



Sustainability in Action

September 26, 2019

Brought to you by:



Presenters

- Hank Giclas** – Senior VP Science, Technology & Strategic Planning, Western Growers and Steering Committee of SISC
- Nikki Rodoni** – CEO and Founder, Measure to Improve, LLC
- Kieran Ficken** – Sustainability Program Manager, Measure to Improve, LLC
- Jamie Barsimantov** – Co-Founder and COO, SupplyShift
- Amy Duda-Kinder** – Vice President of Food Safety and Sustainability, Duda Farm Fresh Foods
- Jocelyn Bridson** – Director of Environmental Science and Resources, Rio Farms, LLC
- Louis DeMaso** – Sustainability and Operations Analyst, Lipman Family Farms
- Javier Zamora** – Owner, JSM Organics
- Daniel Mountjoy, PhD** – Director of Resource Stewardship, Sustainable Conservation
- Dr. Daniel Sonke** – Director of Sustainable Agriculture, Campbell Soup
- Michael Cahn, PhD** – Farm Advisor, Irrigation and Water Resources, UCCE
- Laura Murphy** – Soil Scientist, RCD Monterey
- Alejandro Del-Pozo, PhD** – Area IPM Advisor – Entomology, UCCE
- Mike Bennett** – Sales Manager, Ecology Action
- Ed Treacy** – Vice President, Supply Chain and Sustainability, PMA
- Jennifer Maloney** – Food Stakeholder Manger, Bayer Crop Science

Participants



Hank Giclas, Senior VP Science, Technology & Strategic Planning, Western Growers

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Welcome Remarks

- The agricultural industry is becoming more sustainable, but this isn't always well communicated.
- Consumers and regulators want to know more about the sustainability of our products.
- We can use the ideas shared here today to track and report sustainability.

Nikki Rodoni, CEO and Founder, and Kieran Ficken Sustainability Program Manager, Measure to Improve, LLC

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State of the Industry – Today and the Future

- The Monterey County Sustainability Working Group started in 2012 to share best practices.
- Measure to Improve helps clients develop and implement sustainability programs that can be improved over time and credibly promoted.
- Sustainability entails meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
 - Companies often use a “triple-bottom line” approach, considering the three P's of sustainability: people, planet, and profit.
- What does sustainability look like today?
 - Companies focus on resource use; there is often a strong business case to be made for using our resources more efficiently.
 - Reporting is typically practice-based, with little data.
 - Few tracking tools have been broadly deployed, making gathering, organizing, analyzing, and reporting data difficult.
 - Partnerships are emerging to help tackle sustainability problems.
 - Companies are under increasing pressure to address social concerns, both for workers and the communities in which we operate.
 - Climate change is already impacting the industry; agriculture is both a major contributor to climate change and the industry that will most strongly feel its effects.
- What will sustainability look like in the future?
 - Agricultural supply chains will need to adopt climate-smart solutions, including adapting to changing weather patterns while deploying regenerative practices, which help sequester carbon in the soil and mitigate climate change.
 - Stronger emphasis will be placed on food loss and waste; a growing population and a changing climate means each unit of production is more critical than ever.
- “Sustainability is becoming the cost of doing business.”
 - Sustainability provides us with the opportunity to save money, build trust, improve transparency, increase efficiency, and do the right thing.

Jamie Barsimantov, Co-Founder and COO, SupplyShift

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SISC Calculator – Leveraging New Online Tools to Support On-Farm Sustainability

- SupplyShift is a global company, covering multiple industries. It supports partners and suppliers with data collection, aggregation, assessment, and mapping.
- The company recognized the overwhelming need for transparency to buyers and sellers.
 - The best solution was a network, which makes sharing valuable data between providers and customers easier.
 - Growers enter information once and can share it with multiple buyers, instead of answer unique questionnaires for each buyer.

