

Sustainable Development in Central America and the Dominican Republic

Company: Alimentos Campestres S.A.
Country: Guatemala
Project: TMF Program: Poverty reduction and environmental improvement.
An Integral Sustainable Development strategy.
Year: 2006

THE COMPANY

This Guatemalan company was founded in 1990 and since its beginning it has made and commercialize dehydrated and dry food products. During production season, it may have up to 60 employees, out of which 45 work exclusively in production tasks. Most of them are neighbors from Zona 17, *Lomas del Norte* where the company is located which show a commitment to the community.



This company also intends to implement environmentally friendly alternative energies in their productive processes which may also result in important costs savings.



PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

This company's main products are dehydrated fruits and vegetables, dehydrated fruit mixes for punch, Jamaican Rose, corn and plantain atole, raisin, plums, peaches, pistachios, and mixed nuts amongst others.

These products are sold in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico and the United States.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The methodology to implement the Sustainability Strategy in the company started with the conceptualizing of the sustainable development system –at which stage an internal and external organizational analysis took place to determine its sustainability profile, as well as its options for improvement in the environmental, economic and social dimensions.



Later on, the company's strategic guidelines were defined within the sustainable development frame. Then, the action plans in each of the dimensions were established – as well as indicators and monitoring mechanisms to guarantee compliance of the strategic established objectives.

Later on, training and technical assistance were provided to support the company in implementing the action plans. This way, it was intended to fulfill the transfer of knowledge to the organization; and also, the follow up oriented towards the achievement of the expected results was developed.

MAIN ATTAINED RESULTS

Strategies, policies and plans

New approaches were defined within the company’s strategic framework:

COMPANY’S MISION

Alimentos Campestres S.A. is a manufacturing and commercializing enterprise specialized in dehydrated and dry food products - innovative and of high quality - that promotes each country’s traditions in the region.

