



As part of our vision to be a positive force for change, we've produced a series of factsheets to help our customers better understand sustainability issues, and what we're doing about them.

Overview

Labelling requirements on food and menus have increased steadily over time – recent additions have included improvements to allergen labelling as well as calorie information for large catering establishments. A growing number of foodservice and hospitality outlets now require carbon information on the products they buy from us – so that they can either provide this data on menus and/or calculate the carbon footprint of their total annual food purchasing from us.

We're working hard on providing this information – read on to find out more.



What's the problem?

As the climate and nature crisis accelerates, there's growing awareness that industrial scale food production drives a lot of negative impacts. From land use change (e.g. the cutting down of native forests to create cropland or pasture for livestock – known as 'deforestation') to agricultural processes, fertilisers, methane production, transportation and storage, the food we eat has a hefty carbon footprint.

That's before we've even cooked it, disposed of the packaging or created any waste food. But not all food is equal, and there are a lot of misunderstandings about what drives the carbon footprint. So we need to support customers with better information – so that they can better measure and reduce their own footprint – as well as enabling them to give consumers the information they need for more responsible choices.

Jargon busting

Did you know that food transport related emissions make up typically only 10% of the carbon footprint?

Lots of people love the idea of local food (and with good reason!) but it's generally far better (environmentally speaking) to buy food from where it's grown seasonally, then transported to UK, than to buy food from heated greenhouses in the UK, which are usually powered by fossil fuels.

There's also a lot more to food sustainability than just its carbon footprint. From fair pay to workers, water consumption to animal welfare and more, the carbon footprint is just one aspect of sustainability.

What can you do?

You don't need carbon footprint data to start making a difference. Meat and dairy are typically high impact foods, so reducing the proportion of these on a plate will almost always result in a reduction in the climate impact. This can be achieved creatively by swapping in different ingredients (veg, lentils, meat substitutes, nuts etc.) without compromising on taste.

Many caterers have already adopted meat reduction targets (some without even communicating it) and this can have benefits for health and your bottom line too.

Our targets and plans

We're working in partnership with CarbonCloud to provide carbon footprint data for all products in our consumable product range. CarbonCloud are specialists in product level emissions reporting, supporting data accuracy and measurement to accelerate net zero progression. A project overview is below:

STEP 1:

We use the CarbonCloud platform to generate carbon footprint data for all our food and beverage products, this is typically calculated at two levels. For own brand products, we hold higher quality data related to specific recipe information, allowing for a more accurate calculation. Against branded products, we hold less granular information, hence the calculations are initially more generic, as rely heavily on product specific category matching.

STEP 2:

We are engaging our suppliers in this initiative, explaining our approach to carbon footprinting. This gives suppliers a clear signal that our customers are interested in measuring and reducing the climate impact of the food they're buying from us.

STEP 3:

We will invite suppliers into the system to input product/supplier specific data, enabling the accuracy of calculations to be improved. This provides suppliers a greater understanding of the climate impacts of the food they're producing, as well as an opportunity to differentiate themselves in the marketplace, by innovating (in the cultivation and/or processing and/or transportation of the product) to lower the carbon impact.

STEP 4:

By this point, we aim to have supported the acceleration of decarbonisation across our supplier base and wider food supply chains, contributing to a lower scope 3 carbon footprint for our customers, their customers and ourselves.

Share your feedback

We hope you find this fact sheet helpful, we'd love your feedback using the QR code or by clicking [here](#).