- “The value of a network is that you can answer once and share with who you want multiple times.”
- SupplyShift does not manage content. “We think that there are really smart people across every industry that put together multi-stakeholder collaborations to figure out what needs to be measured. Our job is to make that efficient.”
 - In this case, SISC developed the calculator; SupplyShift incorporated it into their platform.
- The SISC online platform tracks critical metrics in the specialty crops sector.
 - There is no cost to growers.
 - SISC provides privacy and confidentiality, with anonymous peer groups for benchmarking.
 - That’s an opportunity for learning.
 - SISC provides an opportunity for customers to request information in one platform in one consistent way.
 - SISC allows aggregators to manage and organize growers in one place.
 - Once growers submit, the aggregator can view the data in a variety of outputs.
 - The first three aggregators will be Campbell’s, Smucker’s, and Western Growers
- There will be a Summit on Responsible Supply Chains in Santa Cruise on Nov 4th and 5th

Q and A

- While SupplyShift is available on mobile devices, SISC is unconfirmed for mobile
- SISC is not publicly launched yet, but anticipates launch in the spring of 2020.
- Translation capability for this platform is unconfirmed.
- SISC is interested in developing IPM and on-farm food waste metrics.
- Aggregators need to pay for subscription.

Grower Panel Session: What Are We Doing in Our Operation and Why?

Amy Duda-Kinder - Vice President of Food Safety and Sustainability, Duda Farm Fresh Foods

Jocelyn Bridson - Director of Environmental Science and Resources, Rio Farms, LLC

Louis DeMaso - Sustainability and Operations Analyst, Lipman Family Farms

Javier Zamora – Owner, JSM Organics

Moderator: Daniel Mountjoy, PhD – Director of Resource Stewardship, Sustainable Conservation

Where is your organization in addressing sustainability?

- Amy Duda-Kinder manages food safety programs and sustainability.
 - “We’re working on our sustainability programs much like everyone else.”
 - We are working on a pilot program with SISC to baseline soil health, nutrient input and water efficiency for our specialty crops
- Javier Zamora owns an organic strawberry farm and works to develop a greater social consciousness about where the food we eat comes from.
 - He works with researchers from UC Davis, Berkley, and NOAA who want to study nitrogen application and practices on his farm benefiting the environment.
 - “We need to be a group. Making an impact by yourself is difficult.”
- Louis DeMaso with Lipman Family Farms joined SISC to match metrics to the data they were generating.
 - Lipman Family Farms is now working to unify their sustainability efforts, aggregate data, turn it into meaningful metrics, and communicate to buyers.
- Jocelyn Bridson’s sustainability story started at an onion processing plant in Oxnard with, Nikki Rodoni. Onion waste was a problem and the solution was to use the onion juice as energy at the plant.
 - With SISC since 2011, she is now using SISC to track compost programs

- Rio Farms focuses on nutrient management by chipping away at things like pre-plant fertilizing. By stopping this practice, they saved 4 million dollars over 4 years. 500,000 lbs. of nitrogen have not been applied to the land.

How has the sustainability program been adopted in your organizations?

- Amy Duda-Kinder: It started as a reporting issue but now involves a real passion.
- Javier Zamora: we want to let people know what an organic farmer does.
 - Sharing good metrics lets you stand out as a small grower.
 - It is more expensive to grow organic; reporting helps people understand your prices and model.
- Louis DeMaso: Lipman Family Farms has been implementing sustainable practices for years, but we need to quantify and show that.
 - Metrics help with operations and resources efficiency.
 - The sustainability team quantifies savings and shows how we're improving.
 - Marketability and reporting to consumers encourage a culture of innovation with competitive advantage when buyers are looking who to buy from.
 - Standing out with data showing you can grow more with less is useful.
- Jocelyn Bridson: this helps tell our story which includes the costs of resources.
 - We've been doing pump efficiency tests for years, but now being able to track that digitally is more efficient than a PDF.
 - This also helps to learn about your farm itself. *"You might not know why you're looking at data until later it saves you millions of dollars."*

What other methods are used for collecting data? What is the value in using SISC in the future?

- Javier Zamora: We know we're doing well, but how well?
 - We found 5.5% organic matter in one soil but almost -1% is another. *"What is the difference between those two soils? We need these tools to understand what is happening."*
- Amy Duda-Kinder: *"we're good at generating data but struggle with using it strategically."*
 - Having these tools to simplify and replicate that data, and communicate it between departments is useful
- Louis DeMaso: The value of SISC is the difference between a metric and data.
 - Data is how much water you used last month vs this month. *"But what does that really mean? Did you plant less? Was it hotter?"* A metric includes these other variables
 - With SupplyShift, efficiency and ease of use allows the farm managers know what to collect, how, and where.
 - Information is easily communicated in the company or to buyers.
- Jocelyn Bridson: *"There are companies helping growers track to shippers for food safety but there aren't a lot of organizations helping track irrigation for every plot"*
 - SISC is great for supply chains because it's all integrated.

