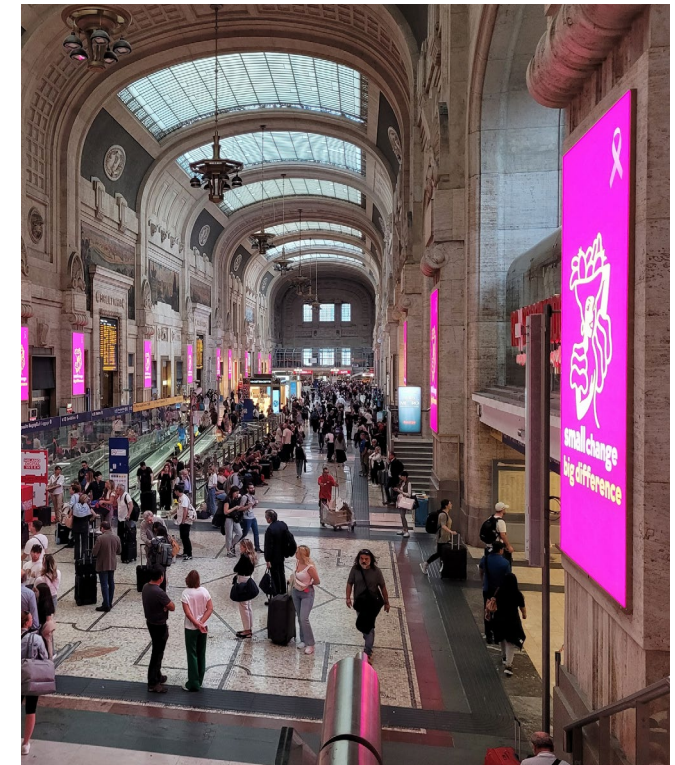
Chiquita's support for the international October Pink Ribbon breast cancer awareness campaign has been an annual event since 2017. This support is realized through collaborations with various national breast cancer awareness charities worldwide such as the American Cancer Society, AIRC (Italian Breast Cancer Foundation) in Italy, and Pink Ribbon in Germany and the Netherlands, as well as the symbolic color change of our iconic Blue Sticker to pink to draw attention to the cause.

In 2023, Chiquita developed a new approach featuring Miss Chiquita as an ambassador. By changing her iconic pose on stickers, billboards, website, and social media to one where she is performing a self-examination, Miss Chiquita leads by example, encouraging women to make small changes in their lives, such as adopting a healthy lifestyle and regularly planning medical screenings, to spread the message on the importance of prevention and early detection.




We achieved **120,000 social media interactions** for our Small Change, Big Difference breast cancer awareness campaign.

The 2023 campaign exceeded expectations: We received an enthusiastic response on social media with more than 120,000 interactions and over 200 organic mentions from women who actively joined the movement. We also received coverage in business-to-business (B2B), specialized, and lifestyle magazines, as well as several mentions from trade via LinkedIn.



For its results, "Small Change, Big Difference" was recognized in 2023 with multiple awards at the latest [NC Awards](#), including Gold for Best Campaign in the CSR/Purpose/Sustainability/Nonprofit category and Best Print Campaign, as well as Silver in the final Grand Prix.



Behind the Blue Sticker

Mariaelena Paragone,
Chiquita Global Brand
Marketing Lead

Q. *Chiquita has been campaigning on behalf of the Pink Ribbon for some time, but how did the idea of “Small Change, Big Difference” come about?*

A. With the “Small Change, Big Difference” campaign, we decided to transform our campaign into a true movement for awareness and prevention. For this reason, we immediately thought of our brand ambassador and female icon, Miss Chiquita. Through a change in her historic pose within the Chiquita logo, Miss Chiquita performs the self-exam gesture, turning it into a symbol of a global movement in support of breast cancer prevention.

We also consulted and partnered with AIRC to ensure the accuracy of the message we wanted to convey, and we look forward to continuing to collaborate with them on new projects to support the cause.

Q. *How was the campaign received by the market?*

A. Despite being a deliberately ambitious and unique Chiquita campaign, the reaction from the markets has been very positive. We promoted the awareness movement in the most important national newspapers in Europe and in the New York Times, alongside gaining interest and participation from local communities. We are very proud of this result, which is why in 2024 we hope to push the movement even further.

Children and Education initiative

We know we can have a significant impact in our communities by helping children get a good primary school education. Chiquita's "Children and Education" initiative is just one of the ways we do this.

Each year, we deliver school packages to the children of our employees. We agree on the packages' contents – which can include the books, notepads, pens, instruments, and other items that a student needs for the academic year – with the workers' representative organizations.

Since 2015, around 33,000 school packages have been delivered by Chiquita to the children of our workforce.

School package donations in 2023



Partnership with Feeding America

One of the ways we work to combat food waste and support our local communities is by partnering with organizations like Feeding America, the United States' largest hunger-relief charity. The organization's mission is to see an America where no one is hungry. They believe we all deserve to have enough food to eat – without worrying about whether we can afford it. Feeding America is part of a nationwide network of over 200 food banks and 60,000 meal programs that help people access food without judgment or stigma.

Each year, Chiquita donates around 5.5 million bananas to Feeding America, supporting people who need nutritious food.

“Feeding America® is committed to an America where no one is hungry. We support tens of millions of people who experience food insecurity to get the food and resources they say they need to thrive as part of a nationwide network of food banks, statewide food bank associations, food pantries, and meal programs.”

5.5 million bananas
donated to Feeding
America in 2023.

We also invest in innovative solutions to increase equitable access to nutritious food, advocate for legislation that improves food security, and work to address factors that impact food security, such as health, cost of living, and employment.

Since 2019, our partnership with Chiquita has resulted in the donation of 5,500 tons of bananas to the Feeding America network of food banks, providing fresh and nourishing food to people facing hunger. We are so grateful for Chiquita's support in helping fight hunger year-round.”

Mike Piotrowski

Senior Director,
Regional Supply
Chain Team (Central)



For the Greater Good



Our efforts under this pillar are those that are for the benefit of the whole industry and the world more broadly. Three key topics have been selected as issues that feature as most significant in our materiality assessments and where our leadership can create the greatest positive change.

In this section:

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- 38 Reducing our carbon emissions
- 41 Finding a global solution for Banana Wilt Disease
- 43 The future of bananas by Professor Gert Kema



Tackling food waste

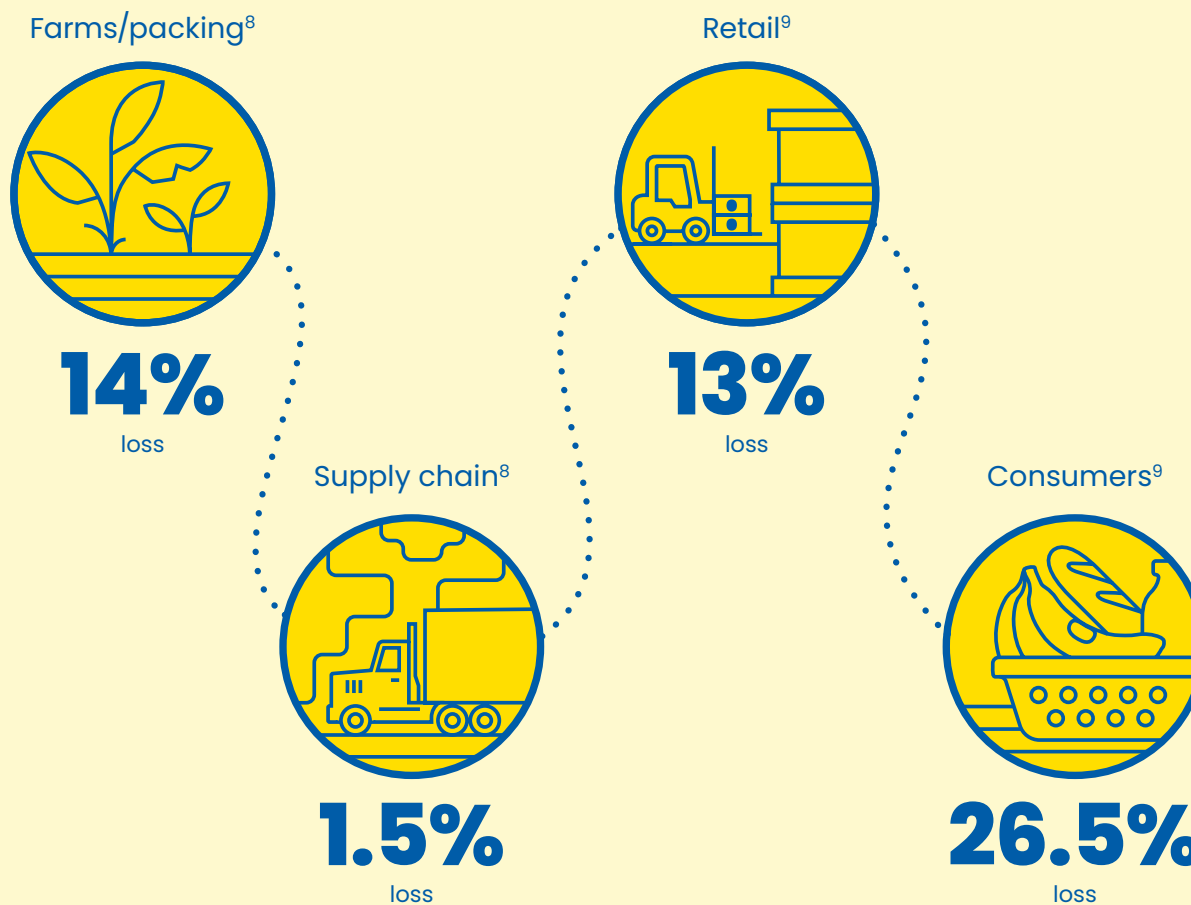
We love bananas in all shapes and sizes and hate to see them go to waste. We prioritize innovative solutions to reduce and repurpose food waste while maintaining high standards of quality.

