



## Sustainably Grown\*\* Rice Uncle Ben's®, Mars Food®

Rice is the daily staple for more than 3.5 billion people around the world. However, traditional rice production use approximately 40% of the world's irrigation water, and is responsible for up to 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions. As the makers of Uncle Ben's – one of the world's best loved rice brands – we're committed to working with other to drive transformational change. That's why we were the **first in the industry to commit** to sourcing 100% of rice from farmers working towards the Sustainable Rice Platform standard by 2020.



*(Photo: Rice Farmer Sajid Ali Looks Out Over His Fields, Pakistan)*

The UN's **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, also known as the Global Goals, offer a powerful guide for this next generation of growth. While our efforts will contribute to multiple SDGs, we've made a strategic decision to focus on three goals that align most closely with the Pillars of our Sustainable in a Generation Plan. We've selected the goals



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below as the ones where we can contribute most to solutions, while growing our business in a sustainable way.

(Source: <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals>)

That's why we launched our **Sustainable in a Generation Plan** in September 2017. The Sustainable in a Generation Plan has three interconnected strategic Pillars that we believe are essential for sustainable growth:

1. **Healthy Planet**
2. **Thriving People**
3. **Nourishing Wellbeing**

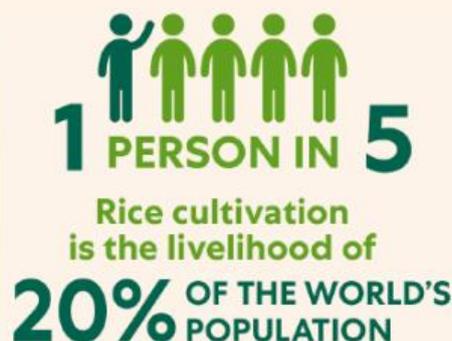


*(Photo: Rice Farmer Sajid Ali Gives Luc Beerens (Sustainability Director – UNCLE BEN'S®) and Hammad Naqi Khan (CEO – WWF Pakistan) a Tour of His Farm, Pakistan)*

**At UNCLE BEN'S® we're committed to sourcing our rice in a way that creates shared benefits for farmers, the environment, and the industry.**

Working through public/private partnerships and on the ground with farmers, we can support a high-quality rice crop for the billions around the world who depend on it for their nutrition and livelihood.

(Source: Mars SIG Report 2018)



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# 1. Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP)



We've worked with the UN Environment and the International Rice Research Institute to create the Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP), an initiative that is driving the industry towards sustainability and we've committed to sourcing 100% of our rice from farmers working towards the SRP standard by 2020 – a first in the industry.



## Rice is the daily staple for more than 3.5 billion people worldwide

Sustainable rice is critical to meet the needs of a growing global population. Rice is the daily staple for more than 3.5 billion people and provides livelihoods for 19% of the world's population– and demand for rice will only increase.

(Source: <http://www.sustainablerice.org/Resources/>)

## Yet rice farming has environmental impacts for example:

Traditional rice production use approximately 40% of the world's irrigation water, and are responsible for up to 10% of methane emissions.

(Source: <http://www.sustainablerice.org/Resources/>)

**In 2017 we made a commitment, a first in the global rice industry...** In 2017 Mars Inc. launched our Sustainable In a Generation Plan, a Mars-wide initiative to bring real change. Mars Food announced that all of its rice, sold under the world's largest rice brand, UNCLE BEN'S® will be sourced from farmers who are working towards the Sustainable Rice Platform's (SRP) standard by 2020 – a first in the global rice industry. Our sustainable sourcing strategy has been recognised by UN Environment, the International Rice Research Institute and the World Wildlife Fund.



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**Increased yield, income and reduced water usage:** farmers who adopted SRP techniques in Pakistan have delivered at least 8% increase in yield, 30% reduction in water, and up to 32% increase in net income. We will now look to roll these new techniques out across our supply chain.

(Source: *Mars SIG Report 2018*).