How are you using the data and metrics to tell your story to regulators and consumers? What are buyers looking for and how do you translate that?

- Louis DeMaso: Programs like SupplyShift will help in standardizing reporting not just for management but for operations as well.
- Amy Duda-Kinder: Metrics help us find consistency internally to collect data and later provide that to customers.
- Javier Zamora: Internally, metrics help us save money on nutrients and water usage. We can utilize those numbers to let the customer know what we're doing to be sustainable.
- Jocelyn Bridson: Surveys can be frustrating, answering almost the same question but not quite.
 - We've found real value in discussing the data internally.

Which metrics are most useful to you?

- Javier Zamora: Irrigation efficiency - how much water we use on 1-acre plot of romaine.
 - We report water and nitrogen to regulators.

- *“The technology to measure is there already, we should utilize these tools in a social way. Connecting can make us more sustainable.”*
- Amy Duda-Kinder: The most useful metrics is irrigation efficiency, water use, nutrient input, and soil health.
- Jocelyn Bridson: *The new metric for food waste is the most exciting.*
 - A lot of decisions to harvest are out of the farmer's control.
 - We can see if buyers are improving and taking as much as they intend to.
- Louis DeMaso: All metrics are useful to sustainability.
 - Where in the process or company is important.

What is your advice to people starting sustainability programs and what are the risks and opportunities for communicating?

- Jocelyn Bridson – Consider all of your resources and value. *“Be curious. Admit what you don't know.”*
 - Use these tools to find what buyers are buying vs what they promise they will buy.
 - Both farmers and buyers have an impact on sustainability. This data can open up a conversation.
- Louis DeMaso – Define why you want to pursue sustainability.
 - Make specific and measurable metrics because *“...biting off more than you can chew is easy to do with sustainability.”*
 - Use the data to prioritize projects.
- Javier Zamora – *“Keep educating yourself. Listen to people because they want to share what they know.”*
- Amy Duda-Kinder – *“These conversations have to be honest.”*
 - You need executive level support.
 - Data can empower sales to know how to say yes or no to a customer.

Questions and Answers with the Audience

- How do you build soil health?
 - Jocelyn Bridson: We use cover cropping and reusing food waste.
- Do you think people in the industry are coming together in sustainability like they did with food safety?
 - Amy Duda-Kinder: Audit overload is too much to deal with but there are discussions to support streamlining this process.
 - Nikki Rodoni: United Fresh, PMA, Western Growers are all talking about streamlining these metrics.
 - Hank Giclas – SISC is the idea of getting ahead of the audits that happened with food safety. A lot of the SISC metrics are incorporated into today's surveys.
 - Jocelyn Bridson – SIP Wine Certification is a practice based example for our industry.

Lunch was sponsored by Bayer Crop Science

Dr. Daniel Sonke, Director of Sustainable Agriculture, Campbell Soup

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Keynote: Why Sustainability Matters to Consumers

- A few major issues in sustainability:
 - Consumers are a driver of sustainability; they want real food: food with recognizable, desirable ingredients, ethically sourced, that is tasty and affordable.
 - Global challenges impact Campbell's sustainability efforts as well:
 - A rising middle class in China drives pork prices around the world.
 - Overdrafting is an issue in South Africa and India; the Midwest's Ogallala Aquifer is beginning to dry up.

