



# People & Planet Impact Journal 2024:

Expanding Impact, Building Resilience





# Table of Contents

## CHAPTER 1: WELCOME ..... 2

Welcome from Katlin, Our Founder & CEO ..... 5

Introduction from Christina, Our Head of Sustainability & Mission ..... 6

People & Planet Impact as of 2024. .... 7

## CHAPTER 2: WHAT WE STAND FOR ..... 8

Simple Mills Vision & Mission ..... 9

Simple Mills People & Planet Journey .....10

Our Brand Principles .....12

Mission Strategic Plan .....16

## CHAPTER 3: CHANGING HOW FOOD IS MADE ..... 18

Making Our Food with People & Planet in Mind ..... 19

Building Biodiversity for Planetary Health .....20

Cultivating Dietary Diversity for Human Health ..... 21

Innovation for Human & Planetary Health .....22

## CHAPTER 4: CHANGING HOW FOOD IS GROWN ..... 24

Our Regenerative Agriculture Approach ..... 26

Investing in a Resilient Future for Almonds ..... 32

    The Almond Project ..... 34

    \* Orchard Soil Health Academy ..... 36

    \* Cover Crop Seed Broadcaster Partnership with Blue Diamond Growers ..... 38

    \* Climate-Smart Practice Implementation Fund .....40

The Coconut Sugar Project ..... 42

The Cocoa Project ..... 44

Direct Trade ..... 46

\* Deepening our Relationship to Growers ..... 48

\* Sharing our Direct Trade Program with Influencers ..... 49

## CHAPTER 5: IGNITING POSITIVE IMPACT AT SIMPLE MILLS & BEYOND ..... 50

Employee Engagement & Well-Being ..... 52

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging ..... 53

Closing the Loop: Recycling & Reducing Material Waste .... 55

Investing in the Future of Farming: Young Farmers ..... 56

Climate Action Plan ..... 58

Recognition in 2024 ..... 59

Amplifying Impact & Building Awareness with Eaters ..... 60

Supporting Organizations  
Building a More Inclusive Food System ..... 61

## CHAPTER 6: ONWARD ..... 62



Keep an eye out for the NEW badge throughout the journal to learn about programs that launched in 2024!

\* indicates NEW in 2024





— CHAPTER 1 —

# Welcome



# We're glad you're here.

We are honored to share with you our third annual People & Planet Impact Journal. This year's journal reflects our foundational approach to advancing our mission, with key updates and new metrics to highlight our 2024 progress. We are so excited to share with you our journey to revolutionize the way food is made to nourish people and the planet, *one bite at a time.*







# Welcome from Katlin, Our Founder & CEO

Welcome to the 2024 People & Planet Impact Journal -  
and thank you for being on this journey with us!

Helping people feel their best has always been central to Simple Mills' mission. This passion stemmed from my personal health journey, which transformed in 2012 when I was a management consultant with a hectic travel schedule, often turning to convenient packaged foods to keep up with my fast-paced lifestyle. But I wasn't thriving. When I transitioned to a diet focused on whole foods, everything changed—I felt better, and I wanted others to experience that same transformation.

**“People shouldn't have to compromise taste in order to nourish themselves”**

So, I set out to raise the bar on what consumers could expect from the food industry: delicious, nutritious food that helps people feel their best—because I believe that people shouldn't have to compromise taste in order to nourish themselves.

Over time, I came to understand the immense impact our food system has, not just on human health, but on the health of our planet. Our ability to thrive depends on the resilience of the ecosystems that sustain us. In 2019, a permaculture course opened my eyes to the urgent need to shift away from extractive agricultural

practices and toward regenerative approaches. It became clear that Simple Mills had a powerful opportunity—and a responsibility—to leverage food as a force for good.

In 2021 we committed to designing all new product lines at the intersection of human and planetary health needs. Since then, we've introduced 19 products with an eye toward nourishing eaters and strengthening the resilience of our ecosystems. We're committed to revolutionizing how food is made so that farmers can continue to grow nutrient-dense ingredients in healthy soil for generations to come.

This vision requires bold action, careful planning, and unwavering dedication. In 2023, we developed our *Mission Strategic Plan*, a multi-year roadmap to maximize our positive impact. In 2024, we made exciting progress against our goals of *Changing How Food is Made*, *Changing How Food is Grown*, and *Catalyzing Systemic Change at Simple Mills and Beyond*. There is still much work to be done, and I am dedicated to channeling the impact and influence of Simple Mills toward a future where food benefits all of us who depend on it, from farmers, to employees, to consumers, and beyond. Thank you for joining us as we work toward our vision of a world where food creates a better tomorrow for people and planet.

- Katlin Smith



## Introduction from Christina, Our Head of Sustainability & Mission

In 2024 we made exciting progress against our mission to revolutionize the way food is made to nourish people and planet: we launched two new products developed at the intersection of human and planetary health needs, we expanded

our reach of regenerative agriculture programming to a total of 4,400 farmers operating an estimated 74,000 acres, we began funding pioneering research on the link between regenerative agriculture and nutrient density, and we sponsored 49 young and diverse farmers to join policy fellowships designed to help them become advocates for more climate-smart and equitable agriculture policy, among other exciting projects.

**“What makes us most energized about advancing our mission is the *relationships* we’re cultivating with people across all corners of our food system”**

We’re proud of the measurable progress we’ve made, but what makes us most energized about advancing our mission is the *relationships* we’re cultivating with people across all corners of our food system. In April of 2024, Simple Mills team members from nearly every function spent three days walking the fields, attending trainings, and hearing farmers’ stories over meals with more than 50 growers during the first ever orchard-focused Soil Health

Academy, which Simple Mills was honored to sponsor. After 5 years of collecting farmer input and honing our direct trade program for sunflower seeds, in 2024 we extended our first multi-year contracts to three pioneering growers in the program, helping reduce risk and providing more certainty to farmers prioritizing regenerative principles. We continued to integrate farmer insights into our innovation process and create market demand for a wide variety of ingredients farmers want to grow—like butternut squash, red beans, and watermelon seed flour, all ingredients that farmers have encouraged us to use to help diversify crop rotations while enhancing variety and nutrient density in eaters’ diets.

Biologist and author Rachel Carson famously quipped: “In nature, nothing exists alone.” At Simple Mills, we understand that when we buy an ingredient, we’re investing in a lot more than an ingredient: we’re investing in a farm landscape, a community, and an intricate web of producers and eaters whose health and wellbeing is at stake. Take the organic sunflower seeds we buy directly from farmers in the Midwest—they’re part of diverse crop rotations with a long list of other plants that all impart something unique to the soil. They connect us to other mission-driven brands buying from the same rotation, to the families supported by farm incomes, to robust ecosystems enabling continued harvests, and to eaters enjoying a wide variety of nutrient-dense ingredients on their plates.

This work is so much bigger than us, and we are grateful to play a role within a vibrant network of committed and creative people working to create a more resilient food system. Thank you for tuning into our People & Planet Impact Journal and for being a part of our story!

