

EFEMA STATEMENT ON SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability agenda is moving from a focus on emissions at production sites to environmental and social impacts along the entire product chain. This shift from production focus towards product focus is also expressed in the consumers and retailers increasing interest in products that contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle.

EFEMA believes that sustainability is a journey, not a destination – as such there is no such thing as a sustainable product but all products need to become continuously more sustainable over time. In order to produce more sustainable products all three dimensions of sustainability – social, environmental, and economical – need to be addressed. When only looking at a single step in the value chain, undesirable tradeoffs can occur; therefore the whole lifecycle of a product as well its impact on other value chains needs to be assessed.

EFEMA believes the highest value is achievable for all, if we turn the sustainability challenges into opportunities. For example, emulsifiers can help to minimise food waste, by extending the shelf-life of certain products. Food waste is one of the major societal issues of our times, and emulsifiers can therefore provide benefits throughout the whole food value chain. Emulsifiers also enable food manufacturers to produce products with a lower fat content, which gives consumers the possibility to choose low-fat variants of many products.

Industry associations such as EFEMA can play an active role in promoting methodological alignment in how we assess the environmental impacts from emulsifiers and therefore an EFEMA working group on lifecycle assessment was formed. The working group has defined a common Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methodology for emulsifiers. This LCA methodology aims to significantly enhance members' capacity to take effective measures and action to reduce environmental impact in the manufacturing process of emulsifiers.

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