



Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

RSPO Secretariat
www.rspo.org
Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

RSPO EU Communications
www.rspo.eu
communications@rspo.eu
T +32 2 231 50 19

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate publication

Trade in sustainable palm oil has taken off

More than 250,000 tonnes of RSPO-certified oil sold so far

KUALA LUMPUR/BRUSSELS, 30 October, 2009 – A growing number of product manufacturing and retail companies is purchasing sustainable palm oil for use in their consumer products.

Today, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) announced that more than a quarter of a million tonnes ('metric tons') of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil or corresponding certificates have been purchased since becoming available late last year. In the last two months alone, more than 100,000 tonnes of palm oil or corresponding certificates were acquired by companies in Europe and elsewhere.

"Six years after the foundation of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, we are witnessing the first stages of a viable market for sustainable palm oil," said Jan Kees Vis, the RSPO's President. He added: "Now is a great time for more producers and users of palm oil to join the endeavor, so that one day all palm oil will be produced in a socially and environmentally sustainable way."

Growing market uptake

By late October 2009, plantations in Malaysia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea have produced more than 1.1 million tonnes of certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO) since they were officially certified. They can sell sustainable palm oil at a premium through various RSPO channels.

After a slow start, product manufacturers and retail companies began purchasing sustainable palm oil this past summer, bringing millions of dollars in extra revenue to certified producers far away.

Over the last twelve months, certified producers were able to sell over 22 percent of their sustainable oil at a premium price. In September and October, market uptake rose to about 50 percent.

[More >>](#)

Theoretically speaking, the combined sales so far could have been used to manufacture billions of packs of margarine. Many consumer goods contain smaller oil fractions, however, so an even larger number of products will probably be affected by the time they reach retail shops. Companies may claim the use of sustainable palm oil on their packaging if they follow RSPO's guidelines.

The rise in sales of sustainable palm oil coincides with a growing number of companies publicly pledging to fully switch to sustainable palm oil within a certain time frame (many choose 2015), as all RSPO members are required to do.

Worldwide, an estimated forty million tonnes of palm oil is produced annually. About eighty percent comes from Malaysia and Indonesia; countries in West Africa, Latin America and Papua New Guinea supply the rest. About four percent of global production capacity has so far been RSPO-certified.



CAPTION:
Supply (green) and sales (orange) of RSPO-certified sustainable palm oil (CSPO) over the twelve-month period ending October 2009. After a slow start, sales have taken off since the spring of 2009. (High-resolution graphic: see www.rspo.eu)

--

About the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil is a multi-stakeholder association created in 2003 by seven organizations and companies aiming towards sustainable production of palm oil. The Roundtable includes palm growers, processors, traders, retailers, investors and leading NGOs such as WWF and Oxfam International. The RSPO now has more than 400 members, and membership is still growing. Next week, the organization's sixth General Assembly will convene in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The RSPO sets social and environmental standards for sustainable palm oil production, such as no new clearing of primary tropical forests, conservation of natural habitats, and respect for workers and indigenous people. The RSPO selects independent certifiers to audit plantations and issues marketing guidelines so that product manufacturers accurately inform consumers on the use of sustainable palm oil.

More information

More information on market numbers and general background information on the RSPO is available through the RSPO Secretariat or RSPO's EU Communications office (www.rspo.eu). The latter site includes up-to-date market numbers and a 'Press Room' with links to fact sheets and slide presentations containing statistics, answers to frequently asked questions, and still and video images.