– Christina Skonberg



**100%**  
OF OUR  
PRODUCTS

are developed to prominently feature ingredients selected for their nutrient-density

**4,400 FARMERS** operating an estimated **74,000 ACRES**

**ACROSS 4 SOURCING REGIONS** **ENGAGED IN**

regenerative agriculture awareness building, implementation and/or sourcing partnerships - a **7-FOLD INCREASE IN ACRES SINCE 2023!**

**47 CROPS**

in our ingredient portfolio beyond the most dominant four in our food system - two added since 2023 - helping bring more variety to agriculture and diets

**OUR PEOPLE+PLANET IMPACT AS OF 2024**

**THIS ACREAGE ESTIMATE REFLECTS THREE TYPES OF PROGRAMMING:**



**ENABLING AWARENESS BUILDING** and farmer-to-farmer learning opportunities for farmers operating **68,800 ACRES** across an estimated



**MAKING FIELD-LEVEL INVESTMENTS** in tools and resources to help alleviate risk as well as financial investment for farmers operating across an estimated **2,900 ACRES**



**SUPPORTING THE MEASUREMENT OR VERIFICATION** of regenerative practices and outcomes through sourcing partnerships across an estimated **2,900 ACRES**

developed at the intersection of **HUMAN & PLANETARY** health needs with **TWO NEW PRODUCTS** added to our portfolio in 2024

**19 PRODUCTS**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE

**NATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS COALITION**

WE'VE CONTRIBUTED FUNDING TO SUPPORT MORE THAN

**150 YOUNG FARMERS**

in their advocacy for equitable and climate-smart agriculture policy - with 49 new farmer fellows sponsored by our 2024 NYFC partnership

MORE THAN  
**25%**

of our ingredient volume by weight is **CERTIFIED ORGANIC** as of 2024





CHAPTER 2

# What We Stand For



# Simple Mills Vision & Mission

## Vision

A world where  
food creates a  
better tomorrow  
for people  
and planet



## Mission

Revolutionize the  
way food is made  
to nourish people  
& the planet  
*and inspire others  
to do the same!*

# Simple Mills People & Planet Journey

**JAN 2017**

Katlin is named to Forbes 30 Under 30 for her innovative business



**JUNE 2017**

Simple Mills ranks #1 baking mix brand in the natural channel according to 2017 SPINS data

**OCT 2019**

Katlin attends a weeklong permaculture design course, learning from experts about the power of food to impact our planet



**SEPT 2012**

Katlin Smith founds Simple Mills with a line of almond flour baking mixes made in her home kitchen

**APR 2022**

Simple Mills co-launches The Almond Project: a multi-year, farmer-led partnership to implement and evaluate the outcomes of regenerative principles in California almond systems



**APR 2020**

Simple Mills launches the Direct Trade program, establishing direct relationships with sunflower growers in the Midwest to support the adoption of regenerative agriculture, expanding our mission to include planetary health in addition to our human health commitment



**AUG 2022**

Simple Mills launches The Coconut Sugar Project: a multi-year investment in organic coconut farmers in Java, Indonesia, to support the adoption of regenerative agriculture principles





## MAR 2023

Simple Mills supports the National Young Farmers Coalition to send more than 100 young farmer fellows to Washington DC to advocate for equitable and climate-smart ag policies in the 2023 Farm Bill



## MAR 2023

Simple Mills publishes its inaugural People & Planet Impact Journal, transparently sharing our approach to and progress against our mission to positively transform the food system



## JUNE 2023

Simple Mills launches The Cocoa Project: a multi-year awareness raising campaign about the economic & environmental benefits of crop diversity in cacao operations in West Africa



## SEPT 2023

Simple Mills launches its Mission Strategic Plan, a roadmap for the ambitious human and planetary health impacts and initiatives we will pursue through 2026

## MAY 2024

Simple Mills is honored by Fast Company's World Changing Ideas for our Mission Strategic Plan to revolutionize the way food is made to nourish people and the planet.



## APR 2024

Simple Mills sponsors inaugural orchard-focused Soil Health Academy providing regenerative agriculture coaching to 50+ growers operating on more than 50,000 acres



## JUNE 2024

Simple Mills officially extends partnerships with three leading regenerative farmers in our Direct Trade program from annual agreements to multi-year contracts.



## AUG 2024

Simple Mills brings 13 influencer partners to visit one of our Direct Trade partners for a peek behind the curtain of our direct sourcing model and to help spread the word about the benefits of regenerative farming

# Our Brand Principles

Simple Mills was founded on the belief that food has the power to transform how people feel. We also know that the way food is grown and made has tremendous potential to impact the health of our planet. This is why we are unwavering in our ongoing mission to make food that uplifts people and does right by our planet.



Simple Mills strives to be a food brand that...



*Supports people in their desire to live a healthy, full, passion-filled life through delicious products and informative communications*



*Is rooted in fundamental health and wellness principles that stand the test of time*



*Develops delicious products with broad appeal while addressing specific dietary interests*



*Believes the health of people hinges on the health of the planet*



*Leads with integrity and always has the consumer's best interest at heart*





## Our Product Principles: Astounding Ingredients, Amazing Taste

By purposefully selecting our ingredients, we are working to realize our vision of a food system where the standard is delicious, nourishing food, always made with the planet's health in mind. We believe food should be enjoyed on many levels and ultimately, it should make you feel full of life.

Three foundational tenets guide our product development:

### STUNNINGLY SIMPLE

We scrupulously handpick recognizable ingredients, never using fillers or artificial flavorings, artificial coloring, artificial sweeteners, or artificial preservatives.

### NUTRIENT DENSE

We are unwavering in our pursuit of nutrient-dense ingredients like nuts, seeds, and vegetables that nourish your body. All Simple Mills products are developed to prominently feature ingredients selected for their nutrient density.

### MADE WITH PLANETARY HEALTH IN MIND

In 2021, we committed to designing all our new product lines in service of our regenerative agriculture goals. From using underrepresented crops like buckwheat and red beans to create market demand for more biodiversity in agriculture, to sourcing sunflowers from farmers using regenerative principles like livestock integration and diverse crop rotations, we consider planetary health needs in the design of all new product lines.



# Understanding our Footprint:

## Focusing on Ingredient-Driven Impact

Working to assess and improve our climate impact is a critical part of our strategy to positively impact the planet.

After completing our first product Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) in 2023, we're proud to share that in 2024, we performed our first business-wide greenhouse gas inventory, setting a baseline for the comprehensive emissions impact we have across all business activities—from office energy use and employee travel to the impact of growing our ingredients and turning them into delicious pantry staples.

**The data from these two assessments confirm that most of our greenhouse gas impact occurs at the farm-level. According to our latest inventory, ingredients account for an estimated 59% of our greenhouse gas footprint. In other words, the ingredients we select and how they are grown matters tremendously.**

This has affirmed our work to date in purposeful ingredient selection and regenerative agriculture investments. Because other supply nodes like manufacturing and transport also surfaced as activities with meaningful relative contributions to our footprint, we are exploring the role that Simple Mills can play in reducing emissions in those areas as well.

Read more about our learnings and the breakdown of our impact in the *Climate Action Plan* section on [page 58](#).

WHAT WE EVALUATED:





# Mission Strategic Plan

In 2023, we put a stake in the ground and created an ambitious roadmap for the impact we seek to have on human and planetary health.

In 2024, we made progress on the *three focused strategies* that fuel our mission of nourishing people and the planet.



## CHANGING HOW FOOD IS MADE

by crafting our products with—and creating market demand for—a variety of nutrient-dense and underrepresented ingredients that encourage biodiversity and dietary diversity.

### OUR COMMITMENT

100% of new product lines are developed at the intersection of human and planetary health needs

### IMPACT AS OF 2024

19 products (100% of new product lines) launched through this commitment to date (*learn more starting on [page 18!](#)*)



## CHANGING HOW FOOD IS GROWN

by supporting and sharing risk with farmers in their journeys to implement regenerative agriculture principles.

### 2026 GOAL

7,000 farmers operating an estimated 40,000 acres engaged in regenerative agriculture awareness building, field-level investment, and/or sourcing programs, both in and beyond our supply chain. This is equivalent to the estimated total number of acres needed to grow all of our ingredients!

### IMPACT AS OF 2024

4,400 farmers operating an estimated 74,000 acres to date (*learn more starting on [page 24!](#)*)

This acreage estimate reflects three types of programming:




Enabling awareness building and farmer-to-farmer learning opportunities for farmers operating across an estimated 68,800 acres



Making field-level investments in tools and resources to help alleviate risk as well as financial investment for farmers operating across an estimated 2,900 acres



Supporting the measurement or verification of regenerative practices and outcomes through sourcing partnerships across an estimated 2,900 acres



## IGNITING POSITIVE IMPACT AT SIMPLE MILLS AND BEYOND

by advocating for food policy reform and engaging in collective action with peers to meaningfully address the climate crisis.

