The Dutch Foundation for Chain Transition Responsible Soy

The Netherland’s Feed Industry is a major importer of soy for animal feed. With the creation of the global platform the Round Table on Responsible Soy Association, it seeks for answers to protect the environment. As Henk Flipsen, Director of the Dutch Feed Industry Association put it, “The worldwide soy problem requires worldwide solutions and the RTRS is a global platform for identifying and implementing these solutions. Through the RTRS, the Dutch Feed Industry became able to engage and debate how the soy purchased for animal feed can be responsible – and how it is significantly less detrimental to the environment or the workers who grow the soy.”

The Situation

The Netherlands is the world’s second largest exporter of agricultural and food products, thanks to its innovative agrofood technology. The Dutch agrofood sector is a sustainable source of healthy, safe food that is produced with respect for human and environmental resources.

The Netherlands imports soy – mostly from South America (Argentina and Brazil)- to keep its efficient food industry humming. In fact, the Netherlands is the world’s second largest importer of soy – mainly as animal feed. With its unique role as an exporter and importer, the Netherlands has a specific responsibility for reducing the negative effects of soy production. As part of this, Dutch companies throughout the entire supply chain, from animal feed producers to retail, have agreed to gradually switch to 100% responsible soy and soy products for the production of meat, dairy, eggs and other foodstuffs in the Netherlands starting now until the end of 2015. In order to work sector-wide on this objective, Dutch feed companies formed a foundation called the Dutch Foundation for Chain Transition Responsible Soy. The initiative was established in 2012, with the entire Dutch food chain (feed industry, farmer organizations, representatives from the poultry, dairy and pork chain as well as food and retail sectors) committing to cooperate to make the transition happen.

Responsible Soy Demand

"There is a demand for responsibly cultivated soy - responsible soy must become the standard for the entire European market”

Responsible soy is a vital step towards soy cultivation with care for people and the environment.

On company level the latest responsible soy credit buyers from Dutch origin are KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, Cono Cheesemakers, and Agrifirm. The Foundation, supported by Dutch NGO’s Natuur & Millieu, Solidaridad and WWF, purchased more than 300,000 tons responsible soy – through mass balance and credit purchasing - in 2012.

According to Flipsen, “A big success factor is the cooperation between all chain partners and the willingness to stimulate and help each other on this track. On the other hand there is an open attitude to other companies and organizations. We convinced other—sometimes critical—parties to join us.”

www.responsiblesoy.org