



Sustainability report Summer 2024

REISMÜHLE 
NUTREX

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An aerial photograph of the Nutrex facility in Reismühle, Switzerland. The facility consists of several large, modern industrial buildings with grey roofs, some of which have solar panels installed. A tall, white cylindrical silo with the 'NUTREX' logo is a prominent feature. The facility is situated in a valley, with a small town visible in the background and the Reismühle mountain range in the distance under a clear sky.

Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

What does sustainability mean to us?

"Sustainability permeates every business segment and is a mainstay of our strategy as a Swiss production division of Coop. We take a holistic approach, and both our actions and our decisions are always influenced by a sustainability perspective. We don't just view sustainability as a trend – we actually live by it."

Gerhard Marty, Managing Director of Reismühle Nutrex



Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in sourcing?

Long-term supplier relationships

For us, everything begins with the purchase of raw materials for our rice and vinegar products. We place great importance on long-term partnerships to give our producers a perspective which is as long-term and sustainable as possible. This is extremely important for individual farmers and forms the basis for sustainable development. They are only in a position to implement the sustainable standards we require of them in product cultivation thanks to our long-term commitment.



How is sustainability reflected in sourcing?

In harmony with nature and the environment

As a manufacturer of staple foods, we are directly dependent on nature. As such, we've known all along that we need to take care of the environment. In this regard, we observe ecological standards in cultivation and provide support to our producers in switching to and practising organic farming. This is not only very welcome from an ecological point of view, but it also helps farmers achieve a markedly more attractive price, as they can benefit from an organic premium. In economically less developed countries in particular, this is an important element for improving the living standards of farmers and their families.



Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in sourcing?

Tackling economic and social inequality

We aim to certify our products in line with the Fairtrade standard in economically less developed countries in particular. Firstly, this creates fair working conditions and at the same time improves the farmers' producer prices. In addition, we pay producers a Fairtrade premium, which is collected by the community as a whole. The farmers then independently and democratically decide how this money should be used. The idea is that this will be used to promote agricultural innovations. One example of this is purchasing equipment and machinery or investing the money into social projects, such as renovating schools and drinking water systems.

Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in sourcing?

Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

The idea of sustainability is reflected in particular in two rice projects in India and Thailand. Here, Reismühle Nutrex has been actively collaborating with the Coop Sustainability Fund and Helvetas since 2011 and works with approx. 3,500 smallholder farmers who own on average around 1 hectare of land. It is not just about growing a high-quality and environmentally compatible product, but also noticeably improving the living conditions of farmers and their families, and creating added value for the whole community.



Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in sourcing?

Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

Achievements so far:

- Stable and higher yields for our organic producers compared to conventional farmers
- Significantly higher producer prices (e.g. Thailand +26%)
- Considerably lower production costs compared to conventional farmers
- Markedly lower water consumption (e.g. -40 to -50% in India)
- Agricultural innovations
- Social benefits for the whole community through the Fairtrade premium





Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in production?

Resource-efficient processing

When processing our raw materials, we use resource-efficient processes so that no food is wasted. We continually optimize our production facilities and operations in the fight against food waste or to reduce our energy requirements. Where waste or wastewater is generated, we take care to ensure a consistently high recycling rate and make sure that it does not cause environmental pollution.

Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in production?

Environmentally-friendly packaging

We have declared war on plastic packaging in particular. Wherever it is possible and appropriate to do so, we have switched from plastic to paper packaging. Where there are no feasible alternatives, we have reduced the weight of the packaging – and thus the amount of plastic – and we use recycled plastic whenever possible. When it comes to bulk containers, we use reusable folding containers instead of disposable IBC containers whenever possible. For cardboard packaging, we use 100% FSC-label card, which represents sustainable forestry.