Our goal: No banana wasted

As with any product, there is loss and waste in the banana supply chain. Nonetheless, we are trying to minimize this as much as possible. We have identified four main locations in the supply chain where banana loss or waste occurs: farms/packing, supply chain, retail, and consumers.

While not strictly food waste because it's not edible, the loss from our farms and during transportation represents a leakage of value – both for our business and also for the planet.

Main points of banana loss or waste in our supply chain⁷



⁷ Percentages presented show waste/loss at each stage of the supply chain and not of overall loss, e.g., on average, 26.5% of bananas purchased are wasted.

⁸ The information for farms and supply chain is primary data collected by Chiquita.

⁹ Retail and Consumer figures from [Food Loss and Waste Database | Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste](#) | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ([fao.org](#)) based on 2015–2022 median loss by stage reported for bananas.

Reducing waste on our farms

We have two separate growing environments in Latin America – a drier and hotter zone in Honduras and Guatemala, and a wetter, more humid environment in Costa Rica and Panama. Each country in which we operate experiences different levels of food rejections due to various factors, which can lead to food loss. For instance, in 2022, Panama faced an issue with sooty mold (a type of fungus) that caused 50% of all rejections across our company.

In 2023, we saw a reduction in overall banana loss across our growing countries.



Addressing key areas of loss

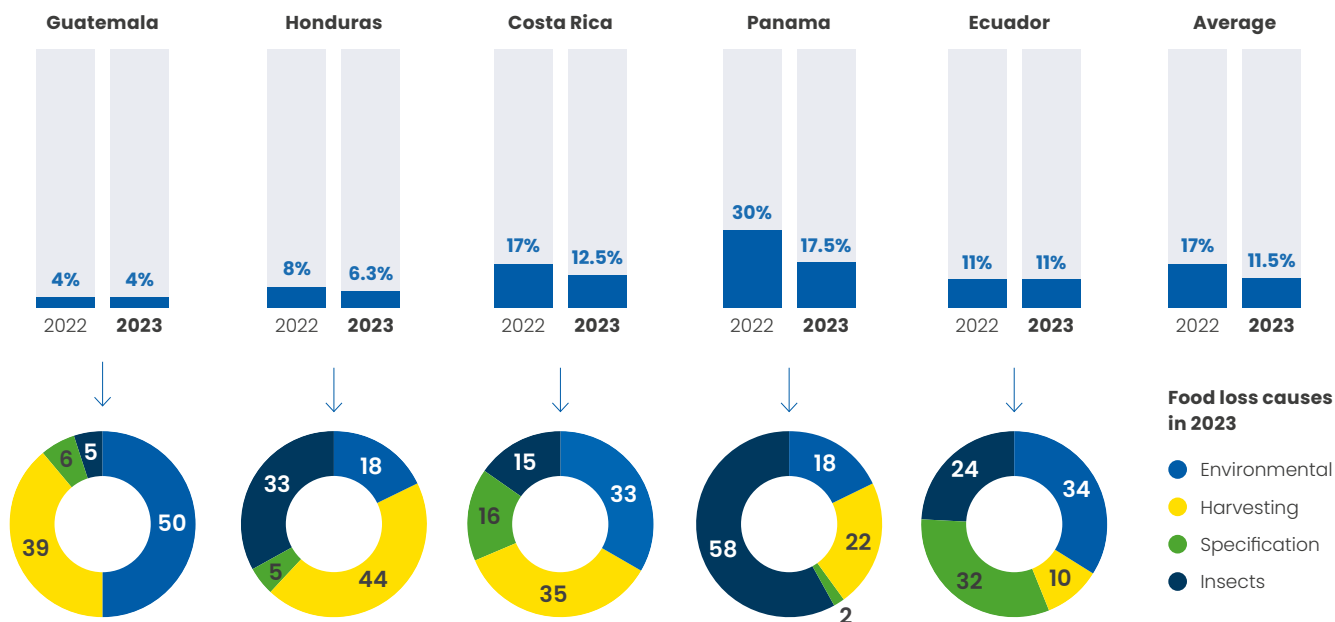
When it comes to reducing on-farm waste, we focus significant effort on harvesting, as this is where we can exert the most control.

In 2022, 20% of all harvesting rejections across all countries were caused by stems dropping from cable ways (suspended cables used to move bananas from one point to another) during transport to the packhouse. This was something we sought to immediately address through training.

In 2022, labor disruptions caused by COVID-19 made operating in Panama very challenging. Our yields, losses on farm, and overall waste were much higher compared to the rest of our business. We also experienced a significant decline in the use of fertilizers due to price and availability issues.

However, in 2023, we saw significant improvements in Panama, including a 40% reduction in waste. This was largely thanks to reducing stem rejections by 16,000 tons through a focus on training to improve plant care. Our goal is to bring waste levels in Panama back in line with the company average by the end of 2024.

Banana loss, as a percentage of total production



Food loss causes in 2023

- Environmental
- Harvesting
- Specification
- Insects

Repurposing waste

The priority for our farms is to pack all the fruit that is grown. While different grades of banana are produced at a farm level, they are all from the same plants, grown with the same care and passion. Other than size and appearance, there is no difference.

However, on the stem, some of the bananas are just too small, or sometimes too big, or marked for our Chiquita Class Extra (our highest grade of banana) or other grades. In these cases, we try our best to use the units that won't be sold under our Blue Sticker in other ways to reduce waste.

Our non-Blue Sticker bananas can be used in a range of ways, including becoming other food items.



