



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Simple Mills Partners With Supplyshift To Engage Suppliers On Regenerative Agriculture Principles



Simple Mills®

About Simple Mills

Founded in 2012, Simple Mills is a leading provider of better-for-you crackers, cookies, snack bars and baking mixes made with clean, nutrient-dense ingredients and nothing artificial, ever. With distribution in over 25,000 stores nationwide, Simple Mills is on a mission to advance the holistic health of the planet and its people by positively impacting the way food is made.

For more information, visit www.simplemills.com

Customer Success Story:

Simple Mills Partners With Supplyshift To Engage Suppliers On Regenerative Agriculture Principles

Since its founding in 2012, Simple Mills has been on a mission to enrich lives and bodies through simple, delicious, whole foods. Along the way, the company has learned that a diverse and nutrient-dense diet doesn't just contribute to a healthier lifestyle, it can also help create a healthier planet.

How and where our food is grown can have a big impact on the environment. As a food company, Simple Mills knows that agriculture represents the biggest opportunity to create positive impact – and that's why the brand is seeking out more diverse ingredients and partnering with farmers and suppliers to advance adoption of regenerative principles and leave the land in better shape for future generations.



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– Berklee Welsh, Senior Analyst, Sustainability & Mission at Simple Mills

Increasing Transparency In Value Chains As A First Step

According to Berklee Welsh, Senior Analyst, Sustainability & Mission at Simple Mills, the company is working to develop visibility into how key ingredients are grown, enabling Simple Mills to verify and improve their impact.

The supply chain offers the largest area of opportunity for Simple Mills to advance the adoption of regenerative agriculture – and trusted relationships directly with suppliers, farmers, and the communities embedded throughout ingredient value chains are critical to this work.

Simple Mills relies on a custom assessment by SupplyShift to understand the farm-level practices being used throughout their supply chain – including details about sourcing region, cropping system climate, biodiversity, soil health, and more. The custom assessment—dubbed the Regenerative Agriculture Engagement Tool—allows Simple Mills to collect, compare, and validate supplier data.

“We support leaving farm-level decisions to farmers and growers who are the experts,” Welsh said. “We take a holistic approach to regenerative agriculture, looking to support implementation of outcomes-based principles specific to the context of each operation.”

Simple Mills is utilizing SupplyShift’s unique capabilities to gather information above and beyond what might usually be captured through certifications. Certifications such as USDA Organic represent just one of several key pathways through which the brand is advancing regenerative agriculture; all pathways are supported by a baseline understanding of where and how ingredients are grown, and their associated impact.

“Regenerative agriculture principles can be applicable to any operation, across varying regions and crops,” Welsh added.

For example, Simple Mills aims to understand how farmers are implementing regenerative principles in the context of their own system, such as planting cover crops, utilizing diverse crop rotations, reducing tillage, and promoting biodiversity through creation of pollinator habitat.

In addition to building data around on-farm ecological practices, Simple Mills is also collecting anecdotal evidence around the impacts of these practices on input use, climate resilience, and profitability.



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– Berklee Welsh, Senior Analyst, Sustainability & Mission at Simple Mills

In particular, Welsh said that the Engagement Tool can help Simple Mills identify opportunities to invest in strategic sourcing regions and assist growers in removing barriers to adopting regenerative principles. Simple Mills recognizes that transparency and trust must be established by both parties and relies on the SupplyShift platform to deepen relationships with suppliers. And with an assessment response rate above 80%, it’s working.

Through the SupplyShift platform, Simple Mills’ partners are asked questions they might never have encountered before, which has prompted suppliers to dig deeper into their own social responsibility and environmental impact commitments.

“That was exciting for us to hear—that simply starting the conversation via the Engagement Tool and SupplyShift’s platform is encouraging our partners to join us on this journey,” Welsh added.

Simple Mills has found that SupplyShift assessments help encourage transparency—suppliers feel comfortable delivering their responses digitally and on their own time.

Welsh said that one of the most impactful pieces of feedback they received from multiple suppliers was that the Engagement Tool invited them to evaluate their farming processes in a way they never had before.

“It’s difficult for farmers to differentiate in any commodity system,” Welsh said. “A common theme was that producers are really excited about regenerative agriculture and utilizing it as a defining part of their own journey, especially as a place for them to add value.”

Establishing The Necessary Baselines



According to Welsh, increased transparency and a baseline understanding of ingredient value chains are both critical to recognize and prioritize opportunities along the company’s journey in regenerative agriculture. SupplyShift has been instrumental in gathering data on ecosystem health and community resilience specific to the regions Simple Mills sources from.

Before using the tool, Simple Mills struggled to collect and analyze data on barriers to adoption that suppliers in their network face at a broad and representative scale. A lack of clarity into crop risks within certain ingredient value chains added complexity – a challenge many food and consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies face.

“SupplyShift has valuable experience with various CPG clients in developing supply chain mapping, data utilization, and supply risk assessments—all high-potential solutions for Simple Mills as we evolve our strategy over time”

– Berklee Welsh, Senior Analyst, Sustainability & Mission at Simple Mills

A team favorite is SupplyShift’s functionality to compare and contrast multiple suppliers within the same crop group or region. Assessments have the dual benefit of establishing a baseline and developing support for suppliers. This allows Simple Mills to both highlight context-specific opportunities for improvement and identify and celebrate ways that suppliers are already building soil health, strengthening ecosystems, and building more resilient farming communities.

Establishing The Necessary Baselines



“SupplyShift has been instrumental in quickly identifying common barriers to adoption across a variety of factors such as crop, region, and growing climate. For example, we’ve learned that many producers struggle with the adoption of low or no-till practices.”

– Berklee Welsh, Senior Analyst, Sustainability & Mission at Simple Mills

Tillage is just one example of how this capability comes to life via the Engagement Tool. Simple Mills also considers labor practices, synthetic pesticide and herbicide application, land use change, and more. Within its Engagement Tool, Simple Mills asks “Are there crops you’d like to add to your operation, but can’t today?” and “How can Simple Mills support you along your regenerative agriculture journey?”

Identifying these themes is critical to advancing Simple Mills’ regenerative agriculture strategy – one that is centered around farmers – and ensuring that the brand’s support is relevant and targeted to challenges being faced on the ground. From developing co-created technical assistance to embedding financial incentives for adoption, supplier feedback plays a key role throughout the process.

“SupplyShift’s sophisticated capabilities are allowing Simple Mills to gather complex, unique information from a wide range of suppliers and ensure that data is applicable across cropping systems and geographic regions,” Welsh said. “This functionality is key to scaling our supplier engagement and transparency work in the future.”

About Supply Shift

SupplyShift is the platform for creating sustainable, transparent, lower-risk, and higher-performing supply chains. Assess suppliers, unify your data, uncover insights, and take action — all with one platform.

Join a network of over 90,000 businesses driving supply chain sustainability at supplyshift.net



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