### 2026 GOAL

200 young farmer leaders supported to train as advocates for more equitable and climate-smart agriculture policy

### IMPACT AS OF 2024

More than 150 young farmer leaders supported to date to develop skills as advocates for fairer and more climate-resilient agricultural policies through our partnership with National Young Farmers Coalition (*learn more starting on [page 50!](#)*)





CHAPTER 3

# Changing How Food is Made



# Making Our Food with People & Planet in Mind

We're leaning into bold creativity, crafting our products with—and creating market demand for—a variety of nutrient-dense and underrepresented ingredients that encourage biodiversity and dietary diversity.



## OUR COMMITMENT

**100% of new product lines** are developed at the intersection of human and planetary health needs.



## IMPACT AS OF 2024

Simple Mills launched 2 new products in 2024, bringing us to a **total of 19 products (100% of new product lines)** thoughtfully developed at the intersection of human and planetary health needs:

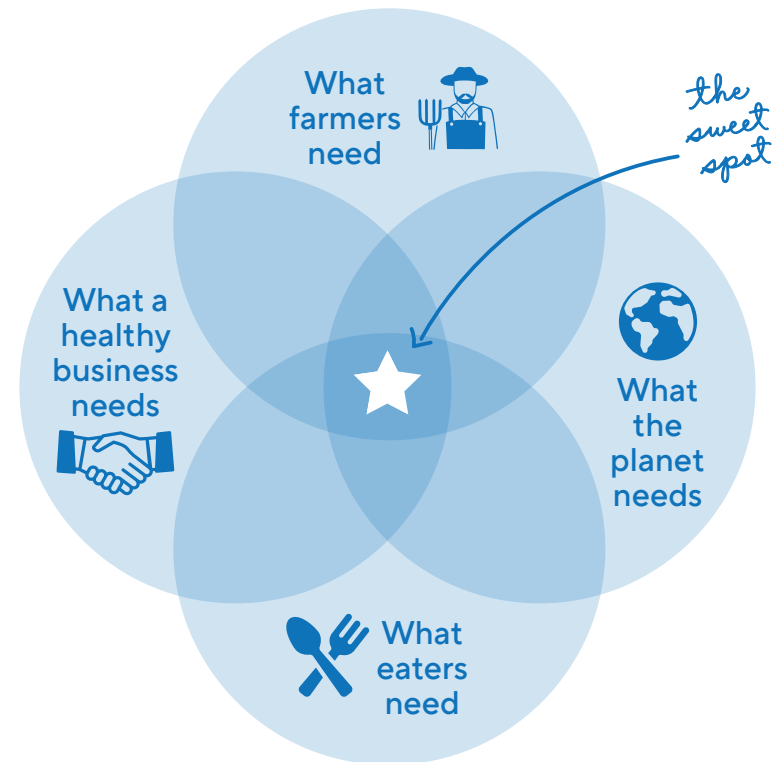


**Lemon Sweet Thins** feature watermelon seed flour from an underutilized variety of watermelon grown specifically for its seeds. By finding a home for this ingredient, we're aiming to bring more crop diversity to agriculture and human diets, all while delivering protein, beneficial fats, and delicious flavors to your plate.



**Pizza Pop Mmms** are made with butternut squash, which delivers Vitamin A and fiber, and red beans, which deliver minerals like potassium. Butternut squash is a big leaf crop that can armor soil from direct sunlight and weeds, and red beans can help build healthy soil by fixing nitrogen.<sup>2,3</sup>

## We innovate at the intersection of human & planetary health needs





# Building Biodiversity for Planetary Health

Biodiversity refers to the various forms of life, big and small, that are critical to our living planet. Biodiversity not only enhances ecosystem stability but also serves as a foundation for long-term human prosperity.<sup>4</sup>

Despite its critical importance, biodiversity faces increasing threats primarily due to human activities like deforestation to clear the way for agricultural land, monocropping, (the cultivation of only one or a limited number of crops), and use of agrichemicals, (synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides), that can be harmful to plants and animals.<sup>5,6,7,8,9,10</sup>



But our food system can also be a powerful lever for fostering biodiversity by prioritizing practices like planting a variety of crops, integrating grazing animals into cropping systems, and planting pollinator habitats. We were thrilled to see these topics take center stage at global convenings like COP 29 and Climate Week NYC.<sup>11,12</sup>

***Did you know?***  
*The global food system is the primary driver of biodiversity loss, with agriculture alone being a threat to nearly 86% of species identified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as at risk of extinction.<sup>13</sup>*

# Cultivating Dietary Diversity for Human Health

Dietary diversity is linked with maintaining a longer healthy life and reduced risk of many age-related diseases, such as diabetes and cognitive decline.<sup>14</sup> A varied diet is also correlated with improved gut health and a wider array of microorganisms that live in our microbiome.<sup>15</sup> Research increasingly shows that gut health is also linked to mental health and cognitive regulation.<sup>16,17</sup> Yet, only 4 crops—sugar cane, maize, wheat, and rice—account for about half of global crop production!<sup>18</sup>

**We craft products that make it simpler and tastier for people to enjoy a wider variety of nutrient-dense ingredients.**



This year we hosted an interactive learning session for employees focused on the human and planetary benefits of our key ingredients. The session featured an ingredient tasting, offering team members an engaging, sensory experience to explore how our rigorous ingredient selection process supports dietary diversity and biodiversity.



***Did you know? Our gut is home to a vast network of over 100 trillion microbial cells that play a significant role in our metabolism, nutrition, immunity, and overall health.<sup>19</sup>***



# Innovation for Human & Planetary Health

We're committed to crafting 100% of our new product lines at the intersection of human and planetary health needs using one of the five pathways shown below:



**1** Promote underrepresented crops like **buckwheat** to enhance agricultural diversity and dietary variety beyond the world's most commonly grown crops.



**4** Use crops from multiple plant categories, like **flax** (which delivers Omega 3 fats)<sup>20</sup> and **sunflower** (which delivers Vitamin E)<sup>21</sup>—to support market demand for crops that can be used in a diverse rotation and can bring a wide variety of nutrients to consumers' diets.



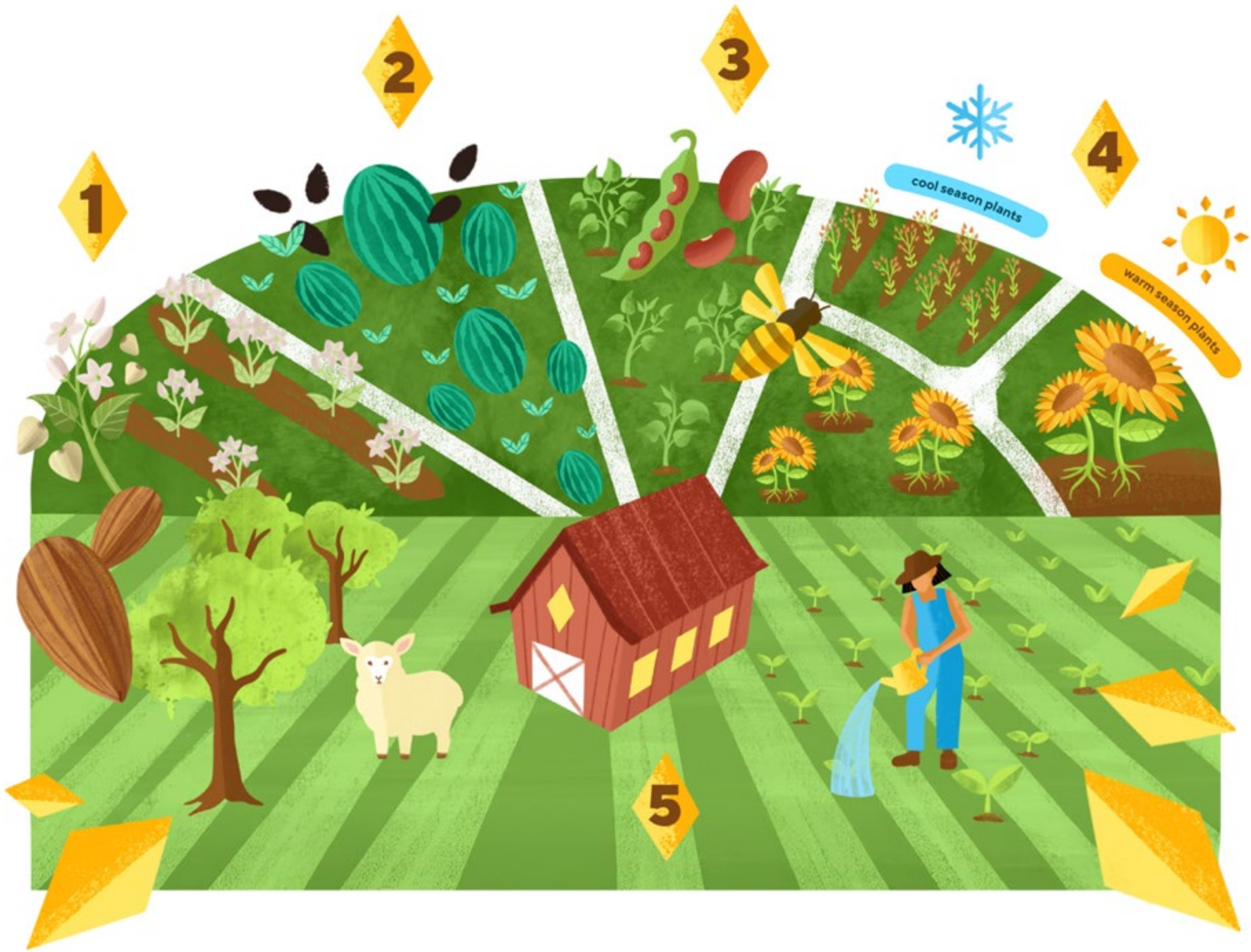
**2** Develop products with newly commercialized ingredients like **watermelon seed flour**, to help spark the diversification of farm ecosystems and diets.