Banana puree



Flour



Snacks



Compost



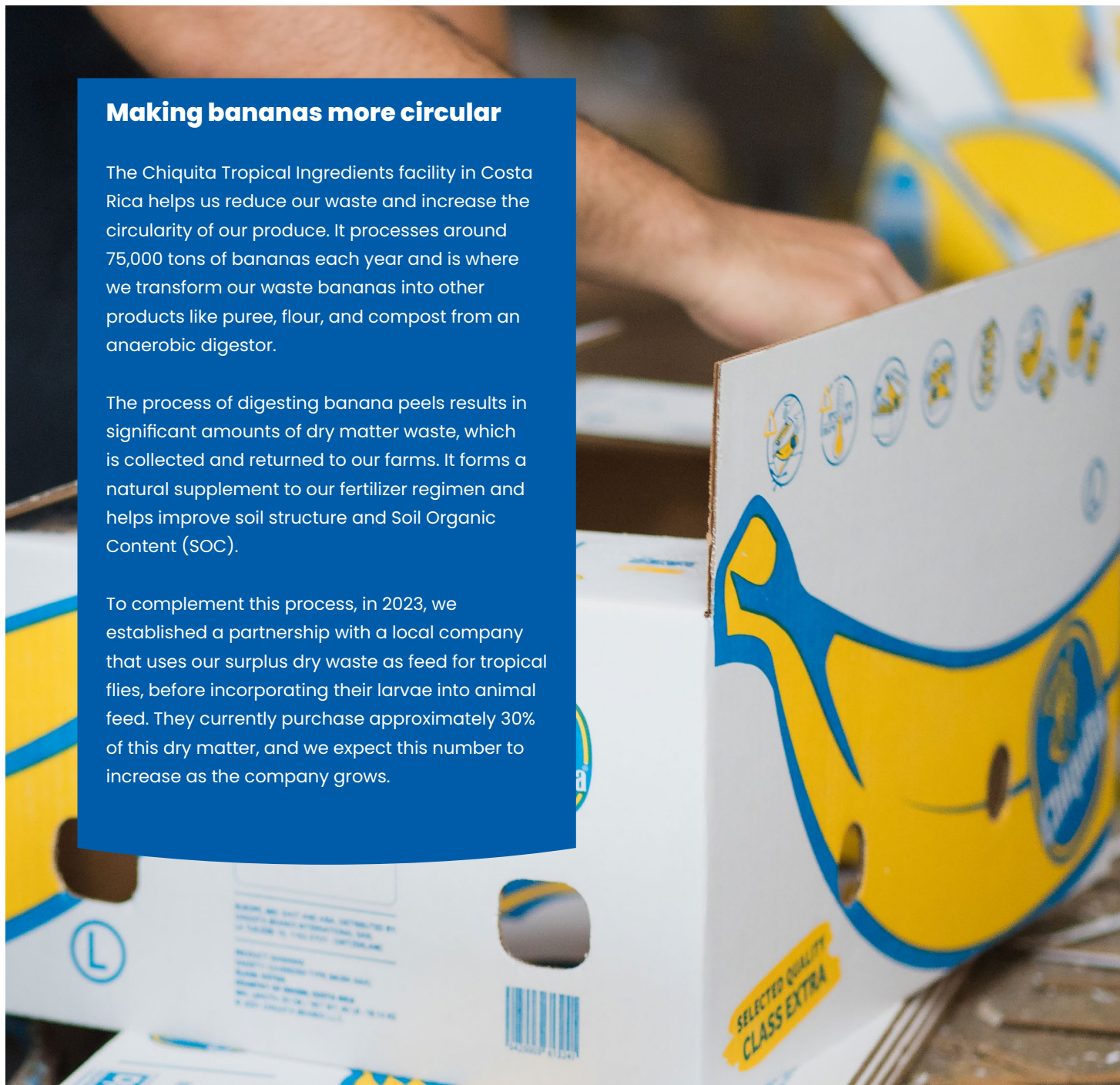
Animal feed

Making bananas more circular

The Chiquita Tropical Ingredients facility in Costa Rica helps us reduce our waste and increase the circularity of our produce. It processes around 75,000 tons of bananas each year and is where we transform our waste bananas into other products like puree, flour, and compost from an anaerobic digester.

The process of digesting banana peels results in significant amounts of dry matter waste, which is collected and returned to our farms. It forms a natural supplement to our fertilizer regimen and helps improve soil structure and Soil Organic Content (SOC).

To complement this process, in 2023, we established a partnership with a local company that uses our surplus dry waste as feed for tropical flies, before incorporating their larvae into animal feed. They currently purchase approximately 30% of this dry matter, and we expect this number to increase as the company grows.

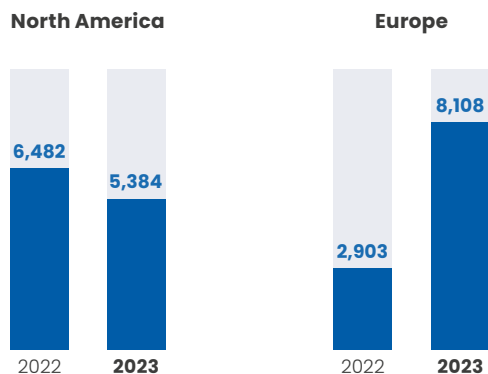


Reducing waste in our supply chain

When we look at waste and loss in the supply chain, we measure not only the banana, but the carbon footprint associated with packaging and transportation. Although it is the smallest proportion of loss/waste in our whole supply chain, loss during transportation has a big impact on our carbon footprint per box of bananas.

This loss involves the banana and all the packaging required, as well as road transportation to port, port operations, shipping, and distribution. Considering these different stages, the carbon footprint is around 2.5 times that of the same weight of banana loss in farms.

Bananas rejected in ports (tons)



Less than 1.5% of our bananas were wasted in our ripening, port, shipping, and distribution operations in 2023.

In 2023, 13,492 tons of bananas were rejected in our market ports, an increase from 9,385 tons in 2022. Typically, U.S. waste percentage is significantly lower than E.U. waste in Europe as a percentage of overall volume. The main reason for this is shipping time, with arrivals to the U.S. ranging from six to 14 days, compared to 20 to 24 days for Europe – there is less time for defects to develop.

Causes of waste during transportation

The major reason for port rejections, which was on average 63% for 2022–2023, is that the ripening process had already started in transit. There are several factors that can influence this, but by far the most common is that the fruit will have been harvested later than the optimum time. If bananas have started to naturally ripen, it is very hard to slow down this process; however, if it has not started, then the dormancy induced in transport works very well. This is the main cause of the change in rejections from 2022 to 2023 in European ports.

Preserving bananas through innovative packaging

The Chiquita Easy Vent box is one way we are driving down waste in the supply chain. Deployed with multiple retailers across North America, the box's design has helped achieve a 4–8% reduction in banana waste. Recognizing its impact, Canadian retailer Loblaw presented Chiquita with the 2024 President's Partner of the Year Award.

Chiquita received Loblaw's President's Partner of the Year Award in 2024 for our Easy Vent boxes, which significantly reduce waste in the supply chain.



Reducing waste in the Netherlands

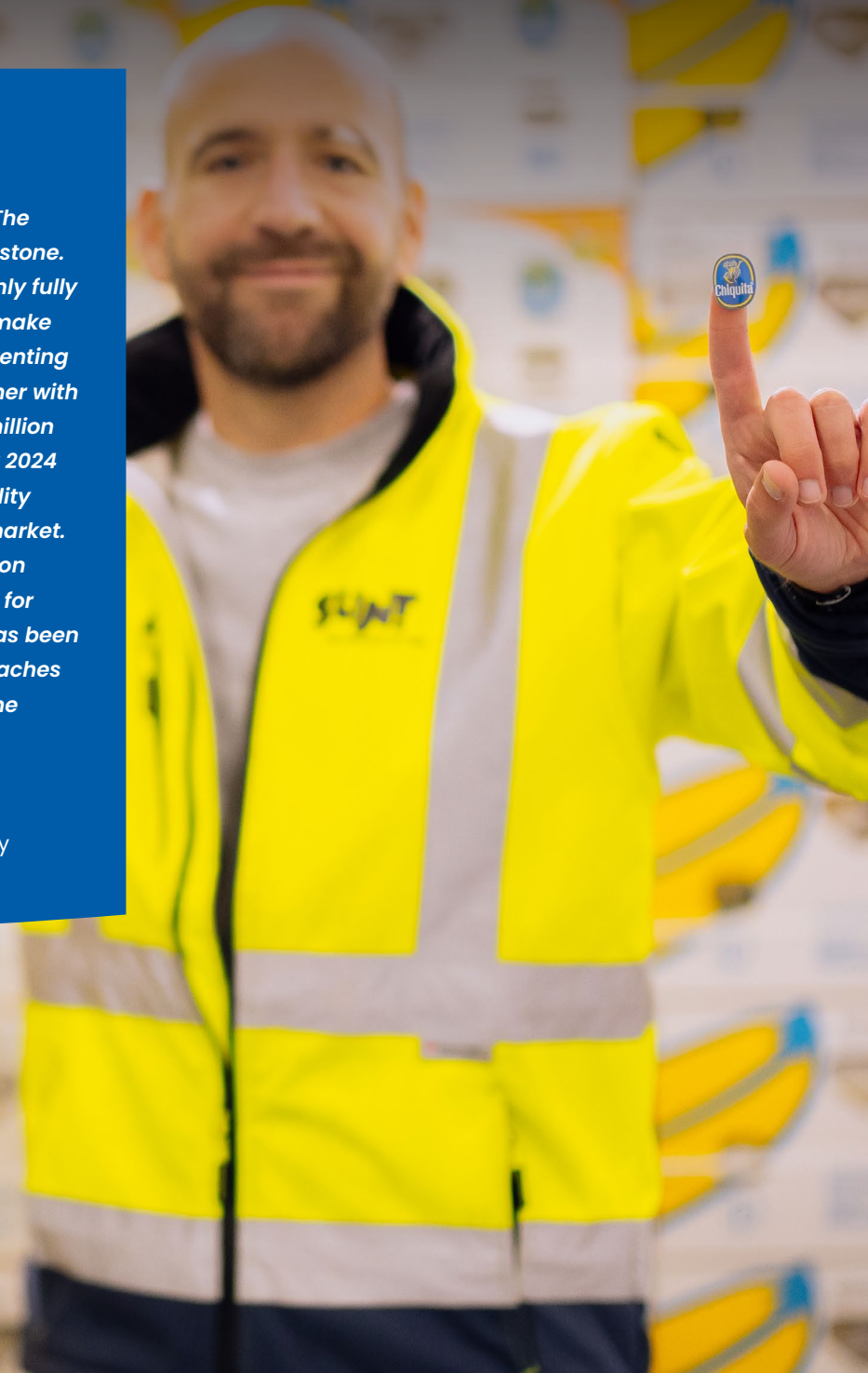
Our quality checks in ports result in banana rejections. Because of regulations in Europe, bananas that don't meet check standards are required to be destroyed, otherwise duty must be paid on them. This unfortunately means bananas that could be processed further are sent for destruction.

