

Carbon emissions in spotlight at GlobalGAP Summit

Delegates can offset travel carbon emissions as GlobalGAP pledges support for UN Sustainable Development Goals

Delegates at the GlobalGAP Summit 2016 have been offered the chance to offset carbon emissions from their travel to the conference for free.

The news comes as the certification body announced it will adopt the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Speaking at a press conference at the Summit, held in Amsterdam this week, GlobalGAP chairman Guy Callebaut said that in at least seven of the SDGs, GlobalGAP is "closely concerned". "Our commitment to the SDGs will be public from now on," he said.

Chief executive Kristian Moeller explained how carbon trading business Gold Standard is sponsoring the initiative to offset delegates' carbon emissions.

"Every time a delegate hands in a completed form, we put a peanut in the container. We hope to get one peanut for all 400 delegates, and thus become the first carbon-neutral conference. We are using peanuts to show that carbon is not peanuts – we need to talk about this, let's really make it happen," he said.

GlobalGAP also publicly announced its new partnership with sustainability platform Greenfence, which it said will help bring costs down for certified growers.

Jim Jefcoate, GlobalGAP board member and director for up-streaming at IPL, said: "The new system will be more cost-effective for growers, as we will be able to bring more growers onto the scheme, which will bring costs down."

Greenfence's vice president for innovation, Petra Wissenburg, said her company offers the first "platform economy for the fruit industry", using similar models to taxi firm Uber and online marketplace and retailer Amazon. "You can be seen as a seller of your product – once certified you are visible on the platform, which provides added value to farmers," she said.

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