**3** Use crops that have built-in environmental and human health benefits, like **red beans**, which fix nitrogen in the soil and provide essential dietary fiber for eaters.



**5** Use ingredients grown by farmers and suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to using regenerative agriculture principles, like **almond** farmers who are integrating livestock in their orchards and planting cover crops to protect soil between almond rows.







CHAPTER 4

# Changing How Food is Grown

# Our Regenerative Agriculture Philosophy

We're committed to supporting farmers' transitions to regenerative agriculture starting with our highest impact ingredient categories that together represent 75% of our ingredient volume.

We're intentionally working within our key sourcing regions to spread this impact beyond our own supply chain. We want this work to transcend the confines of our brand, and we believe that helping expand the use of regenerative principles in agriculture should be our highest priority, whether or not the enrolled farmers supply directly to Simple Mills.

At the same time, we also partner directly with farmers growing identity-preserved ingredients for our products to deepen our connections to the people and places growing our ingredients and to bring our farm-level work to life in the food we make.

Our goal is to meet farmers where they are and learn from them. We celebrate and resource farmers innovating at the forefront of regenerative agriculture *and* those just getting started on their regenerative journey. In the same way that our innovation process thrives on curiosity and experimentation, we believe farmers and their ingredients have better impacts on people and planet when given space to innovate creatively.



## 2026 GOAL

**7,000 farmers** operating an estimated **40,000 acres** engaged in regenerative agriculture awareness building, implementation and/or sourcing partnerships, both in and beyond our supply system – this is equivalent to the estimated total number of acres needed to grow all of our ingredients!



## IMPACT AS OF 2024

In 2024, we welcomed over **1,000 farmers** operating on an estimated **60,000 acres** to our regenerative agriculture programming. This brings us to **4,400 farmers** operating an estimated **74,000 acres** and 4 sourcing regions engaged in regenerative agriculture awareness building and implementation!

**It's important to note** that across these estimated 74,000 acres, farmers are engaged in our programming in a variety of ways: some are more closely linked to our supply chain through direct sourcing models, some are receiving financial and technical support to implement regenerative principles, and some are attending trainings hosted by Simple Mills.

The substantial increase in estimated acres in 2024 is largely due to growth of our regenerative agriculture awareness building programs that enrolled high numbers of farmers who collectively operate a significant number of acres. Through these different levers, as of 2024 we're thrilled to have reached farmers operating more than the equivalent of our estimated ingredient sourcing footprint!

Read about our different levels of programming on [page 28](#).



# Our Regenerative Agriculture Approach

While regenerative agriculture has been capturing headlines in recent years, it reflects a set of farming and land management methods that have been practiced by Indigenous communities for generations. Our current food system presents myriad barriers for farmers to implement regenerative principles—from policy disincentives to diversify crop rotations to gaps between consumer demand and what farmers want to grow to create resilient farm systems—and our goal is to help remove some of those barriers.

**At Simple Mills, we think about regenerative agriculture as an approach to farming that builds ecosystem resilience through principles that consider the holistic context of the farm system. In short, it's about working with nature rather than competing against it.**

Four outcome areas and six management principles guide our regenerative agriculture approach. We recognize and honor the variability that exists across farms, ecosystems, and communities. With variability in mind, we avoid a prescriptive, one-size-fits-all approach by elevating general principles that provide flexibility in how growers approach management practices. These principles are adapted from sources including Understanding Ag, the NRDC, and leaders like Robin Wall Kimmerer.<sup>[22](#),[23](#),[24](#),[25](#),[26](#)</sup>

## FOUR OUTCOME AREAS GUIDE OUR WORK:



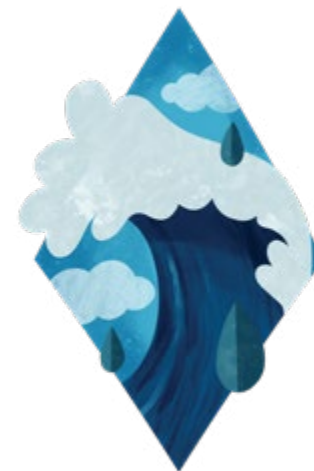
**Improve  
soil health**



**Increase  
biodiversity**



**Instill farm  
community resilience**



**Improve  
water health**

# Six Principles Guide Our Regenerative Agriculture Work



**Honor place** by making decisions that consider the unique ecological and social context of each operation



**Minimize mechanical & chemical disturbance** to improve soil structure and function and protect against erosion



**Keep a living root in the ground year-round** to store carbon in the soil and foster symbiotic relationships between plants and microbial communities



**Maximize crop diversity** to support biodiversity, improve nutrient cycling, and reduce pest and disease pressure



**Keep soil covered** to protect it from the elements and enhance water infiltration



**Build relationships between land & animals** to improve soil health and microbial density, reduce chemical inputs, and increase carbon sequestration





## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO Invest in Farmers' Transitions Toward Regenerative Agriculture?

Food companies have many levers to help advance the implementation of regenerative principles. At Simple Mills, we've reflected on the unique role we can play and identified 3 focus areas:



**Enabling awareness building and farmer-to-farmer learning opportunities.** For instance, through the Cocoa Project we fund theater programming in our primary cocoa sourcing region to build awareness of the ecological and economic benefits of diversifying cacao fields with additional tree species.



**Making field-level investments in tools and resources to help alleviate risk as well as financial investment.** Through the Coconut Sugar Project we provide standardized kitchen tools and seedlings to support farmers in implementing soil health practices.



**Supporting the measurement or verification of regenerative practices and outcomes through sourcing partnerships.** For example, through the Almond Project, we invest in measurement protocols to track soil health and crop nutrient outcomes with one of our key almond suppliers.

## What About Regenerative Certification?

We applaud growers who pursue one of the many new, innovative regenerative certifications and we recognize that many leading-edge farmers implementing regenerative principles opt not to certify, a choice we honor.

**We celebrate farmers at all points along the spectrum of their regenerative journeys, and we aim to play a role in removing barriers for them along the way.**

In short, we are prioritizing an inclusive approach to expanding the adoption of regenerative agriculture across a diversity of growers, ingredients, and regions while also celebrating the farmers and ingredients at the very tip of the spear who are achieving and certifying regenerative outcomes.





