Palm Oil in Girl Scout Cookies

Please read article on palm oil controversy in Girl Scout Cookies.

Assume you are the CEO of TAOCO, whose bakery division makes the Girl Scout cookies. This is a significant, high volume business for TAOCO and a source of significant annual profits (upon which your annual evaluation is based). Your food process R&D engineers tell you there is no good alternative for palm oil that will provide the same beneficial properties to the cookies. Your materials procurement VP tells you that the availability of sustainable palm oil cannot supply enough material for your cookie volume and the current cost of available material is 2-5 times the current cost of normal palm oil.

The Wall Street Journal has just published an article on this issue (attached). Your Board of Directors’ (BOD) meeting is coming up next month and they have asked you to provide a plan of action to address the negative publicity from this article.

1. Please analyze the Girl Scout article and express the critical argument from the article in premise/conclusion format. Note that this argument will also indicate a possible course of action for you.

The conflict

TAOCO makes a good profit from manufacturing and supplying the GSA with cookies (which they sell) made using non-sustainably obtained palm oil. TAOCO does not want to lose this profit. The critical argument given in this article concludes that the GSA should stop selling these cookies, which would result in TAOCO losing their profits. Unfortunately, there is not enough sustainably grown palm oil to make enough cookies in the amounts required to maintain TAOCO profit levels. Also, palm oil provides the cookies with valuable qualities, such a better nutrition (trans-free fat), texture, and product stability. There is currently no satisfactory alternative to palm oil that provides these qualities.

Your assignment is to develop a strategy and counter critical argument that would enable TAOCO to continue making profits by making cookies for the GSA.

1. Please select a plan of action and express it in the form of a conclusion as to what your company should do with respect to this issue. Please develop the premises for this conclusion and present these in the format of a critical argument (i.e. premises and conclusion format). You should analyze your argument to make it a strong (sound and valid) argument (i.e. this is the basis for the homework evaluation). What issues with respect to the premises of your argument can you anticipate might arise in the BOD meeting?

