

Ambition 2025: Bettys & Taylors

Four years ago Bettys & Taylors launched an approach to sourcing that would transform the way they worked with suppliers, helping them to become more sustainable in the face of ever-increasing challenges. ‘Taylors Sourcing Approach’ was developed through two years of consultation and engagement with producers.

The model that has emerged integrates sustainability ambitions directly into supply chain relationships. Their work seeks to ensure a future proofed environmentally and socially resilient supply base to guarantee a long-term supply of quality tea and coffee.

Rather than traditional buyer-led relationships, the business collaborates with its key suppliers to build contracts, improve quality and find solutions to sustainability challenges. Long-term contracts – typically three to five years – provide a degree of security for producers, allowing longer term planning, and supporting investment and continuous improvement.

In all cases, the tea and coffee Bettys and Taylors buys is certified, ensuring there’s a strong baseline of environmental and labour standards. Regular visits to origin support genuine partnerships. And by working collaboratively with suppliers and industry bodies, the business is able to build projects that will have a significant impact of supply chain communities.

An example of this work is Bettys & Taylors ambitious project to plant a million trees across tea farms in Taylors’ supplier heartland in the foothills of Mt. Kenya. Working directly with smallholder tea farmers, the community reforestation scheme is part of the business’s commitment to a carbon neutral tea and coffee supply chain by 2020.

Beyond receiving ongoing payments for the carbon their trees absorb, the farmers are encouraged to grow trees that provide other benefits such as cash crops, fodder for cattle, shade and soil nutrients. As part of the scheme, farmers are receiving training on conservation farming and agro-forestry techniques. The business is now looking towards a second phase that will address similar issues in its coffee supply chain.

In 2017, Bettys and Taylors won a Queen’s Award for Sustainable Development in recognition of its work.

“Building resilience in our supply chain is about much more than just ‘doing the right thing’. Sustainability is a commercial imperative for our business and, for us, resilience means ensuring business continuity for everyone in the value chain.”

Simon Hotchkin, Head of Sustainable Development, Bettys and Taylors

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