## A NOTE ON ORGANIC FARMING

# Organic Farming as a Strong Foundation of Regenerative Principles

Regenerative and organic agriculture share many of the same goals, which is why we believe organic farming can benefit people and farm ecosystems. The National Organic Program is a federally enforced, rigorous standard that encourages practices associated with positive outcomes including reduction of synthetic chemicals harmful to people and the environment, cover cropping to protect and enrich the soil, diverse crop rotations to break pest and disease cycles, and organic soil amendments that can stand in for chemical alternatives.<sup>27</sup>

**We believe that regenerative outcomes can manifest in certified organic as well as non-certified systems, and we see certification as one path to encourage the implementation of management techniques that have the potential to benefit human and planetary health.**

IN 2024, THE PROPORTION OF OUR TOTAL INGREDIENT VOLUME THAT WAS CERTIFIED ORGANIC REACHED

**25%**









## Investing in a Resilient Future for Almonds

At Simple Mills, we've always been nuts about the delicious taste and nutrition of almonds.

Starting in 2021, we turned our focus toward the environmental impacts of almonds and the potential for California farmers to implement regenerative principles in their orchards.











# The Almond Project

**As Founding Members of The Almond Project, we're collaborating across the food industry to make California almond farming more resilient by implementing and evaluating the outcomes of regenerative soil health practices.**

Launched in 2022, The Almond Project began with the development of a five-year study in California's Central Valley, implementing and researching a variety of soil health practices. The Almond Project's founding members represent a rare coalition of cross-functional advocates: spanning from third-generation almond growers (Pacific Ag Management) and processors (Treehouse California Almonds), to pioneering food brands (Simple Mills, Daily Harvest, and Cappello's), and non-profit conveners (White Buffalo Land Trust). The collective has since grown to include several additional partners and further programming.

In 2024 we grew our coalition to include two new brand partners, Justin's and GOODTOGO, expanding our reach and capacity to implement additional programming!

Learn more at: [www.thealmondproject.com](http://www.thealmondproject.com)





The Almond Project farm partners are trialing and testing the outcomes of soil health practices on



**160 acres**

of almond orchards in the Central Valley of California.

### FOUNDING SOIL HEALTH STUDY

In collaboration with other founding members, Simple Mills is sponsoring technical assistance, soil sampling, and project management to better understand the impact of regenerative principles in conventional almond orchards. The 2024 harvest marked the third year of the project, and our first major data sampling since establishing baselines in 2021. After the 2024 harvest, soil scientist Dr. Jessica Chirtas spent several days in the fields gathering samples. We look forward to sharing our learnings soon!



### CROP NUTRIENT TESTING

As a brand focused on the intersection of human and planetary health, we are keen to advance the burgeoning field of research exploring the link between farming practices and nutrients in harvested crops. Simple Mills is partnering with Dr. Selina Wang's lab at UC Davis to study how the farming practices implemented through The Almond Project influence nutrient profiles in almonds.







# Orchard Soil Health Academy

In April 2024, Simple Mills partnered with leading soil health educators at Soil Health Academy to sponsor the first-ever almond and orchard-focused school.

The 3-day event was generously hosted on Burroughs Family Farm, a leading producer of regenerative almonds located in the northern San Joaquin Valley. Now managed by the fifth generation of Burroughs family members, Burroughs Family Farm takes a holistic and innovative approach to farming, continuing the family's commitment to stewarding the natural environment.







The school provided regenerative agriculture-focused education to almond growers across California's Central Valley—both within and beyond Simple Mills' own supply network. Together with almost 100 attendees (including 14 from the Simple Mills team!), we explored how regenerative principles can be applied in almond orchards to positively impact farm economics, ecosystem health, and human health.

**This experience included:**

**52 farmers** and **13 technical service providers** in attendance.

**3 full days** of hands-on learning. **50,000+ acres** under management by the almond grower attendees.







# Cover Crop Seed Broadcaster Partnership with Blue Diamond Growers



Nearly 70% of California’s almond farmers operate on 100 acres or fewer.<sup>28</sup>

Many smaller-scale growers may not have access to the right machinery, or enough acreage, to justify the cost of expensive seed drilling services—a common way to plant cover crops. Consequently, many growers face barriers to cover cropping, a practice that can enrich and protect soil and is often considered a stepping stone to implementing further regenerative agriculture principles.<sup>29,30</sup>

To help reduce these barriers faced by small growers, Simple Mills has partnered with supplier partner Blue Diamond Growers to provide seed broadcasters and educational content to help farmers incorporate cover cropping practices in their operations.





**88 seed  
broadcasters  
distributed**

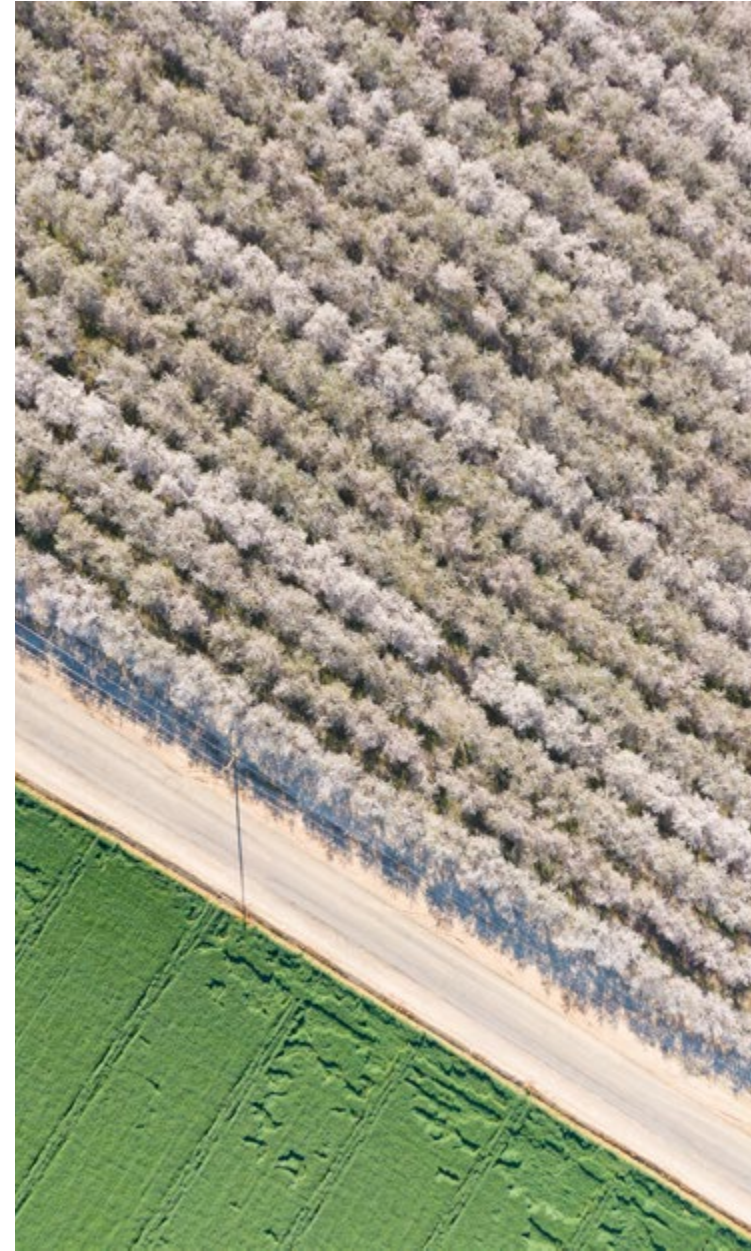
A seed broadcaster is a tool used to evenly distribute seeds across a field, making it easier and more efficient to plant cover crops without the need for specialized machinery.

**1800+ acres  
operated by  
growers who  
received seed  
broadcasters**

“Delighted with the broadcaster. It worked very well and is encouraging us to keep up the cover crop planting. Hiring a seed driller was very expensive and would make planting cover crops price prohibitive for our farming operation.”

- BD Grower &  
Grant Recipient

By offering no-cost access to easy-to-use seed broadcasters, this project aims to support the adoption of cover cropping not only on the acres of participating growers but also to their neighbors and others who learn, share, and utilize the resources developed through this project.