- Investors and customers are aware of these issues and it influences their choices
- Distributors want to report to consumers but also work with companies that won't experience disruptions because of their practices.
- When it comes to communication, growers should keep an eye on how consumers related to sustainability.
 - Farmers are still a trusted source of information for consumers regarding food; if you can tell your story then there is an audience waiting to hear it.
 - Scientific progress along with its process has driven consumers toward more natural foods.
 - Less processed, simpler ingredients, and communicating your whole agricultural story is desirable to the consumer. *"I just want to eat something that is real."*
 - Consumers interpret healthy for the environment as healthy for them.
 - Trust is key. Produce in an ethical way and communicate that to consumers.
 - Supply chain interests often show up in the intersections of Environmental, Economic, Social, and Personal interest. *"That's where the healthy for me, healthy for 'we' trust elements all intersect."*
 - We communicate this to our customers through websites, videos of the farmer at work, and podcasts *"Reminding people that there are some really cool stories behind the food they are purchasing."*
- Campbell's is using SISC to build a sustainable story from the metrics they collect.
 - We collect data from 50 family farms and over 400 tomato fields each year.
 - The adoption of drip irrigation on 75% of our fields has reduced total water use by 20%
 - *"This is a wonderful story that I've had the privilege of telling on behalf of our farmers."*
 - Our grower management team uses this data as a conversation starter with farmers about sustainability.
 - We will be using the SupplyShift tool to launch a sustainability program with our new potato chip supply chain
- **Future Trends**
 - Soil health is an important focus area, and a good term because this language connects with consumers better.
 - Regenerative agriculture is still undefined; it could mean organic plus more soil health attention and closed loop systems.
 - Another definition could mean sequestering more carbon than you're making. This would mean that GMOs and no-till practices fit regenerative standards, but not organic ones.
 - People want new flavors and textures in food which necessitates biodiversity.
- **Questions**
 - What is the company's system for collecting data? Is there a staff?
 - There are 2 of us working on sustainable agriculture. Tomato sourcing staff consists of 3 people.
 - We use Excel and Athena Intelligence to gather information from farmers.
 - Land O'Lakes is a partner for wheat.
 - We will pilot SupplyShift for our potato supply chain but have other crops we may use.
 - Do you believe the consumer can understand this?
 - Consumers are savvy so we need to back up what we say with data. Note everyone will want to look closely at the information we provide, but it has to be there for those that are interested.
 - Consumers are asking for a transition to regenerative farming, but we have to be careful with making a promise we can't deliver.

- Consumers focus on different aspects of sustainability, depending on the product, from traceability to clean label, to human rights, to animal welfare.
 - Stakeholder assessments give a very clear answer that we should focus on water, greenhouse gasses, fertilizer, soil, and pesticides.

Michael Cahn, PhD, Farm Advisor, Irrigation and Water Resources, UCCE

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Improving Irrigation and Fertilizer Efficiency

- Cooperative Extension is the outreach branch of the University of California
- We work with growers on applied science for nutrient management. We obtain grants to run studies based on grower requests.
- UCCE can:
 - Help growers begin better practices
 - Offer equipment and staff to start implementing on farm trials
 - Partner with other organizations and consultants to further your efforts
 - Provide educational workshops and seminars and can tailor these to specific organizations and needs

Laura Murphy, Soil Scientist, RCD of Monterey County

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Reducing On-Farm Carbon Emissions

- Every county has an RCD. In Monterey County, we can be responsive to grower needs because the RCD is funded by grants, not task-based funding.
- Interest in carbon sequestration and soil management has grown, along with irrigation management.
- We focus on NRCS protocols for sustainable farming, but with a strong emphasis on carbon sequestration.
- We work with landowners to conserve natural resources and provide direct technical assistance to farmers on the land to help implement carbon reduction practices.

Alejandro Del Pozo-Valdivia, PhD, Area IPM Advisor - Entomology, UCCE

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Inter-cropping and Its Impact on Beneficials and IPM

- We help growers implement alternative pesticides or improve Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices
 - For example, intercropping with plants that attract beneficial insects which leads to fewer pests.
- We pair with local companies to release beneficial insects and quantify how those insects control pest populations
 - We provide this information to growers so the whole industry can benefit.

Mike Bennett, Sales Manager, Ecology Action

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Greater Energy Efficacy Across Your Operation

- We are a non-profit based in Santa Cruz, specializing in supporting commercial customers with their sustainability projects
- We have served 15,000 customers and helped gain them 52 million dollars in rebates from utilities.

- Auditors will come to your farm, find where you can get the best rebate, then create a proposal with you.
 - With Taylor Farms the switch to LED saved 1 million kWh annually, afforded \$132,000 in rebates, and will save close to \$200,000 annually.
 - PG&E is currently, financing at 0% with no money down, up to \$150,000 per project.