We fully support a change to this customs arrangement to avoid waste, which is why, in April 2024, we started a new relationship with a Netherlands-based scale-up, The Banana Factory, to further process otherwise wasted bananas. Through this project, we pay the import duty on bananas so that they can receive them, which is currently the only way to avoid them going to waste.

"With a mission to combat banana waste in European ports, the collaboration between The Banana Factory and Chiquita is a huge milestone. As a Dutch-based company and Europe's only fully automated banana processor, we strive to make the banana chain more sustainable by preventing banana waste after arrival in Europe. Together with Chiquita, we expect to save more than 2.2 million Chiquita bananas (450 tons) from waste by 2024 by converting these bananas into high-quality 'no-waste banana puree' for the European market. We are extremely proud that our collaboration means that the 'otherwise rejected banana' for which so much time, energy, and passion has been invested – albeit in a different form – still reaches the consumer. In this way, we jointly close the banana chain."

Tom van Hees

Commercial Responsible, The Banana Factory



Addressing waste in retail

Second only to household waste, food waste in retail has an extremely high carbon footprint, which is why we are taking steps to reduce this impact.

We believe supporting retail partners to waste fewer bananas is good for both of our businesses. This effort is part of our partnership value for retailers, through the wealth of knowledge we bring on the issue of waste.

Our organization has been voted category captain for 24 consecutive years by Progressive Grocer, the United States' No. 1 media brand for the grocery industry. This award, among other recognitions, recognizes our role

as a value partner for continuous efforts in working closely with its retail partners to drive significant growth. All value delivered comes from a consistent excellence in execution guaranteeing the best-quality fruit, exceptional customer service, and holistic category management. This careful category support plays a key role in minimizing in store food waste.

Chiquita has been voted Progressive Grocer category captain for 24 years in a row.



Training retail operatives to help reduce wastage

In Europe and North America, we have 45 retail specialists. Their role is to ensure the Chiquita banana display in stores looks its best. The best display leads to the best sales, and through that, the lowest banana waste.

For this to happen, our specialists train thousands of retail operatives each year in box and banana handling, the correct ways to display and rotate stock, and how to maximize visual impact through color grading displays and removing singles.

Single bananas that have been removed from a bunch by consumers often form a significant proportion of store waste. We believe that no banana should be wasted and that these can still contribute to store revenue instead of costs. We provide retail customers with secondary displays that include single bananas which, when placed close to the checkout, creates an additional touchpoint with consumers.

Beyond the store

In the household, by far the largest cause of banana waste is bruising or ripening beyond customer tastes. On our website, [we share recipes](#) to help customers find ways to use bananas they might otherwise throw out.

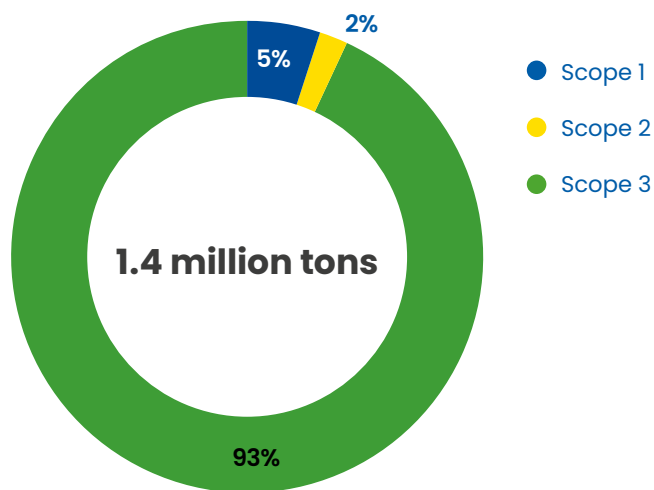
We intend to extend this engagement in collaboration with retail partners over the coming years to better help consumers tackle home food waste.

Reducing our carbon emissions

We have been working to address our carbon emissions since 2013, and in 2021, we announced 30by30, our goal to reduce our Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions across our operations by 30% by the end of 2030.

We are proud to have received Science Based Target initiative (SBTi) approval for 30by30 and its associated climate goals – making us the first global fruit company to do so. See our [2021–2022 report](#) for more details about our plan.

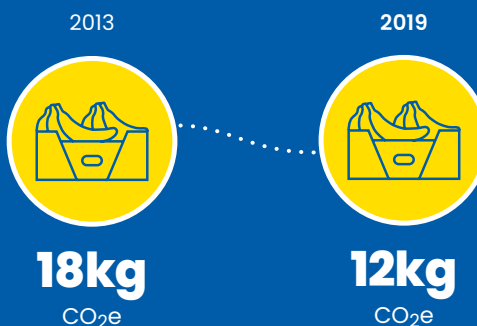
In 2019, our total value chain emissions were 1.4 million tons of CO₂e



Understanding our footprint

To illustrate our overall progress, in 2019 – our baseline year – producing one box of bananas accounted for around 12kg of carbon emissions,¹⁰ significantly down on the average of 18kg in 2013. While measurement methods have changed over time, this reduction helps show how our actions, and those of our suppliers, are helping reduce our impact over time and will guide our efforts toward our 2030 goals.

CO₂e per single box of bananas



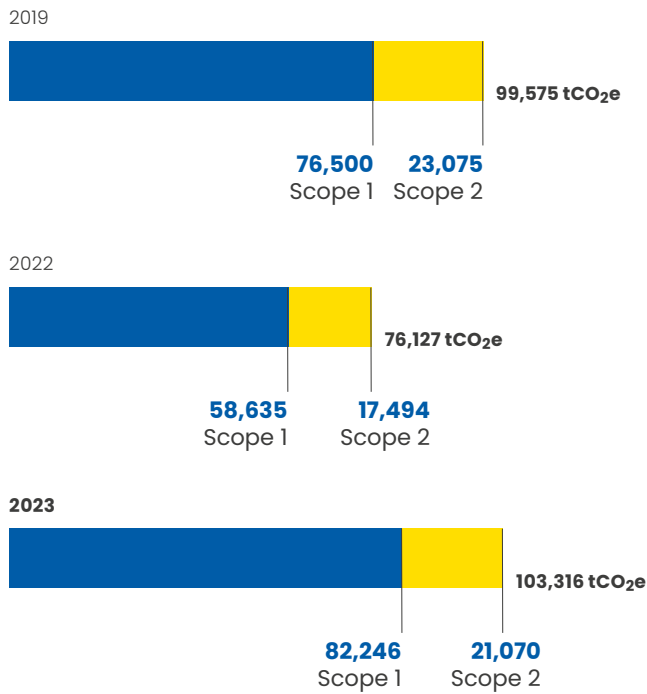
Chiquita was the first global fruit company with SBTi-approved climate goals.