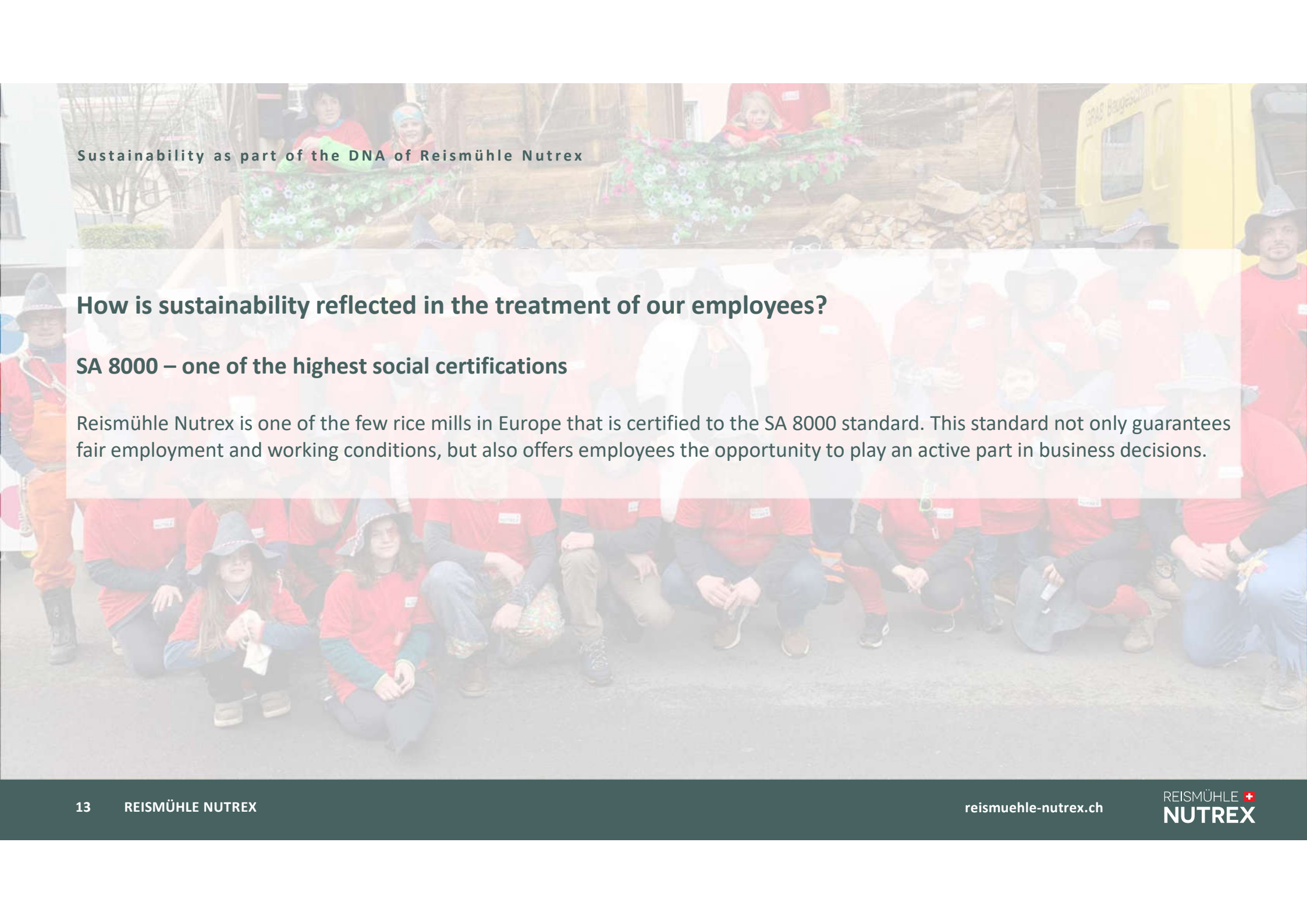


Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in production?

Logistics that are as sustainable as possible

When selecting our suppliers, we try to keep transport routes short. When transporting our products and raw materials, we completely avoid air travel and, wherever possible, move transport from road to ship or rail.



Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in the treatment of our employees?