Discover more: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfNwE6tOtuA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfNwE6tOtuA)



(Photo: Mr. Muhammad Ali Tariq Chief Operating Officer inaugurating the seminar WATER PRODUCTIVITY & SUSTAINABLE RICE PRODUCTION, Pakistan, 2018).

**To find out more:**

- [www.mars.com/sustainability-plan](http://www.mars.com/sustainability-plan)
- [www.sustainable-rice.org](http://www.sustainable-rice.org)
- <https://www.mars.com/news-and-stories/articles/sustainable-rice-farming-program>

## 2. We go one step further...

### **UNCLE BEN'S® HAVE SAVED ENOUGH WATER FOR 2 CUPS\* OF WATER FOR EVERY PERSON ON THE PLANET!**

With farmers working towards the Sustainable Rice Platform standard and adopting new farming techniques, Mars has been able to save enough water for 2 cups of water for every person on the planet!



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\*(1 cup = 250ml, 3,5 mln M3: Cup=0,25ltr / 7,6 bn people on earth (7,6x0,5=3,8 mln M3))

(Source: Mars SIG Report 2018)

**Together with rice farmers,  
WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SAVE**



**2 CUPS OF  
WATER**



**FOR EVERY PERSON  
ON THE PLANET PER YEAR!**



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### 3. What do we mean by ‘SUSTAINABLY GROWN\*\*’?

You might have noticed our ‘Sustainably Grown\*\*’ roundel on some of our rice packaging.



What do we mean by ‘sustainably grown’? We have formed partnerships with local and international organisations to work towards growing rice sustainably. We have formed partnerships with local and international organisations to work towards growing rice sustainably – \*\*this includes **improving rice growing practices, encouraging water stewardship and empowering farmers.**

Below you will find our **three pillars** that make our rice ‘sustainably grown’:



#### IMPROVING RICE GROWING PRACTICES

- In Spain, farmers are working towards the Sustainable Rice Platform, with 80-86% compliance in 2018.
- Across our total rice portfolio 98% of farmers are successfully working towards SRP standards, in line with our goal to reach 100% compliance by 2020.
- As a funding partner of ORYZONTE, we are working together to reduce GHG emissions and improve biodiversity in Seville, Spain (pictured below).



(Photo: *Birds flying above the Oryzonte field in Seville, Spain. Oryzonte Report, 2018*)

## WATER STEWARDSHIP

- In Spain, we have partnered with ORYZONTE to pilot rice growing techniques with farmers that have proven reductions in water usage and greenhouse gas emissions!



(Photo: *Experimentation plot, showing the sensors and systems to quantify water use + Electrical Conductivity in water inlet (left). Piezometers for visual inspection of water depth during the drying periods (right). Spain. Oryzonte Technical and Financial Report, 2018.*)

- Mars Food works to protect the marshlands of the Doñana National Park in southern Spain. Together with partners Ebro, Danone, Optiriego, UN Environment and WWF, Mars Food encourages rice farmers to reduce water use in the Guadalquivir River Delta by working toward the Sustainable Rice Platform Standard. By doing this, farmers will save 50 million cubic meters of water by 2022. Along with other initiatives on rice, this is helping us meet our goal to reduce unsustainable water use by 50 percent by 2025.

(Source: *Mars SIG Report 2018*)

- In Pakistan, for example, Mars Food partners with UN Environment, the International Rice Research Institute and WWF to support more than 600 basmati rice farmers in reducing their water use, achieving a 30 percent reduction since 2016, while increasing farm productivity.

(Source: *Mars SIG Report 2018*)



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- Through working with farmers in Pakistan and India as part of our WAPRO partnership, we saw combined savings of 3.5 million cubic metres of water. That's equivalent to 2 cups of water per person on the planet! (1 cup = 250ml. 3.5m Mw: 0,25ltr/7.6bn people on earth).



