



The Food Skills Cymru programme delivered by Lantra supports businesses within the Welsh food and drink processing and manufacturing industry to ensure employees have the right skills and training for their business and the wider industry.

Sustainable development is at the heart of our founding legislation in Wales and to support Welsh Government achieve their targets on sustainability, the project has worked in collaboration with Cynnal Cymru and Eco Studio to develop a Sustainability Training Programme specifically for the food and drink manufacturing industry.

The purpose of the training course is to equip participants with the knowledge and skills to develop systems and actions appropriate to their situation that address environmental management, sustainability and social impact.

Modules 1-3 of the programme addresses specific elements of sustainability including decarbonisation, zero waste, support for natural systems, fair and responsible employment, social and staff well-being, and community impact. Whilst modules 4-6 enables participants to develop their own bespoke sustainability strategy, integrating the specific elements into a holistic, long-term approach that will be coherent with government policy at a Welsh and UK level, resonant with the sustainability strategies of larger corporates, and appealing to customers. All participants are required to produce a sustainable document strategy appropriate to their business by the end of the course.

O.P. Chocolate Limited



Tell us a bit about O.P. Chocolate

O.P. Chocolate Ltd is a Merthyr Tydfil based manufacturer of chocolate and wafer biscuits. The company was established in the late 1930's by Oscar Peschek, an Austrian baker and confectioner. After relocating twice from the original Cardiff site, O.P. Chocolate settled at its present location in Dowlais in 1963. We have a skilled and loyal team of around 450 helping us make great tasting, great value products that can be found on the shelves of most of the major food retailers in the UK.

We are part of Sweet Products, a family owned and run chocolate confectionery business that supplies retailers, brand partners and specialist chocolatiers across the world. The group is committed to the responsible sourcing of high-quality raw materials, working only with ethical supply chains and becoming a CO2 neutral organisation.



O.P. Chocolate Limited

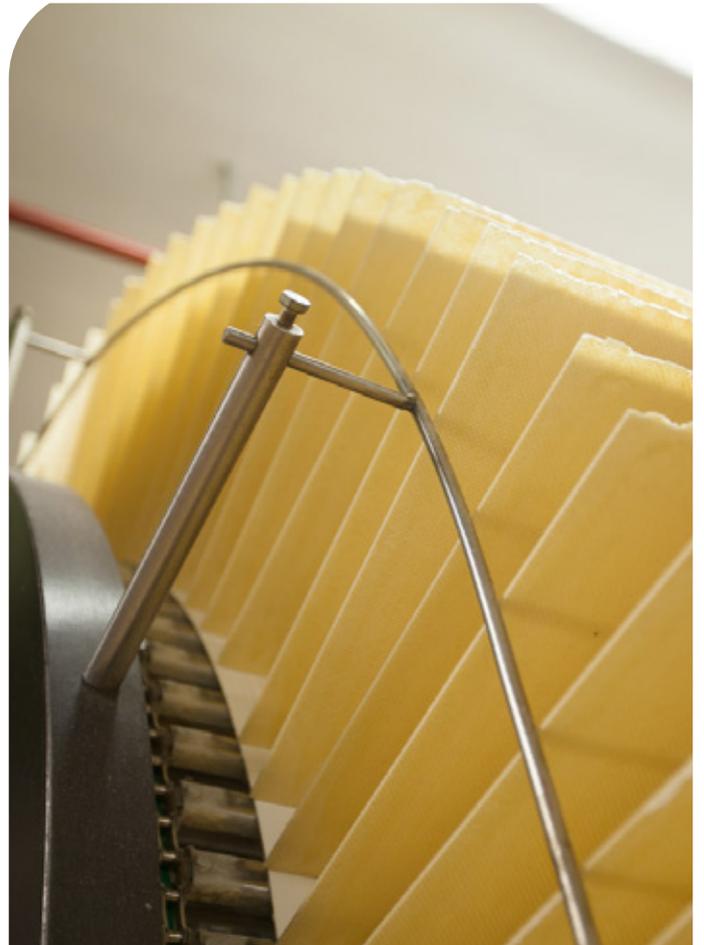
What is your commitment as a business to sustainability?

The group owns both processing and manufacturing plants in the Cote d'Ivoire, one of world's largest cocoa producing countries and has invested heavily in sustainability. We work closely with the World Cocoa Foundation, national and local government representatives, growers, partners and competitors to eliminate low wages, child labour and deforestation in all cocoa producing regions and are rightly proud of our Transparency Cacao programme, an internationally acclaimed cocoa sustainability model that is managed and run by our teams on the ground in Africa and France.

The group is also a member of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, the organisation dedicated to making the supply of sustainable palm oil the norm and works with several other groups focussed on the development of ethical supply routes for many other materials. Our commitment to sustainability is not limited to the sourcing of ingredients and together with our suppliers and customers, we have been actively working to reduce or eliminate the use of plastic packaging on our products.

We are actively engaged in reducing the use of fossil fuels and CO2 emissions across all of its sites, with energy generation initiatives such as solar, hydroelectric and biogas power contributing to reducing our carbon footprint. Our objective is for the group to become carbon neutral as soon as is practically possible.

We are committed to ensuring that every person working in our supply chain is treated equally, has a safe place to work and the means to support themselves and their families. We ensure our workplaces are free of bribery and corruption and we use sustainable methods that keep the environment intact for future generations.



Commenting on the company's sustainable practices Director, Dominic Shaw, said:

“Our local and group teams strongly believe that we can only continue to be a successful business if sustainability is at the heart of everything we do. We have made great strides over the last few years, but know that we can and must do more to support everyone working in our supply chain, reduce our impact on the environment and help communicate the importance of taking coordinated and swift action in both areas.”



What difference has the Sustainability Training Programme made to the business?

At O.P. Chocolate, whilst each of the above principles is embedded into the way we work and supported by our individual policies and many procedures, we did not have a way to easily communicate our vision, objectives and the day-to-day management of the elements that make up our sustainability strategy.

We felt that the training course would help us identify the best way to do this. Having completed the course, I can say with certainty that this goal has been achieved. I now have more knowledge of the elements that should be included, a deeper appreciation of what we've achieved to date and a greater understanding of the way we can build a framework into which our relevant working practices fit.

Dominic further added:

“It would be useful for other members of our team to attend the same course, as improving their understanding would help further embed the true breadth, depth and importance of sustainable sourcing, production and supply into both our working practices and our communication with all stakeholders.

It's great to see Food Skills Cymru considering sustainability issues and putting it at the forefront of their training programme.”

www.opchocolate.com



Funding is available to support our Sustainability Training Programme, along with a host of other training courses. Eligible food and drink businesses will firstly complete a Skills Diagnostic with a member of our team that helps businesses identify and prioritise training needs. If you are interested in further information, please get in touch with us today.

For more information about Food Skills Cymru contact Lantra

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