Ed Treacy, Vice President, Supply Chain and Sustainability, PMA

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PMA's Efforts in Sustainability

- PMA brings together the produce and floral industries
- We promote sustainability while keeping companies profitable
 - We will put out 2 or 3 sustainability case studies a month to promote success stories.
 - We are developing tools to help farmers know what sustainable practices are in fact sustainable.
 - Our Ethical Charter for the Treatment of People helps guide the adoption of social accountability practices. Over 100 companies have adopted this.
 - Additionally, we focus on soil health, alternative energies, food waste, food loss, and packaging

Jennifer Maloney, Food Stakeholder Manager, Bayer Crop Science

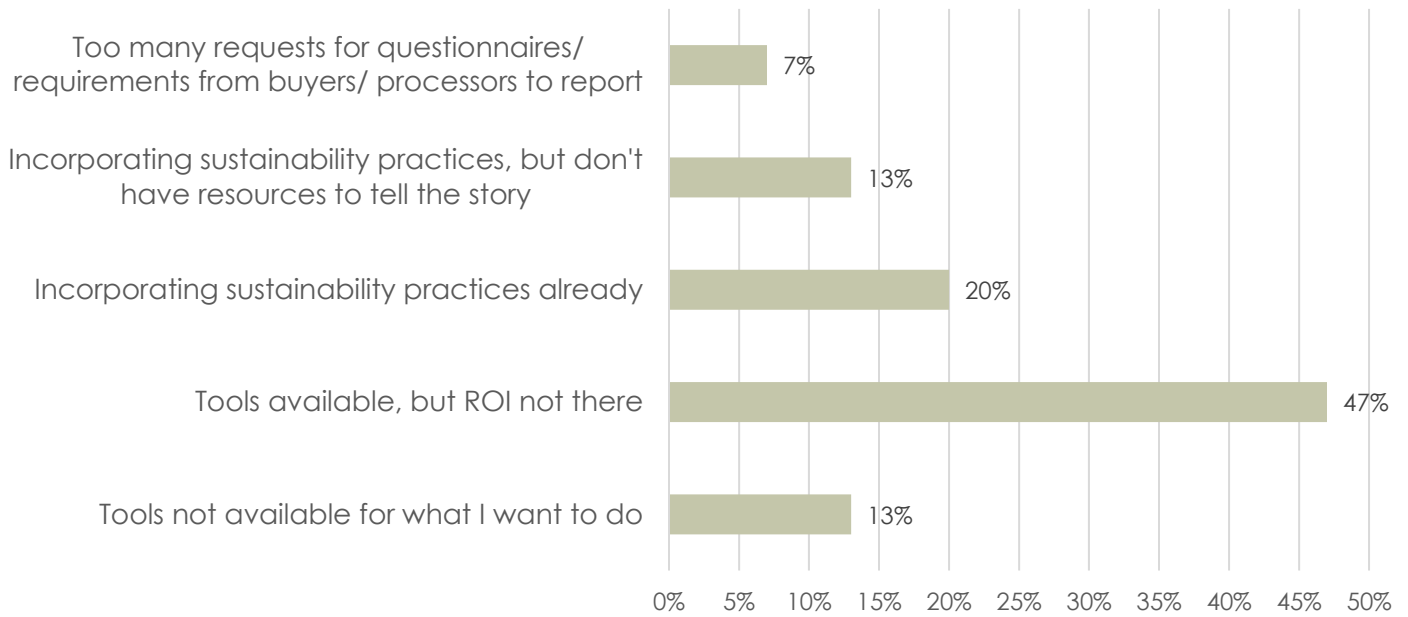
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- We are here to tie these different conversations together from processing to consumer levels.
 - We need to be communicative and collaborative.
- We need to share tools like SISC, technical resources, government incentives, and how to tell our story.
- Use the tools we've discussed today and the connections you make to know where to go and who to talk to.
 - SISC – stewardshipindex.org for information on these tools
 - Monterey County Working Group – MCSWG.org for notes and slides.

Poll Results

The audience was asked to participate in polls to help identify the biggest challenge to adding sustainability practices to their organizations, and where their interest lies in adding sustainability practices to their organizations in the future. The results from the polls are included in the charts below:

What is the biggest challenge to incorporating sustainability into your practices?



Where does your future interest lie in helping to incorporate sustainability practices?