(Source: *WAPRO Annual Reports*)

(Photo: *RPL field team along with farmer measuring the ground water. Rice Partners (Pvt) Limited (RPL) 5-KM Sheikhpura Road, Muridke, Pakistan, 2018.*)

- The rice component in Pakistan is implemented in Muridke tehsil of district Sheikhpura Punjab Pakistan by MARS Food (MARS) in partnership with Rice Partners (pvt.) Limited while Helvetas Pakistan is a policy partner. Under WAPRO project, multi-stakeholders join forces to enhance water productivity.

(Source: *HELVETAS Pakistan Report, RETURN ANALYSIS OF RICE CROP WITH IMPROVED PRACTICES, 2018*)

## INCOME AND EMPOWERING FARMERS

- In Pakistan our WAPRO partnership has brought farmers together for regular training sessions to agree joint action on water usage, land laser leveling and rice crop management.



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(Source: WAPRO Annual Reports)

(Photo: Mr. Luc Beerens, Ms. Louke Koopmans from MARS food Mr. Wim from UTZ and DR. Arjumand from Intercooperation, Pakistan inaugurating the Laser land leveling with RPL team and contract farmers. Pakistan. WAPRO Annual report, 2016.)

- As part of our SIG targets, we are dedicated to empowering women in our business and in the supply chain. Annual reports from WAPRO and PVT have shown that a fair equilibrium is respected and women are also getting active in rice growing communities. WAPRO training meetings with farmers have pushed for more job equal opportunities for women in the supply chain.

(Source: WAPRO Annual reports, WAPRO Training records, Rice Partners PVT Ltd Report).

- Our work with GIZ and Ebro in Thailand (Sustainable Hom Mali Rice Initiative Thailand Project) has helped to increase involvement of women in employment: 'The project helped us change our practices, yield more crops and adapt to the challenges of climate change. It also helped strengthen our community by increasing female employment' - Mrs. Lumpai Na-ngam, member of Bua Ngam Community Rice Centre (CRC)



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(Source: Mars SARI Thailand 2018 Report)

(Photo: Farmers from Suvarnabhumi district of Roi Et smile while sharing their crop development with a team of rice experts on 20 November 2018. Thailand.)

- Through training programs providing education on improved rice farming techniques farmers have achieved from 20 - 32% increase in average income from rice (Jasmine and Basmati rice), and in Pakistan farmers saw at least 8% increase in yield!
- These improved practices not only provide more income for farmers, but they have also seen GHG and water usage reductions for farmers in Spain and Pakistan.

**Our commitment to meaningfully improving rice sustainability is UN & WWF**

**recognised:** Our sustainable sourcing strategy has been recognised by UN Environment, the International Rice Research Institute and the World Wildlife Fund.

***“ We commend Mars Food for its commitment to meaningfully improve the sustainability of the world’s rice supply. ”***

- JAMES LOMAX, Programme Management Officer, UN Environment.

(Source: Mars SIG Report 2018)



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## 4. Uncle Ben's® Basmati Rice

### **Since 2018, 100% of our Basmati rice comes from farmers working towards the SRP**

We work with suppliers and partners, such as the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), World Wildlife Fund and Helvetas, to share innovative farming methods with farmers. Since 2011 we have worked with partners to adopt SRP technologies in Pakistan and results have demonstrated that new growing techniques delivered at least 8% increase in yield (paddy ton/acre), 30% reduction in water, and around 30% increase in net income. We will now look to roll these new techniques out across our supply chain reaching 15,000 farmers.

(Source: *SRP Verification Reports*)

### **In Pakistan and India, Mars has joined a WAPRO (WATER PROductivity) coalition of partners to work on water stewardship.**

This partnership which focuses on water mitigation techniques as well as bringing water users together to agree a joint action and water use plan. Water use has been reduced by 30% and improved collection of rainwater and control of water usage. WAPRO is improving dialogues with governments and local water councils, made up of farmers, to improve water infrastructure, increase equal access to water and improved policies.