¹⁰ Overall footprint for reference: 12kg per large box equivalent (LBE).

Understanding our Scope 1 and 2 emissions

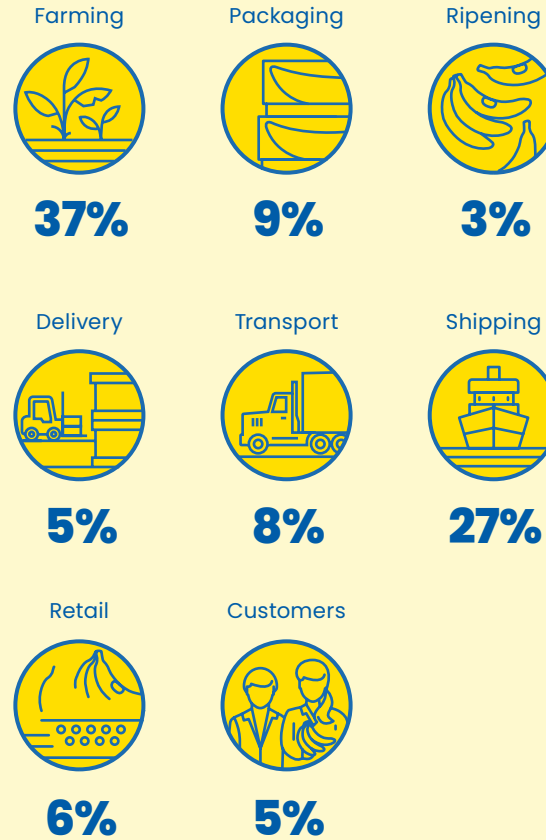
We recognize that, while our Scope 2¹¹ emissions have reduced since 2019, our Scope 1 emissions have increased. As discussed in this report, we are prioritizing researching and trialing efforts through to 2027 to reduce Scope 1 emissions from our farms, since direct control here means this is the area where we have the most opportunity for impact. See our [2021-2022 report](#) for a breakdown of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in our value chain.

Direct Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions (tCO₂e)



¹¹ Scope 2 emissions are location based. Location-based Scope 2 emissions are emissions calculated based on the average emissions intensity of a local power grid.

Source of Chiquita's Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions 2023



We have reduced our Scope 2 GHG emissions since 2019.



Exploring carbon sequestration

The new Forestry Landscape and Agriculture (FLAG) guidance from the SBTi provides scope to partially meet our reduction targets through carbon sequestered on our farms. While we try to maximize the areas that we use for banana production, not all areas are suitable, and these locations may prove useful to our sequestration efforts.

We currently have around 757 hectares of land designated as forest, and in 2024-2025, we plan to start assessing possible contribution to sequestration. An additional 1,500 hectares of land is used for drainage, fallow, and boundaries, and we have commissioned research into tree species for these locations that may aid carbon sequestration while also being appropriate for the production environment.

Addressing emissions on our own farms

The use of fertilizers is the biggest contributor to direct carbon emissions from our farms. We are thoroughly researching opportunities to reduce on-farm emissions, including those from the soil, and plan to conduct field trials and analysis to inform the development of operational changes.

In 2022, the global political situation temporarily reduced the accessibility of fertilizers, causing our rate of fertilization to drop dramatically, which is reflected in our soil emissions from that year.

However, yields dropped by 8% in the 12 months following this under-fertilization, which also contributed to a 6% higher waste rate in the field and a revenue impact of more than \$100 million.

This experience demonstrated that a 40% reduction in fertilizer rates did not reduce yields by an equivalent amount, which is an opportunity that we plan to continue exploring with experts from Wageningen University & Research. We hope to develop strategies to improve fertilizer uptake into the soil, thereby reducing emissions in a way that is economically sustainable.

Farms in our supply chain

The largest contributor to our Scope 3 emissions are banana farms that supply us but that we do not directly own.

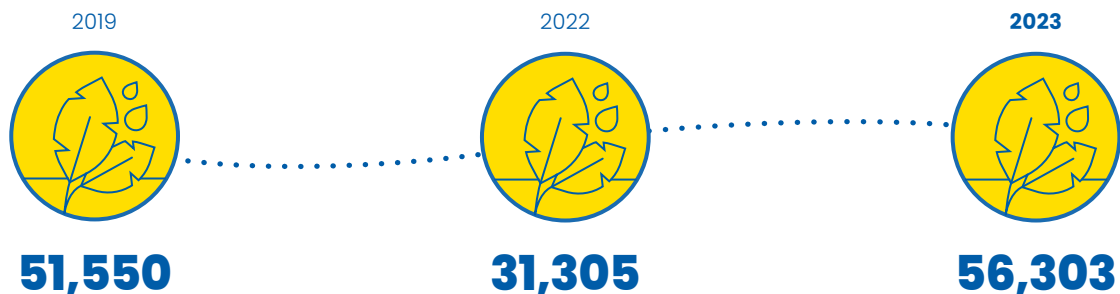
As part of our 30by30 commitment, we intend to use our long-term relationships with grower suppliers to support them to develop their own carbon-reduction strategies by 2025. We are aiming for 90% of our suppliers, by emissions, to set targets.

We plan to conduct a new Scope 3 inventory using 2024 data and share progress in our next report.

By 2025, we're aiming for 90% of our suppliers (by emissions) to set emissions-reduction targets.



Soil emissions from fertilizers on Chiquita-owned farms (tCO₂e)



Finding a global solution for Banana Wilt Disease

What is Banana Wilt Disease?

Banana Fusarium Wilt, caused by Tropical Race 4 (TR4), is a soil-dwelling fungus that makes plants wither and die. TR4 affects the most widely grown variety, the Cavendish banana, as well as many other banana species.

Since it was first discussed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in 2003, the pathogen has spread worldwide. Although global efforts have slowed its spread more than the FAO originally predicted, there is still work to be done.



Banana Fusarium Wilt disease, caused by TR4, has devastated banana production across the world, and the entire industry must work together to develop a lasting solution.

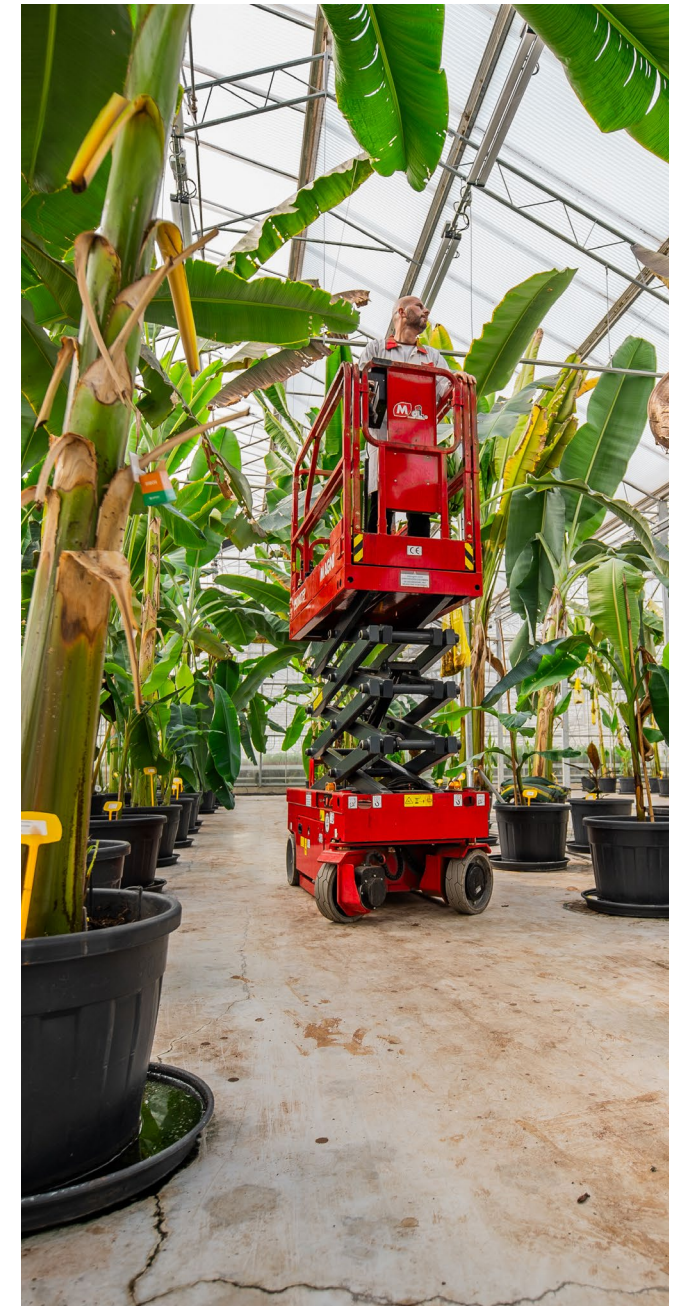
We are cooperating internationally to help address its impacts and putting in place all precautions to prevent its spread. We are also leading and investing in initiatives to achieve the long-term sustainability and stability of the banana supply.

