Next steps towards a smaller CO₂-eq footprint after our SBTi approval

**We’ve reached a major milestone: DFG has been officially approved by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi). This means our sustainability goals are aligned with the Paris Climate Agreement. It marks the starting signal to move forward! So, what are our next steps for CO₂-eq reduction? Marjon van Diepen, Project Lead Sustainability, explains.**

What does the SBTi approval mean?

“This approval shows that we’re not just making promises to become more sustainable, but are actually doing so in a way that’s scientifically aligned with the Paris Agreement,” Marjon explains. “To get here, we carried out a thorough analysis of our entire value chain and identified the level of CO₂-eq reduction needed in each part. These targets are now visible to everyone. We’re required to report annually on our progress.”

From insight to action

Now the real work begins. Growers are responsible for 56% of our total CO₂-eq footprint as a chain. That’s why we’re asking our (larger) growers to calculate their footprint using specialised software. “This helps us pinpoint opportunities for improvement,” says Marjon. “Many growers are already taking environmentally friendly measures, such as using LED lighting, biological pest control, and thermal energy storage. Our role is to support these initiatives and help share ideas between growers.”

Transport and packaging also play a key role in reducing CO₂-eq emissions. Marjon adds: “In collaboration with the Topsector Logistiek and our transport partners, we’re identifying areas for improvement, such as more efficient loading. It's more challenging with airlines, but we’ll be encouraging them to commit to SBTi targets as well.”

Working together across the chain

“Sustainability is a joint effort across the entire chain,” Marjon emphasises. “We’re working together with growers, breeders, transporters, and packaging suppliers. But customers are also part of the chain. Especially retail customers, who have high expectations. Ideally, we assess environmental impact together and explore reduction possibilities collaboratively. I expect that customer requirements will also be part of that conversation.”

Innovation remains key. Growers are leading the way when it comes to innovation. “We’re keeping a close eye on new technologies. Sustainability isn’t black and white. Peat-free cultivation, for example, is a hot topic due to the greenhouse gases released during peat harvesting. Coconut fibre is one alternative, but its environmental benefits are limited because it’s imported from far away. So we continue to critically evaluate what truly makes a difference.”

An ambitious path to 2031

The bar is set high: as DFG, we’ve committed to reducing our CO₂-eq emissions by 47% by 2031 compared to 2021. “We’re taking meaningful steps and want to be a driving force behind this change. By working together and inspiring one another, we can truly make an impact.”