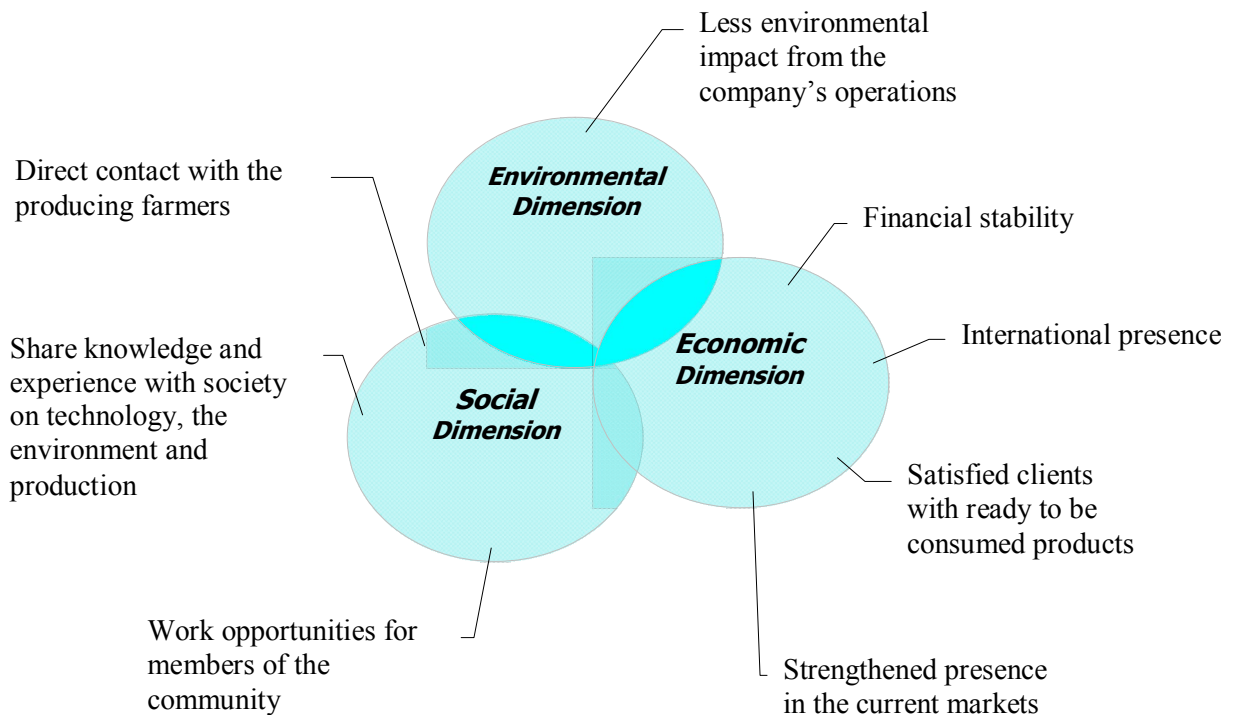
COMPANY’S VISION


Be a company with regional presence renown by its wide availability and its products’ quality, and for its commitment to the cultural and sustainable development of the region.

COMPANY VALUES

- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Creativity
- Dynamism
- Innovation

COMPANY’S SUSTAINABILITY POLICY



Initial diagnosis	Achieved improvements
PROJECT'S PROFILE: SOLAR DEHYDRATING PLANT	
Technical aspects	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in the high costs of fuels. ▪ Project's technical feasibility. ▪ Inadequate location to maximize solar energy use. ▪ Need for technical support in the implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The use of thermic-solar energy is proposed to execute the drying processes of the products. ▪ Through the analysis of the current production and the estimation of the future demand, the project's requirements and scopes were determined. ▪ The company has located a property in the best possible location for the installation of a solar dryer. ▪ The company has been connected with different enterprises and organizations that have offered cooperation not only for the installation, but also during the beginning of the operation of a possible solar dryer.
Financial aspects	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Project's financial feasibility. ▪ Scenario analysis with a solar dryer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Financial statements were projected in two scenarios, with and without solar drying, with the objective of knowing the installation's feasibility. ▪ It was determined that the solar dryer can provide to the company higher competitiveness, savings, new markets, social responsibility and added value, as well as higher quality to its products.
PRODUCTIVE EFFICENCY	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Options to improve in Good Manufacturing Practices at the production plant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was recommended to implement the following measures during the next remodeling: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Isolate the exterior production room, to avoid products coming into the plant contaminated or any other agents for the outside. b. Relocate the office to avoid cross-contamination. c. Redesign the restrooms area so that it complies with the stipulated demands in characteristics and quantities. d. Improve cleanness in general to prevent fungi proliferation. e. More illumination is required; besides, the lamps must be protected against breakage to avoid broken glass from dropping on the product. f. Once the plant is isolated from the outside, an adequate ventilation system must be installed – especially to eliminate the dryers' vapors.
	

SOCIAL DIMENSION

Health and Occupational Safety

- Neither has the company identified or classified the main work risks, nor has it had any training on it.



- Employees do not have basic safety equipment.
- The packing warehouse's stairs present a risk for falls.
- Information is lacking on used chemicals.

- Cuts were identified as the most common accident during the process. Additionally, it was recommended the purchase of ear plugs and safety goggles for employees who operate the chopper.



- It was recommended to purchase safety goggles, anti-cuts gloves, and ear plugs to have them available for employees to be used when necessary. Additionally, employees must be advised of the risk of not wearing them and trained them to use machinery safely.
- It is recommended to install a rail and widen the stairs. The stairs materials should not be porous or prone to fissure. It must be anti-slippery.
- It was recommended that the plant's manager have a copy of the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet), with the objective of his knowing how it works in case of an accident.

Internal and External Social Projection

- Improvement in the Human Resources procedures.
- Improvement in the community projection.



- A positions and a competences lexicon handbook was developed; and procedures for recruiting, selection and induction as well as instruments to determine training needs were documented.
- Given the company's interest, some future possibilities were defined in their projection to the community:
 - Cultural fairs at schools where the products may be promoted.
 - Develop farmers' associations, process their products and encourage their exportation.
 - Make an attempt in the use of renewable energies.

Phrase by the Entrepreneur

“The implementation of the sustainability strategy in the daily chores of Alimentos Campestres, S.A. allows us to perceive the future with confidence and optimism. The adoption of renewable energies, the optimizing of the quality systems, the improvement of our relationship with collaborators and the commitment with our community, definitely positions us as a solid and integral company. We have not yet finished implementing said strategy, and we are already profiling in the short term a great amount of opportunities ...”

Carlos Raúl Montes Segura
General Manager