SA 8000 – one of the highest social certifications

Reismühle Nutrex is one of the few rice mills in Europe that is certified to the SA 8000 standard. This standard not only guarantees fair employment and working conditions, but also offers employees the opportunity to play an active part in business decisions.



Sustainability as part of the DNA of Reismühle Nutrex

How is sustainability reflected in sales?

Long-term customer relationships and prioritized positioning of sustainable products

As with our suppliers, we also place great importance on long-term partnerships with our customers. We pass this planning security on to our producers and thus create the foundations for a sustainable value chain. In the process, we try to get our customers excited for our sustainable products and to position them in an attractive way. Furthermore, we provide continuous support and advice to our customers in implementing and developing sustainable solutions and products.

A photograph of three women in a rice field. They are wearing traditional conical hats and colorful clothing. The woman on the left is smiling and holding a bundle of rice. The woman in the center is wearing a blue shirt and a blue headscarf. The woman on the right is wearing a dark shirt and a brown headscarf. They are standing in a field of tall rice stalks with trees in the background.

Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector: Thailand

Sustainable rice project in Thailand

In 2011, Reismühle Nutrex assisted local farmers in establishing the Oasis cooperative in Surin province in eastern Thailand. Together, we set up a fair value chain based on mutual respect and trust. We invested in infrastructure, equipment, machinery and also in the training of farmers to enable them to grow rice organically. Today, around 800 members of this cooperative benefit from this project as they produce our high-quality, organic Fairtrade jasmine rice.





Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

Sustainable rice project in Thailand

Education and training

In the past six months, many investments have been made into educating and training farmers and the cooperative's employees. This includes training in organic and Fairtrade cultivation and in sustainable water management. For the latter, credits were given to 21 farmers to further optimize their irrigation system. In addition, 53 were trained in setting up a quality seed programme, and 120 were given high-quality seeds.

Sustainable rice project in Thailand

Agronomische Investitionen

To further improve the farmers' income while at the same time ensuring sustainable soil management through an ideal crop rotation product, this year assistance was given to 50 farmers in introducing mung beans. These farmers were trained in cultivation and given seeds. Another 50 benefited from land laser levelling. Levelling the soil is essential for efficient water management. This also helps to control weeds and significantly increases productivity. Investments were also made into machinery and infrastructure, and farmers were provided with fertilizer.





Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector: India

Sustainable rice project in India

In 2011, Reismühle Nutrex began establishing a fair value chain in India as well. The first cooperative was founded in Ramnagar, in the northern state of Uttarakhand. A few years later, another followed, this time in Nanpara in Uttar Pradesh, one of the poorest regions in the whole of India. At the beginning of the project, investments were primarily made into the water systems and water management. In addition, farmers were familiarized with more efficient farming methods and we assisted them in procuring equipment and machinery. In 2023, as part of a new project phase, we tapped into a third area, around the Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary north of Nanpara. Today, around 3,000 members benefit from this project by producing our high-quality organic Fairtrade basmati and long-grain rices for us.

Sustainable rice project in India

Ramnagar

One of the greatest achievements in the last six months was the erection of a fence around the village of Dhela, in which 150 of our farmers live and work. This village directly borders the famous Corbett National Park and, as such, has repeatedly been the victim of conflicts between people and wild animals in the past. Apes and elephants destroy large portions of the crop, and there are often fatal incidents between the villagers and big cats such as tigers and leopards. Just this year, a woman fell victim to a tiger that attacked her inside the village. As they received no support from the responsible authorities, the affected farmers turned to the board of their cooperative, and together they built this solid fence.



Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

Sustainable rice project in India

Ramnagar

"During harvest time, our family members, me included, have to take turns to guard our farmland day and night. It was difficult for any of us to get a good night's sleep, as there was always the danger of the crop being destroyed by wild animals. We can finally relax a little thanks to this fence."

