

Organic Monitor

PRESS RELEASE

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Sustainable Foods Summit Hones in on Ecological Impacts

London – Ecology is the focal theme of the upcoming North American edition of the Sustainable Foods Summit (www.sustainablefoodssummit.com). For the first time, a summit will discuss ways of promoting ecology in the food industry by focusing on sustainability metrics, ethical sourcing & biodiversity, and sustainable food ingredients. The fourth North American edition of this executive summit will be hosted in San Francisco on 22-23 January 2014.

To kick off the summit, the CEO of a sustainable food enterprise will highlight the ethical value of food products. Details will be given on the influence of food production & distribution on the environment and social communities. Another paper will cover the impact of modern agriculture on ecosystems. With intensive agriculture linked to deforestation and desertification, as well a general loss of genetic biodiversity, how can declines in ecosystem be reversed and biodiversity encouraged?

Case studies will be given of food and ingredient firms that are leading in **ethical sourcing** projects. Sambazon will share the challenges it faced when setting up sourcing projects in the Amazon. The Californian firm is building schools and shelters for indigenous tribes whilst procuring acai berries for its organic beverages. Ken Lee, Co-Founder of Lotus Foods, will give details of its sustainable sourcing projects in Asia. Lotus Foods has introduced a number of rare rice varieties in the US market by setting up grower projects in Bhutan, India, Cambodia and other countries. The positive social impact of fair trade on growers in developing countries will also be discussed. Another paper by the Union for Ethical BioTrade will show how awareness of biodiversity is rising across the globe.

Food ingredients for sustainability will be covered at the summit. Loders Croklaan and Daabon USA will discuss the opportunities provided by, as well as limitations of, sustainability roundtables for agricultural commodities. Bob Quinn, President and Founder of Kamut, will explain how the re-emergence of ancient grains is helping overcome monoculture. Diana Plant Sciences will explore the use of plant cell technology to produce sustainable food ingredients. Other papers cover emerging natural sweeteners and novel meat analogues. With surging demand for livestock products linked to climate change, the food industry is coming under pressure to find new alternatives to meat & dairy products.

With intense debate over GM labeling of food products continuing, a number of speakers will discuss the future direction of GM labeling in North America. Laura Batcha, interim

president of the Organic Trade Association, will give an update on the 'Just label it!' campaign, whilst Caroline Kinsmann of the Non-GMO Project will show how non-GMO certified products are soaring amidst the debate. Nutiva will state how ingredient firms can protect their supply chains from contamination by genetically engineered materials.

Another session is devoted to the growing array of **metrics for sustainability**. The Sustainability Consortium will show how food companies and retailers can use sustainability scorecards. Oxfam America will give details of its 'Behind the Brands' sustainability scorecard methodology, which recently gave Nestlé top rating. Quantis will give insights into the carbon footprint of food and beverages, whilst Anheuser-Busch will show how a major brewery is reducing its waste footprint. Insights will be given by Safeway on what sustainability metrics are most important for the retail trade, whilst another paper discusses the role of mobile technology to measure and reduce environmental footprints. The session will adjourn with panelists debating the role of metrics: are they over-complicating the sustainability discussion, or providing meaningful data to actually reduce environmental impacts?

Amarjit Sahota, president of Organic Monitor (organizer of the Sustainable Foods Summit) quotes: 'there is a growing realization that sustainable agriculture can play an important role in tackling the environmental and social challenges faced by the food industry. As well as highlighting industry best-practices in ethical sourcing and food ingredients, this North American edition aims to showcase popular approaches to measuring ecological impacts.'

About the Sustainable Foods Summit

Organized by Organic Monitor, the aim of the Sustainable Foods Summit is to explore new horizons for eco-labels and sustainability in the food industry by discussing key industry issues in a high level forum. The 4th North American edition will be hosted at the Hotel Nikko San Francisco on 22-23rd January 2014. More information is available from www.sustainablefoodssummit.com

About Organic Monitor

Organic Monitor is a specialist research, consulting & training company that focuses on the global organic & related product industries. Since 2001, we have been providing a range of business services to operators in high-growth ethical & sustainable industries. Our services include market research publications, business & technical consulting, seminars & workshops, and sustainability summits. Visit us at www.organicmonitor.com

Further Information

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