# Climate-Smart Practices Implementation Fund

Growers face various challenges in adopting new agricultural practices, and the costs associated with trialing and implementing new methods are often a major barrier that inhibits the spread of these practices.<sup>31</sup>



To help reduce these barriers, Simple Mills is partnering with non-profit Wolfe's Neck Center for Agriculture & the Environment, an awardee of a USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities grant. Through this grant, Wolfe's Neck Center will match Simple Mills' funding contribution for 3 years. Wolfe's Neck Center will manage fund disbursement and contracts in collaboration with Zero Foodprint to help cover almond farmers' costs associated with implementing soil health practices like cover cropping, compost application, and the development of nutrient management plans to aid in reducing synthetic fertilizer and chemical use.



Zero Foodprint

*This material is based upon work supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, under Agreement number NR233A750004G032.*







# The Coconut Sugar Project

Facilitating regenerative agroforestry in Indonesian communities.

The Coconut Sugar Project is a multi-year partnership we launched with agroforestry experts at PUR, a leading organization that aims to regenerate and preserve ecosystems and support local farming communities. The project is designed to help diversify land and income streams through agroforestry implementation and soil health training programs.

In 2024, we formally wrapped up the inaugural Coconut Sugar Project, a three-year program that we launched in 2021. This collaboration with PUR and farmers in our main sourcing region of Java, Indonesia has brought a variety of benefits to participating farmers.

Agroforestry refers to planting a variety of trees and other plant species in agricultural landscapes. The practice can enhance biodiversity, improve soil health, and provide additional sources of income for farmers.<sup>32</sup>





## Noteworthy achievements from the past three years



- **18,000 seedlings of 8 different species** were distributed and planted across more than **1,100 acres** to diversify farmers' land and support the development of thriving agroforestry systems
- **5,000 vanilla seedlings were planted and nurtured**, supporting farmers in diversifying their land and accessing a valuable international market
- **1,800 standardized kitchen tools** distributed to farming families, supporting higher quality and more consistent sugar production
- **2,300 farmers engaged in soil health trainings** and received agronomic support, enabling them to steward the ecological health of their land
- **A community-led demonstration plot** of more than **100 dwarf coconut palms** was established, providing a test-and-learn location for a smaller variety of palm tree that may lead to safer and more equitable nectar harvesting, along with improved profits for farmers

As a result of the project's success and high farmer engagement thus far, Simple Mills has extended our partnership with PUR for an additional 3 years. The next phase of programming will focus on continued support for agroforestry development through training modules and expanded seedling distribution.





## The Cocoa Project

We're supporting farmer awareness campaigns in our main cocoa sourcing region of West Africa to build community knowledge of the ecological and economic benefits of diversifying cacao fields.

In 2023, Simple Mills launched the Cocoa Project, a multi-year partnership with PUR and local production group ALMA to produce engaging and accessible theater performances, film screenings, and radio shows with the goal of spreading awareness in cocoa farming communities about the importance of reforestation and diversifying cocoa farms with other native or naturalized tree species (such as avocado tree, orange tree, and akpi).





Building on the momentum of agroforestry-focused theater performances in 2023, in 2024 our on-the-ground partners at PUR expanded the program to radio broadcasts and agroforestry-focused film screenings followed by facilitated discussions.

A study by PUR revealed that over 40% of cocoa farmers surveyed rely on radio as their primary source of information, making radio an effective medium for education and awareness-raising.<sup>33</sup> These broadcasts, translated into local languages, highlighted the benefits of agroforestry, such as higher yields, improved water retention, enriched soil health, and diversified income streams.<sup>34,35</sup> The programming also emphasized the new Forestry Code, providing farmers with practical solutions to protect against exploitation by logging and mining companies.

To further facilitate community engagement, movie screenings gave participants the opportunity to watch and discuss movies about the connection between cacao growing and climate change, deforestation, agroforestry, and land tenure rights.



## Impact highlights from the program so far

- **1,800 farmers** operating an estimated **13,400 acres** engaged in awareness building and farmer-to-farmer learning opportunities about the benefits of diversifying cacao farms with additional tree species
- **72 radio broadcasts** produced and translated into 4 local languages to reach as many community members as possible
- **216,000 estimated listeners** reached by cumulative radio broadcasts
- **3,240 minutes** of radio programming delivered to listeners including an additional **720 minutes of programming** added to shows over the course of broadcasting due to high demand and caller volume to the radio station
- **5 weekly listening groups** established for farmers to foster discussion and deeper understanding of radio content
- **252 radio listener calls** received, reflecting strong community interest in the topic of agroforestry
- **More than 550 community members** took part in agroforestry-focused film screenings accompanied by facilitated discussion







## Direct Trade

We're working directly with growers to reimagine the commodity agriculture system and support farmers' transitions to regenerative agriculture. 2024 marked the fifth year of the Simple Mills Direct Trade program! Since the program's inception in 2020, we've worked with...

**13 farmers** across more than **2,800 acres** in **3 states**

Through our Direct Trade program, we're aiming to bring eaters closer to the source of their food by forging direct, meaningful connections with growers. We're helping our partner farmers reduce risk by covering the cost of planting seeds, providing stipends for farmers to use toward implementing regenerative practices like cover cropping, and by structuring contracts to provide more certainty to farmers about when they can expect market demand for their ingredients. We invite continuous grower feedback and have evolved the program structure over time with this feedback in mind.

Because our approach to regenerative agriculture is context-specific, we encourage our Direct Trade farmer partners to select practices suited to the unique needs of their operations. For this reason, our partnerships and the practices we are helping to finance look slightly different from farm to farm—and we celebrate that variability!

# Direct Trade in our Products

So far, we've focused our Direct Trade program on organic sunflowers – a beneficial addition to traditional temperate crop rotations and a good food source for pollinators. In 2022 we began integrating sunflower seed grown through this program into our Organic Seed Flour Crackers.



**In 2022, when we began using sunflower seed in our portfolio, we were able to source over**

**26%**

**of the sunflower seed used in our Organic Seed Crackers from our Direct Trade farmer network.**



**In 2024, we were able to source over**

**60%**

**of the sunflower seed used in this product from our Direct Trade farmer network, even while our total ingredient volume demand has increased year over year!**





# Deepening our Relationship to Growers through multi-year contracts

Multi-year contracts are impactful for farmers because they create more stability in price and offtake, helping growers weather the constant swings of commodity markets. In 2024, we officially extended partnerships with three leading regenerative farmers from annual agreements to multi-year direct trade contracts. Our goal in extending contract length is to provide more certainty to farmers year over year and to enable trusted, long-term procurement partnerships that help close the gap between growers and eaters.

*Bottom left photo: Tom Cotter (left), Alma Cotter (right), and their family. Top right photo: Sandy & Mary Cyburg (center). Bottom right photo: Luke and Ali Peterson*







## Sharing our Direct Trade Program with Influencers

To celebrate five years of the Direct Trade program, we brought influencer partners to Minnesota to visit Luke Peterson's Farm (one of our Direct Trade partners!) for a peek behind the curtain of our direct sourcing model.

We shared with influencers how Simple Mills:

- **Covers the cost of planting seeds** to demonstrate upfront commitment
- **Provides incentive payments for growers to use toward implementing regenerative principles.** Growers can use the funds for things like cover crop seeds and equipment, fencing for rotational livestock grazing
- **Structures sourcing relationships** to provide more certainty to farmers about when they can expect market demand for their ingredients

Bringing eaters closer to the source of their food is a core part of the Simple Mills mission and we are so grateful for the opportunity to bring our partners right to the source.

We were thrilled to have **13 influencers join us**, who shared a total of **177 posts** and garnered over **2.1 million impressions** spreading the word about the important work our Direct Trade partners are doing to advance regenerative principles.

This trip was packed full of amazing meals, insightful conversations, motivating education and an overwhelming feeling of community – exactly what Simple Mills stands for.





CHAPTER 5

# Igniting Positive Impact at Simple Mills & Beyond

We're proud of our strong focus on our own supply chain and the way we make our food as the most material opportunities for positive impact. At the same time, we know that no single company can move the needle alone in building a stronger food system.