Tulsi Devi, one of the active farmers





Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

Sustainable rice project in India

Ramnagar und Nanpara:

Improving agricultural production

The farmers continued to receive technical training in seeds, soil preparation, composting, pest control and fertilization and received support in implementing the individual activities. Furthermore, the sustainable and more fruitful SRI cultivation method was promoted to 818 farmers. An experiment was undertaken in Nanpara which employed mobile applications such as remote sensing techniques. This allows the health and yield of plants to be evaluated based on physical parameters such as nutrient stress and water availability.

Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

Sustainable rice project in India

Ramnagar und Nanpara:

Promoting education

In these six months, too, 11 primary schools received support in the form of IT infrastructure to teach children IT skills and further improve their basic education. In addition, nine pupils were given a grant and another 13 succeeded in being accepted into a secondary school at state level.





Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

Sustainable rice project in India

Ramnagar und Nanpara:

Promoting social welfare

The solar streetlamp system was further expanded and the water treatment units underwent maintenance. As part of the welfare programme, rugs, mattresses and blankets were distributed to the farmers and workers.





Sustainable sourcing projects in the rice sector

Sustainable rice project in India

Ramnagar und Nanpara:

**promoting equality between
men and women**

An initiative was set up to offer awareness-raising campaigns and skill expansion training for young people and women. In the educational programme on menstrual hygiene management, health questions were answered and women and adolescent girls in the villages were supplied with sanitary pads. Skill expansion sessions also empowered them to earn a livelihood by training them in tailoring and sewing.

Sustainable rice project in India

Katarniaghat: initiation of a landscape approach

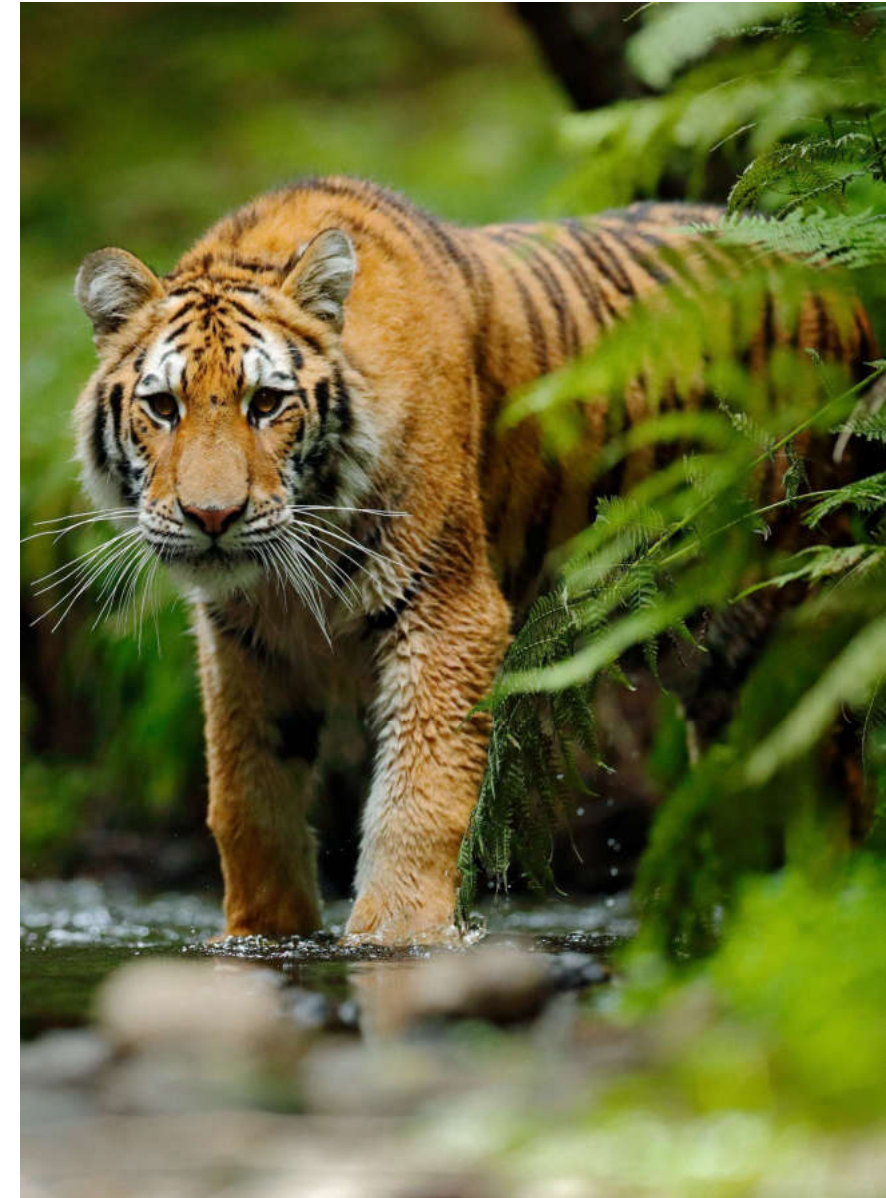
Following the establishment of the value chain in India over the last few years, we have been considering how we might also make a contribution outside the supply chain to make it possible for future generations to cultivate rice as well. In the process, we have decided to initiate a holistic landscape approach. This analyses the opportunities and risks of a project region, from which suitable measures are drawn up for people, nature and the environment. In 2023, we therefore decided to develop a new project area north of Nanpara around the Katarniaghat Nature Reserve. This is one of the poorest regions in India and local farmers live directly in the nature reserve. This means that conflicts between humans and wild animals are inevitable. Our main objectives here are to improve the living conditions of the people living in the project area and to defuse the human-wildlife conflict.