(Source: *WAPRO Annual Reports*)

**100% OF BASMATI RICE**  
**COMES FROM FARMERS WORKING**  
**TOWARDS THE SRP STANDARD**  
(SUSTAINABLE RICE PLATFORM)



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## 5. Uncle Ben's® Jasmine rice

### Farmer partnership programs Cambodia

- Since 2016, together with our partners WCS and Oxfam we have set up a sustainable rice program in Kampong Thom.
- Since 2018 we have a sustainable rice program with IFC and VSO in Battambang

(Source: *SRP Verification Reports*)

### We value developing management skills and financial literacy in our supply chain

- We have built an inclusive value chain: set up of farmer groups, strengthened capacity and connected to the market. Key farmers have been selected and supported to become master trainers to their members.  
(Source: *WAPRO Annual Reports*)
- Women are trained and supported to have equal access to training and finance.  
(Source: *WAPRO Annual Reports*)
- Farmers have increasing understanding that they play a crucial role as stewards of the environment to protect the rice lands as habitat for the critically endangered animals.
- Engagement on provincial level with key public and private stakeholders to promote and support Sustainable Rice Platform.



## 6. Uncle Ben's® Long Grain Rice

### **Our Long Grain rice fields support local biodiversity and water stewardship in Spain**

We have built farm partnerships with farmers in Spain and farmers in Italy who are verified by third party for SRP (Sustainably Rice Platform) commitment, working towards sustainable standards.

The rice variety (Puntal) is grown in the Seville area of Spain. The rice fields are adjacent to the biggest nature reserve in Europe - Donana reserve - known for its diverse bird wildlife. Rice fields provide a brilliant habitat for the birds to forage and nest – our work with ORYZONTE is showing that winter flooding has a positive impact on biodiversity in the rice growing fields.

(Source: *ORYZONTE Reports*)

## 7. The future of our rice packaging

Our Loose Grain and Boil in the Bag cardboard packaging is made from 100% recycled packaging, called 'food board'.

Mars has been working with our partner, the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, with whom we were an early partner in the New Plastics Economy. We've supported the Foundation's efforts through our goal to work toward 100 percent recyclable packaging by 2025.

(Source: *Mars SIG Report*)

## 8. Join the conversation!

**For more information about how we measure our sustainability claims, please feel free to contact Mars Corporate Affairs (Kat.Horrocks@effem.com) or join the conversation on our social media channels.**

Read more about our Sustainability stories [here](#).



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# Infographic Sources:

1. *“Rice is the staple food for 3.5 billion people.”*  
Source: Sustainable Rice, 2019.  
<http://www.sustainable-rice.org/Resources/>
2. *“Rice cultivation is the livelihood of 20% of the world’s population.”*  
Tonini, A. and Cabrera, E., 2011. *Opportunities for global rice research in a changing world* (No. 2215-2019-1630).
3. *“200 million small producers”*  
Tonini, A. and Cabrera, E., 2011. *Opportunities for global rice research in a changing world* (No. 2215-2019-1630).
4. *“Rice cultivation is the livelihood of 20% of the world’s population.”*  
Tonini, A. and Cabrera, E., 2011. *Opportunities for global rice research in a changing world* (No. 2215-2019-1630).
5. *“Rice is responsible for 5-10% of global methane gases emissions”*  
Source: Sustainable Rice, 2019.  
<http://www.sustainable-rice.org/Resources/>
6. *“World rice production uses 40% of irrigation water”*  
Source: Ricepedia, 2019.  
<http://ricepedia.org/rice-as-a-crop/where-is-rice-grown>
7. *“Rice consumption continues to rise. 650 million tonnes by 2050”.*  
Source: Ramsar, 2019.  
<https://www.ramsar.org/news/rice-farmers-move-towards-sustainability>
8. *“40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions”*  
Source: Linquist et. Al, ‘Reducing greenhouse gas emissions, water us and grain arsenic levels in rice systems’, *Global Change Biology* (2014).

Sustainably Grown\*\*

\*\*This includes **improving rice growing practices, encouraging water stewardship and empowering farmers to increase income.**



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