So, we're striving to catalyze systemic change by mobilizing our team around our mission, inviting eaters and the food industry to join our journey by transparently sharing our approach, advocating for better agriculture policy, and partnering with our food industry peers to engage in collective climate action.





# Employee Engagement & Well-Being

We believe that our employees are our greatest asset. Their holistic well-being is integral to our success.

## IMPACTS OF OUR 2024 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT & WELL-BEING PROGRAMS

**20,000+**

hours across all employees spent with family, friends, and on self-care thanks to half days on Fridays year-round

**16 Weeks**

paid maternity leave for birthing parents

**50%**

matching up to 5% of salary offered as part of our 401k program

**25+ Hours**

of learning opportunities offered to employees through People & Planet learning modules, leadership coaching, financial wellness, and allyship trainings

**8 Weeks**

paid parental leave for non-birthing parents

**\$500**

allocated to each employee's wellness stipend every year

**3 Week**

sabbatical offered to employees after 5 years with Simple Mills

**70%+**

of premiums paid across employees' healthcare plans are covered by Simple Mills

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging

At Simple Mills we focus not only on diversity, equity, and inclusion but also on the importance of belonging in the workplace, understanding that this commitment is crucial to our mission of advancing the holistic health of the planet and its people.

Fostering a sense of belonging is about creating an environment where every employee feels valued, heard, and connected to the company's mission and to each other. This sense of belonging is cultivated through shared values, mutual respect, and the recognition that each individual brings a unique lived experience, perspective, and set of skills that taken together enhance our collective creativity, productivity, and overall impact.

## Key insights from our 2024 Engagement Survey related to mission, connection, & belonging:

- 97%** The mission of Simple Mills, to advance the holistic health of people and the planet, resonates with me personally.
- 90%** The mission of Simple Mills gives me a sense of purpose in my work and helps me stay motivated to overcome challenges.
- 95%** I understand how my role fits into the purpose of Simple Mills.
- 88%** I feel like I can be my authentic self at work.
- 87%** I feel a sense of belonging among my coworkers.

## How we identify in 2024:

- **4 out of 4** C-Suite leaders identify as women.
- **3 out of 7** board members identify as women.
- **1 out of 4** employees identifies as racially/ethnically diverse and of those employees, 1 out of 3 are in leadership positions.
- **4 out of 5** employees identify as women.





# We're helping our team members become better allies



For four years, Simple Mills has had the honor of partnering with Brave Space Alliance, the first Black-led, trans-led LGBTQ+ center located on the South Side of Chicago. Through workshops led by Brave Space Alliance, our team has learned invaluable insights and tools to build and nurture an environment that champions the unique voices and experiences of all Simple Mills team members.

This year, Simple Mills collaborated with Brave Space Alliance to develop two-part allyship trainings as part of our commitment to continuous learning and fostering a more equitable society. Team members explored the meaning of allyship, addressed barriers like microaggressions, and practiced building awareness, amplifying voices, advocating for others, and embracing anti-racism. The trainings combined foundational knowledge with real-life scenario practice, creating a safe space for reflection, learning, and growth.

This is an ongoing journey, with plenty of progress to be made and we are grateful to collaborate with Brave Space Alliance to continue that work.

## Dedication across teams

*"We actively seek and celebrate diversity in our vetting process for manufacturing partners, elevating operations that uplift talent from all backgrounds, especially those historically underrepresented."*

*- Manufacturing Team*

*"Embracing and learning from diverse diets and food philosophies, our product development, consumer research, and internal culture reflect inclusivity."*

*- Innovation Team*

*"Diversity and representation are key priorities across all marketing channels and we believe it is paramount for consumers to see themselves represented in our content and communications. We partner with, support, and celebrate BIPOC Registered Dietitians and health practitioners who are often underrepresented in wellness."*

*- Marketing Team*

## CLOSING THE LOOP: Recycling & Reducing Material Waste

As consumers ourselves, we understand that knowing how to properly recycle various elements of a product's packaging can be confusing! That's why in 2024 we began implementing the How2Recycle® label across our packaging. How2Recycle labeling provides consistent and transparent on-pack disposal information for consumers, making it easier to recycle.



In 2024, we added the  
How2Recycle logo to  
**16 products!**

While empowering consumers to recycle is important, we also strive to minimize the environmental footprint of our packaging from the start. This means carefully selecting materials and optimizing our packaging designs to use fewer resources whenever possible, without compromising product quality or safety.



Members of the Supply Chain team came together in May of 2024 for a volunteer day focused on packing food donations and supporting community organizations

Beyond our efforts in packaging, we've also been making big strides in ingredient waste reduction. We are working to divert waste to compost and, where appropriate, donate products directly to community organizations.

In 2024:

- **More than 16,000 pounds** of combined office food scraps, expired product inventory, and trial scrap were diverted from the landfill through our Chicago office composting initiative
- **The Supply Chain team came together for a volunteer day** focused on packing food donations and supporting community organizations
- **More than 99% of product approaching expiration or with cosmetic defects was utilized** through partnerships with alternative channels and donation initiatives, leading to less than 1% going to landfill.



# Investing in the Future of Farming: Young Farmers

In 2024 we expanded our partnership with the National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC) to sponsor young and diverse farmers in their work to advocate for equitable and climate resilient agricultural policy.



## 2026 GOAL

**200 young leaders supported** to train as advocates for more equitable and climate-smart agriculture policy



## IMPACT AS OF 2024

In 2024, we sponsored **49 young farmers** to join policy cohorts and fellowships designed to help them become effective policy advocates. This brings our total to more than **150 young leaders** sponsored by Simple Mills to develop skills as advocates for fairer and more climate-resilient agricultural policies through our partnership with National Young Farmers Coalition.

## We believe that to invest in young farmers is to invest in the future of regenerative agriculture.

Our partnership with NYFC supports farmer leaders to become empowered advocates through local and federal policy, ensuring that future agricultural leadership and policy are influenced by the next generation of working farmers. In 2024, Simple Mills contributed financial support to two key NYFC programs:

### THE ROOT AND BLOOM POLICY FELLOWSHIP

Through this fellowship, 39 farmers across the country received in-depth leadership development training to map out their personal paths to positions of governmental influence. These positions range from local positions on boards managing water, soil, and climate issues in agriculture, to county and state agricultural and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program committees. At Simple Mills, we believe that we need conservation-minded young farmers – a group that has been historically underrepresented in decision-making bodies<sup>36</sup> – to hold power in the spaces that govern agriculture.

### FEDERAL POLICY COHORT

This group, made up of 10 farmers from historically underrepresented backgrounds, advises on the NYFC policy agenda and advocates for federal agricultural policies that prioritize racial equity and regenerative agriculture. These farmers work closely with the federal policy team at NYFC to ensure that the policy agenda reflects the lived experiences and challenges of young and underrepresented farmers, helping to shape policies that truly serve their communities.

This work ensures that the challenges and opportunities faced by young, underrepresented farmers are reflected in policies that secure a more resilient future for agriculture.

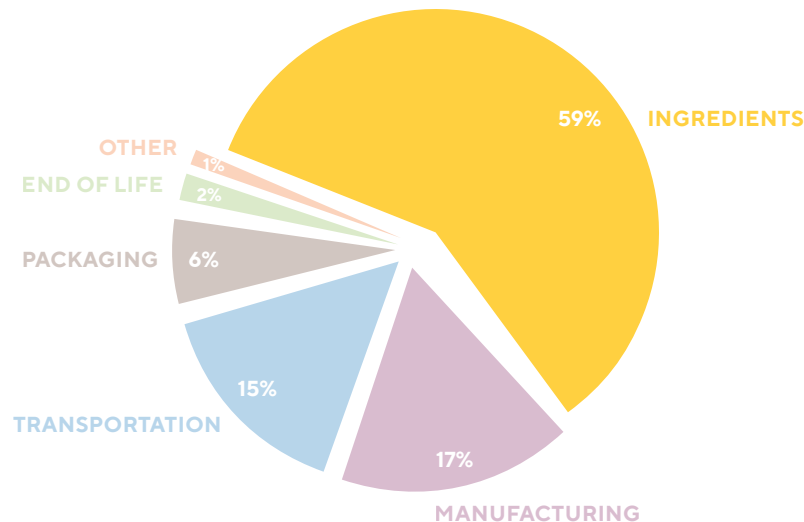




# Climate Action Plan

Up to 1/3 of global greenhouse gas emissions stem from the food system, so as a food company, we feel a deep sense of responsibility to work toward addressing the climate crisis.<sup>37</sup>

**SIMPLE MILLS 2023 ANNUAL EMISSIONS**  
(MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/yr)



Simple Mills is proud to partner with leading sustainability intelligence firm, HowGood, to track our greenhouse gas emissions across all business activities. After several months of data gathering and organizing, we completed our baseline greenhouse gas inventory in the fall of 2024. The inventory revealed what we already suspected—that the largest share of our emissions is tied to ingredients, underscoring the significant impact that sourcing and agricultural practices have on our carbon footprint. Emissions from manufacturing, transportation and distribution, and packaging also contribute considerably.