Slowing the spread of TR4 in Latin America

In our connected world, the disease spreads indiscriminately, threatening the plantain and banana crops that are a staple for millions of the poorest people on earth.

As of spring 2024, TR4 was present in three Latin American countries, with its presence also being investigated in Cuba. The disease's spread across the world has been significantly slowed in comparison to TR1 (which causes Panama disease), thanks to the vigilance and proactivity of the industry.

All these efforts, which have required significant on-farm investments in biosecurity and within banana-growing countries, are intended to buy the industry time to enable the scientific research community to develop alternatives or effective treatments.



An international effort through Yelloway

Yelloway is a strategic, long-term collaboration with our partners to conduct research into bananas that are resistant to both pathogenic diseases and environmental threats.

Established in the Netherlands in 2020 as a joint venture between Chiquita, KeyGene, MusaRadix, and collaborating with Wageningen University & Research, the organization focuses on TR4 and Black Sigatoka, another disease of banana plants.

Initially focusing on Black Sigatoka and TR4 – the most significant current and future inhibitors of efficient, sustainable banana production – Yelloway's approach marries modern bioinformatics and classical plant breeding. It is an approach based on three core principles:

- Genetic diversity: Yelloway has an in-house collection of more than 150 banana varieties.
- Detailed understanding: The partnership brings together groups that have an understanding of plant biology and genetics, as well as the crop system as a whole.
- Genetic tools: The team has developed, and properly uses, genetic tools that set this program apart from similar research projects.

In 2023, the partnership reached a major milestone: Yelloway One (YWI). YWI is the first of a new generation of non-GMO, entirely classically bred banana varieties, and the first to combine TR4 and Black Sigatoka disease resistance. It has been the work of a team of scientists lead by Dr. Fernando García-Bastidas and, thanks to Yelloway's innovative approach, development only took

three years. Relying only on classical breeding would have taken many times longer.

As well as the value to the export sector, the work of Yelloway will positively impact food security. Once finalized, the background intellectual property that has allowed the development of YWI will be placed in the public domain so that nonexport varieties can be developed with enhanced disease resistance.

Yelloway One has been created – a new banana variety with resistance to TR4 and Black Sigatoka.



The future of bananas

By Professor Gert Kema

In the wild, banana varieties are extremely diverse; however, this diversity has not been captured in commercial banana varieties. The current banana cultivation system – particularly for export – depends on a set of nearly identical clones. It is time to consider what a resilient and sustainable banana production would look like in the future.

With an ever-expanding global population, such a system cannot compromise on yield and quality, should contribute to carbon sequestration, and embrace biodiversity as key components. There are various routes we can explore for the sustainable intensification of banana production.



Embracing diversity

Exploring and deploying diversity is a major constituent for the sustainable intensification of banana production. From wild plants, we capture the genetic resources that have enabled the species to withstand millennia of environmental and biotic changes. By doing so, we can evolve plantations of genetically diverse banana varieties that match different consumer preferences and tackle banana diseases such as Black Sigatoka.

Soil microbiome

Enriching the microbiome increases the biological buffering against soilborne diseases such as Banana Fusarium Wilt, and improves nutrient acquisition, including nitrogen fixation. Tailoring the rhizosphere (the zone of the soil under the influence of plant roots) is an important complementary strategy toward achieving an improved soil carbon budget and boosting productivity through smarter use of resources, including water.

Pursuing future research

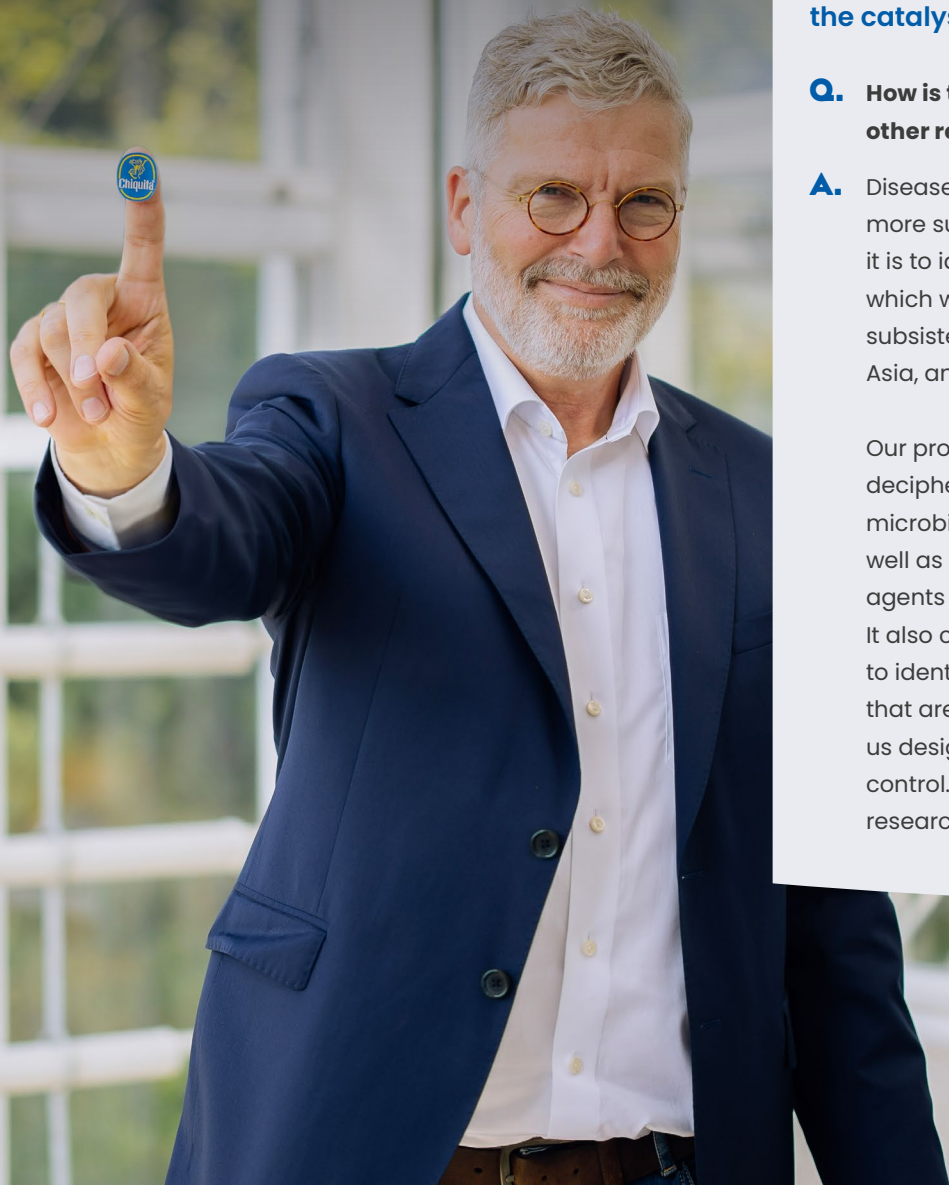
We recognize the knowledge gaps we must address if we are to achieve our ambitious goals. More than ever, we need academic research to go hand in hand with on-the-ground targets. For example, we plan to explore the “need-to-knows,” such as:

- How dynamic plant pathogens are, how they disseminate, and which microbes contribute to the rhizosphere environment
- Whether we can grow or stimulate them, since less than 1% of soil microbes can be cultured
- Which processes determine a healthy soil structure that maintains microbial diversity, which is particularly important for perennial crops



Behind the Blue Sticker

Professor Gert Kema, Wageningen University



Prof. Gert Kema is the outgoing Professor of Plant Pathology at Wageningen University. His knowledge, dynamism, and insight has led the department to be recognized as the place to study banana diseases. He was also the catalyst behind the creation of Yellowway.