Sustainable rice project in India

Katarniaghat: initiation of a landscape approach

The following specific targets are pursued:

- Improving income for farmers
 - through organic and Fairtrade-certified rice
 - by diversifying crop rotation products and establishing additional supply chains
 - by promoting eco-tourism
- Protecting nature and the environment:
 - stabilizing or increasing the populations of endangered species such as tigers and elephants
 - reducing conflicts between people and wild animals in the region
 - reducing greenhouse gases by introducing renewable energies





Sustainability in operations

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Sustainability in operations

Our sustainable targets

As part of the Coop Cooperative, we are committed to sustainable, multi-year targets which we want to have achieved by 2026. These include:

- Ensuring 100% traceability and transparency for critical raw materials
- Introducing social standards for suppliers from risk countries
- Promoting sustainable products
- Introducing minimum standards for rice from risk countries
- Introducing water standards for fruit and vegetables from countries with high water stress
- Improving the reusable materials quota
- Fighting food waste
- Reducing plastic use
- Promoting women in management positions
- Offering apprenticeships in the company
- Promoting education and further training for our employees
- Offering health programmes for our employees

Milestones achieved

Reduction of food waste

As a food producer, we bear tremendous responsibility in this area. We therefore sat down with our suppliers and examined how to further improve yields. In the end, we managed to take yet another important step in combating food waste and reduce waste by another 50%. Because every grain of rice that doesn't end up on a plate is one too many.



Milestones achieved

Reduction of plastic

We have switched our packaging from plastic to FSC paper where possible and appropriate. Paper has two major advantages over plastic packaging. The first is that the decomposition process for paper is more environmentally friendly than for plastic. Paper packaging usually decomposes within weeks. In exceptional cases, it may take several years. Plastic takes between 100 and 1,000 years to decompose and the assumption is that it never decomposes completely. The second advantage of paper lies in the raw material used. Paper stems from wood, a renewable raw material, and is therefore more sustainable than petroleum-based plastic.





Sustainability in operations

Milestones achieved

Reduction of our CO2 footprint

When purchasing raw materials, we try to keep transport routes short. Over the last two years we have also doubled the proportion of end products delivered by rail. In production, we also continue to invest in energy optimization and in-house renewable energy production in the form of solar energy. This will be expanded in future.

Your contact persons

We are here for you!

We are happy to support you with all aspects of sustainable vinegar and rice products. We will answer your questions and provide you with help and advice. Do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Your Reismühle Nutrex Team

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