Q. How is the Yellowway approach different from other research projects?

A. Disease resistance makes banana production more sustainable, and we know how important it is to identify new disease-resistant varieties, which will create opportunities for millions of subsistence and domestic farmers in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Our program spans research lines from deciphering and engineering underground microbiomes to managing Fusarium Wilt, as well as the genome structures of the causal agents of Fusarium Wilt and Black Sigatoka. It also covers gene validation in our endeavor to identify the crucial genes in the pathogen that are required to kill bananas, which helps us design strategies for sustainable disease control. That breadth is unique to banana research in our team.

Q. What achievement within the project are you most proud of?

A. The continuous endurance of the team to cross barriers. We crossed quite a few:

- 1 Massive phenotyping with high quality
- 2 Transformation of both *Fusarium* and *Pseudocercospora fijiensis*, which is necessary to identify the functions of genes
- 3 The high-level view we gained on the global population structure for both fungi, as well as resolving their pangenomes
- 4 The exploration of soil microbiome – fungal interactions and how this can help to manage diseases and acquire a fundamental understanding of the minute biological interactions
- 5 The ecology of *Fusarium* in the field with infections of nonhost weeds, and how this know-how can be used to work toward resilient cropping systems

Compliance

Chiquita is committed to conducting business with integrity – complying with both the spirit and letter of the law. We are proud of being good corporate citizens, and our actions reflect our values of integrity, respect, and responsibility.



Acting with integrity

As a multinational company, we have a responsibility to comply with the complex regulations and requirements that safeguard our industry.

We use a range of policies and best practices to ensure our compliance, including our approach to ethics, supply chain transparency, Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, Office of Foreign Assets Control, taxes, and our constant search for certifications that ensure our proper governance, such as the Customs Trade Partnership Against Terrorism.



Supply chain transparency

Modern slavery and human trafficking should play no part in any supply chain.

We maintain systems that comply with the California Transparency in Supply Chains Act and the U.K. Modern Slavery Act and are committed to complying with all applicable laws and regulations on wages and hours. We require our associates and anyone working on our behalf – including business partners, vendors, service providers, independent contractors, and subcontractors – to comply with all relevant laws and regulations in the countries where they and Chiquita operate. Agreements with our suppliers include provisions for our partners to conform with human rights principles.



Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)

Chiquita enforces FCPA rules, identifying payments/donations/other benefits to government officials or others and certifying those that are permitted and compliant; we also comply with OFAC rules around running certified background checks on our business partners.

Taxes

We are responsible corporate citizens and acknowledge our responsibility to pay taxes and comply with all the laws and rules in force in each country where we do business. We are regularly audited by tax authorities and take this as an opportunity to certify our practices. We aim to ensure tax returns are filed and taxes are paid on time in each jurisdiction, in line with local and international governing laws and rules.

Compliance training










Each year, we provide training modules to targeted employees, educating them on the laws, regulation, and company policies that apply to their day-to-day job responsibilities – helping prevent and detect violations.

Based upon lower-than-acceptable engagement in 2022, we refocused our training in Latin America to be delivered in person and on farm by our regional compliance team, rather than through the standard e-learning channel. As a result, 2023 participation levels have improved significantly. In 2024, we linked the e-learning directly to our HR system, which allows tracking of individual learning achievement.

Compliance training courses delivered per year

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|--|---|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-harassment and Discrimination • FCPA • Antitrust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cybersecurity • Ethics in the Workplace | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-harassment and Discrimination • Antitrust • Avoiding Bribery and Corruption in the Global Business Environment |

Percentage of employees completing all training courses each year

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| Europe |  74% |  51% |  81% |
| Latin America |  62% |  38% |  56% |
| North America |  81% |  60% |  37% |

UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework (UNGPRF) Index

This index reflects our efforts to meet our responsibility to respect human rights. We strive to prevent and address any negative impacts we may have on the rights of the people we employ and work with.

| Section | Topic | What do we say | Where do we say it |
|-------------|--|---|---|
| A1.1 | How has the public commitment been developed? | The CHL Group fully supports the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labour Organization Core Conventions, and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. We are forward-looking in opportunities to reduce inequality in line with our commitment to social justice and human rights. | Modern Slavery Statement Corporate Website Chiquita Code of Conduct |
| A1.2 | Whose human rights does the public commitment address? | The human rights of our employees and those within our supply chain. | Modern Slavery Statement Chiquita Code of Conduct |
| A1.3 | How is the public commitment disseminated? | Through our website, sustainability reporting, and stakeholder engagement. | |
| A2.1 | How is day-to-day responsibility for human rights performance organized within the company, and why? | Employee human rights are upheld by our human resources teams, located in all operating countries. Supply chain human rights are communicated to all suppliers and monitored on a risk-based approach by our sourcing and quality teams, located in each operating country. An independent certification team is accountable for the monitoring of this performance and an independent compliance team is responsible for the collating and reporting of this information. | Chiquita Code of Conduct |
| A2.2 | What kinds of human rights issues are discussed by senior management and by the Board, and why? | At senior management level, the human resources director and president meet regularly to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress of collective bargaining agreements under negotiation • Any formal complaints against the company from stakeholder groups or worker representative organizations • Workplace incidents, accidents, or industrial action • Any serious breaches of the Code of Conduct On an annual basis, the Board of Chiquita's parent company, Chiquita Holdings Limited, reviews presented nonfinancial sustainability information, including the Modern Slavery Statement. | Modern Slavery Statement Sustainability Report 2024/25, pages 45–51 |

| Section | Topic | What do we say | Where do we say it |
|---------|---|--|--|
| A2.3 | How are employees and contract workers made aware of the ways in which respect for human rights should inform their decisions and actions? | <p>The Chiquita Code of Conduct contains all information regarding the company's ethical standards. Training on this is given to all new starters within the business.</p> <p>Annual training is conducted at all sites of employment, including farms and ports on human rights and worker rights.</p> <p>Annual online training on important elements of the Code of Conduct is requested of all office-based staff.</p> | <p>Modern Slavery Statement</p> <p>SA8000 certification training records</p> <p>Chiquita Code of Conduct</p> |
| A2.4 | How does the company make clear in its business relationships the importance it places on respect for human rights? | <p>We stipulate in commercial contracts seven clauses that specifically relate to Chiquita's policies and expectations on human rights and the consequences of failure to act accordingly.</p> | <p>Chiquita Standard Contract</p> |
| A2.5 | What lessons has the company learned during the reporting period about achieving respect for human rights, and what has changed as a result? | <p>The area in which it is possible to grow organic bananas is relatively small, and climate change is making it smaller. Demand for organic is growing. Aligning organic growers with market and Chiquita expectations on human and labor rights is very challenging; levels of social certification are very low, as is grower capability.</p> <p>Chiquita extended weekly farm quality checks to include an annual social responsibility check on all growers' operations. It documents an understanding of human rights expectations and verifies the presence of effective grievance mechanisms and health and safety committees.</p> | |
| B1 | Statement of salient issues: State the salient human rights issues associated with the company's activities and business relationships during the reporting period. | <p>Chiquita is a significant employer. While our risk assessment and monitoring shows our operations to be very low risk, the scale of them and geographical spread means that we must always act assuming all human and labor rights could be salient.</p> <p>22% of our banana supply was determined to be medium/high risk for human and labor rights. This maps onto our organic banana supply chain, which comes from Peru, Mexico, and Ecuador. The major risk to core conventions identified were to freedom of association. For other labor rights matters, working hours, timely payment, and living wages are the other major challenges.</p> <p>Tropical Race 4 (TR4) has the potential to eradicate Cavendish banana production as well as negatively impact the production of other related nonexport varieties. The potential human rights impact is very high when considering both those in direct employment and elsewhere in the value chain.</p> <p>Organized crime is a salient human rights risk for our workforce. Workers may be subject to coercion or forced to undertake certain tasks by criminal gangs. It is very important that we maintain tight controls, ongoing awareness raising, and train our teams in spotting the warning signs of this to protect our workers as well as our business.</p> | <p>Human Rights Risk Assessment – Bananas and Pineapples</p> |
| B2 | Determination of salient issues: Describe how the salient human rights issues were determined, including any input from stakeholders. | <p>We maintain a Human Rights Risk Assessment for bananas and pineapples, considering our own and grower operations. This document is informed by geographical risk, using the GlobalG.A.P.'s country risk register, certification levels, and supplier capability assessments.</p> <p>In 2018, we commissioned a Child's Rights Impact Assessment for our Costa Rica and Panama operations centered on the children living in its surrounding communities.</p> <p>We have compiled a materiality index, both for our stakeholders in production countries and also for our stakeholders in our markets. Our stakeholders are the governments in the countries in which we operate, industry representative groups, multistakeholder initiatives such as the World Banana Forum, nongovernmental organizations, worker representative organizations, our suppliers, our competitors, our employees, and our customers and consumers. During the materiality assessment process, we reviewed key sources of information from each group.</p> | <p>Human Rights Risk Assessment – Bananas and Pineapples</p> <p>Sustainability Report 2024/25, pages 12-13</p> |

| Section | Topic | What do we say | Where do we say it |
|-------------|--|---|--|
| B3 | Choice of focal geographies: If reporting on the salient human rights issues focuses on particular geographies, explain how that choice was made. | Our geographical focus is Latin America. The vast majority of suppliers are located in Latin America; this includes suppliers of nonfruit products, such as packaging, labeling, and farm inputs. We have 65 fruit suppliers, who represent around 500 sites of employment, and 55 suppliers of farm inputs and packaging. Outside of Latin America, we have 15 suppliers, five shipping suppliers, and 10 merchandising suppliers. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 11 |
| B4 | Additional severe impacts: Identify any severe impacts on human rights that occurred or were still being addressed during the reporting period, but which fall outside of the salient human rights issues, and explain how they have been addressed. | Legacy impacts from 20 years before the current ownership of Chiquita have been reported again in the press during the reporting period. These are not new severe impacts. The nature of them is outside of the scope of current salient risks. The steps to address them by the previous owners are a matter of record. | |
| C1.1 | Does the company have any specific policies that address its salient human rights issues and, if so, what are they? | There are very clear policies and procedures for the continuing management of salient risks within Chiquita's own operations and supply chain. | Chiquita Code of Conduct Chiquita Supplier Contracts |
| C2.1 | What is the company's approach to engagement with stakeholders in relation to each salient human rights issue? | Chiquita's length of presence in its operating countries means that it has a very clear understanding of its relevant stakeholders. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, pages 12-13 |
| C2.2 | During the reporting period, which stakeholders has the company engaged with regarding each salient issue, and why? | The core of our approach to safeguarding human rights is through our own procedures, social dialogue, and certification. We also undertake industry body and multistakeholder initiative engagement. Relevant to living wages, we engaged with IDH, GIZ, The Anker Research Institute, COBANA, FAO World Banana Forum, ISEAL, retail customers, and over 31 trade unions and worker representative organizations across our operating countries. For TR4, we are engaged with Wageningen University & Research, WBF, and are partners in the innovation joint venture Yelloway. For validation and certification of our approach, we engage with the Sustainable Agricultural Initiative, Social Accountability International, GlobalG.A.P., Rainforest Alliance, and CTPAT. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, pages 12-13 |
| C2.3 | During the reporting period, how have the views of stakeholders influenced the company's understanding of each salient issue and/or its approach to addressing it? | Our engagements with Richard and Martha Anker from the Anker Research Institute have furthered considerably our understanding of their benchmark process and its value in being used to inform an overall industrywide accepted approach. This is why, during this reporting period, we started sponsoring the Anker Research Institute to better disseminate their work. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 16 |
| C3.1 | During the reporting period, were there any notable trends or patterns in impacts related to a salient issue and, if so, what were they? | Three of our main operating countries, Ecuador, Panama, and Guatemala, all experienced social upheaval during this reporting period. For Guatemala and Ecuador, it was during a process of political change. Operating in Ecuador became very difficult with it becoming difficult to safeguard employee safety. Fortunately, both countries stabilized significantly after this transition. | |
| C3.2 | During the reporting period, did any severe impacts occur that were related to a salient issue and, if so, what were they? | During this period, no severe impacts occurred. | Modern Slavery Statement |
| C4.1 | How are those parts of the company whose decisions and actions can affect the management of salient issues, involved in finding and implementing solutions? | Chiquita is a very small, big company. Accountability for sustainability is embedded throughout the organization. We have a very small, closely aligned leadership team that ensures the decisions of procurement, production, and sales are well aligned with agriculture, human resources, and sustainability. | |

| Section | Topic | What do we say | Where do we say it |
|-------------|---|---|--|
| C4.2 | When tensions arise between the prevention or mitigation of impacts related to a salient issue and other business objectives, how are these tensions addressed? | Accountability for sustainability is embedded throughout the organization. We have a very small, closely aligned leadership team that ensures the decisions of procurement, production, and sales are well aligned with agriculture, human resources, and sustainability. | |
| C4.3 | During the reporting period, what action has the company taken to prevent or mitigate potential impacts related to each salient issue? | See Modern Slavery Statement. | Modern Slavery Statement |
| C5.1 | What specific examples from the reporting period illustrate whether each salient issue is being managed effectively? | Grievance mechanisms are in place, and we report on the output from them. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 18 |
| C6.1 | Through what means can the company receive complaints or concerns related to each salient issue? | As well as the mechanisms in place to raise grievances through social dialogue, we work with Syntrio to ensure a grievance mechanism is in place throughout our operations; in addition, we monitor our grower suppliers to ensure that they have comparable mechanisms too. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 18 |
| C6.2 | How does the company know if people feel able and empowered to raise complaints or concerns? | We monitor the outputs from Syntrio and report on them. We also monitor and record the outputs of our meetings with worker representative organizations. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 18 |
| C6.3 | How does the company process complaints and assess the effectiveness of outcomes? | <p>Complaints could be processed at the local level through the various channels the company offers (supervisor, management chain, employee representative which could be a union, HR, and/or legal departments). The company also offers the helpline platform through the Syntrio system as an alternative way for employees (or any person) to present a complaint or concern to the company.</p> <p>The ongoing process of social dialogue ensures that we are meeting on average twice a week with each worker representative organization. This ensures that complaints remain live and that feedback is given on the effectiveness of proposed and delivered outcomes.</p> | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 18 |
| C6.4 | During the reporting period, what were the trends and patterns in complaints or concerns and their outcomes regarding each salient issue, and what lessons has the company learned? | <p>Our ongoing processes suggest that there were two main trends during this reporting period. The most frequently raised issue through the grievance mechanisms was the condition of infrastructure on farms. The primary cause was that cable ways (the overhead suspension cables used to transport bananas) and some bridges were in poor repair on some farms. This has been slowing workers down in their ability to move around the farm and deliver bananas. As wages are in part calculated based on productivity, this was a source of complaint for workers.</p> <p>The second frequent source of complaint was around payroll discrepancies between worker expectations and the amounts detailed on payslips. The majority of cases are resolved without requiring any adjustment once reviewed with the worker. In the instance that there is an adjustment recorded, we are committed to making this on the next payment cycle. The longest this will be is two weeks after the complaint was made.</p> <p>Other much less frequent issues related to individual employee misconduct, reported by another employee.</p> | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 18 |
| C6.5 | During the reporting period, did the company provide or enable remedy for any actual impacts related to a salient issue and, if so, what are typical or significant examples? | For all the issues raised, remedy is sought to be made as soon as possible. The remedy on infrastructure in Costa Rica has taken longer than desirable. | Sustainability Report 2024/25, page 18 |