These findings highlight the need to prioritize ingredient-focused strategies, such as ingredient selection for innovation and supporting regenerative agricultural practices in sourcing regions. While we continue to focus our energy on farm-level impact, this inventory informs strategies for reducing emissions from additional supply chain nodes, including manufacturing and transportation. In 2025, we look forward to further building out our climate action plan within and beyond the farm gate.

Simple Mills has partnered with HowGood to pilot their newly developed tool, Fieldscope, that provides more granular insight into the specific on-farm practices driving most of our ingredient-associated emissions. This empowers us to make more informed decisions about how we can support the implementation of farm-level practices that most meaningfully reduce environmental impact.



# Recognition for Simple Mills in 2024



## C-Suite Panel at Climate Day

Katlin Smith, our Founder & CEO, participated in the C-Suite Panel at Climate Day during Expo West, where she shared insights on the evolution of the natural and organic food system.



## Inc. Female Founders 250 List

Katlin Smith, our Founder & CEO was included in *Inc.*'s Female Founders 250 list, which celebrates the country's most dynamic and influential women in business.



## Fast Company World Changing Ideas

Simple Mills was honored as part of *Fast Company*'s 2024 World Changing Ideas, for our Mission Strategic Plan to change how food is made, how food is grown, and igniting positive impact at Simple Mills & beyond.



## Good Housekeeping Sustainable Innovation Award

Simple Mills' Pop Mmms received *Good Housekeeping*'s 2024 Sustainable Innovation Award in the Gluten-Free Goodness category, highlighting our focus on making food with people & planet in mind.



## Inc. Best Workplaces

Simple Mills was named one of *Inc.*'s Best Workplaces for 2024, celebrating our commitment to putting employees first.



## Women in Sustainable Leadership Award

Christina Skonberg, our Head of Sustainability & Mission, was named a winner of the 2024 Women in Sustainability Leadership awards, a list honoring leadership in sustainability across the globe.



## Inc. 5000

Simple Mills earned a spot on *Inc.*'s 5000 list as one of the fastest-growing companies in the United States.



## Fast Company Brands that Matter

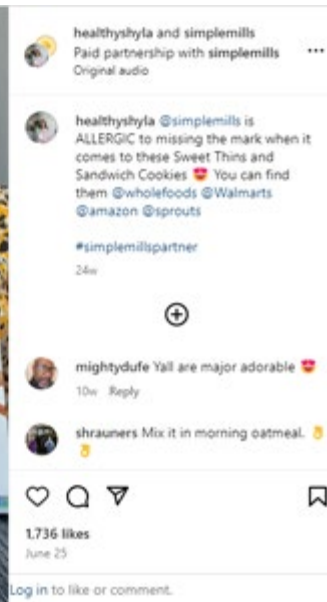
In 2024, Simple Mills was included in *Fast Company*'s Brands that Matter list for the second time, recognized for resonating deeply with consumers while continually adapting to the challenges of our industry.



# Amplifying Impact & Building Awareness with Eaters

At Simple Mills, we transparently share our journey to advance our mission with eaters, retailers, and peers to drive collaboration—and invite feedback—in solving the world’s most pressing issues.

As a brand with products in over 30,000 stores and thousands of loyal fans, our product packaging and communications represent an important lever to engage passionate eaters about the power of food to benefit both people and planet. We seek to create ripple effects when we amplify messages about how the well-being of people hinges on that of our planet.



We use our product packaging to communicate about the essential nutrients found in our ingredients.

We use our channels as a megaphone for impact by sharing tips from registered dietitians, (like Shyla Cadogan, RD, LDN pictured above), on topics like reading food labels, how to get more fiber in your diet, and the importance of a diverse diet for gut health.

# Supporting Organizations Building a More Inclusive Food System

At Simple Mills we are working to create a ripple effect of positive change. One of the ways we do this is by supporting organizations that advance equity in the food system and improve access to nutritious foods.

WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE DONATED TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS IN 2024:



[Just Roots](#) envisions caring communities that motivate and support all residents to access food in ways that promote and sustain the holistic health of people and the environment. Guided by that vision, they lead regenerative urban farms where they grow organic food, facilitate free educational programs, and host community events.



[The Climate Collaborative](#) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to activate rigorous climate action in the grocery industry. The organization offers free climate education and programs, pre-competitive collaborations, policy opportunities, and a Commitment Program that provides high-impact pathways for climate engagement. Since the organization's founding in 2017, it has catalyzed and tracked the public climate commitments from more than 760 companies. Beyond the Commitment Program, the Climate Collaborative currently works with thousands of brands, distributors, retailers, and associations to accelerate meaningful and just climate action and advocacy throughout the food system.



For more than 50 years, [Nourishing Hope](#) has connected people facing hunger with nourishing food. One of Chicago's largest and longest-operating hunger relief organizations, Nourishing Hope provides over 200,000 services each year. Addressing the root causes of food insecurity, they also provide completely free case management and therapy services.





CHAPTER 6

# Onward



# The Journey Continues!

Thank you for joining us for the 2024 edition of our People & Planet Impact Journal. We're proud of the progress we've made on our people & planet journey so far, and we know there is much more work to be done. As we look to the future, we have exciting plans in the works, including:

- **Further expanding our work with farmers and suppliers** to implement regenerative agriculture principles across more crops and sourcing regions.
- **Adding a wider variety of nutrient-dense ingredients** to our product portfolio, with climate impact in mind.
- **Advancing our Climate Action Plan** by continuing to track, report, and address greenhouse gas emissions across our business.
- **Expanding our policy advocacy work** to support the next generation of regenerative farmers.
- **Identifying and pursuing the heaviest hitting opportunities** to improve the impact of our packaging.

As we continue to evolve and grow our People & Planet work, we warmly welcome feedback. We'd love to hear your thoughts on our approach and any ideas for future impact opportunities. You can get in touch by sending an email to [info@simplemills.com](mailto:info@simplemills.com).



# Learn More and Get Involved!

Some of our favorite people and planet resources and a few ways to take action



## BOOKS

### [Farming While Black](#)

By Leah Penniman

### [Fiber Fueled](#)

By Dr. Will Bulsiewicz

### [Braiding Sweetgrass](#)

By Robin Wall Kimmerer

### [The Serviceberry](#)

By Robin Wall Kimmerer

### [The Third Plate](#)

By Dan Barber

### [Intuitive Eating](#)

By Evelyn Tribole MS RDN CEDRD-S &  
Elyse Resch MS RDN CEDRD-S FAND

### [Genius Foods: Become Smarter, Happier, and More Productive While Protecting Your Brain for Life](#)

By Max Lugavere

### [The Blue Zones Secrets for Living Longer: Lessons From the Healthiest Places on Earth](#)

By Dan Buettner

### [In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto](#)

By Michal Pollan

### [Food: What the Heck Should I Eat](#)

By Dr. Mark Hyman



## FILMS

### [Gather](#)

Provides an intimate portrait of the growing movement amongst Native Americans to reclaim their spiritual, political and cultural identities through food sovereignty, while battling the trauma of centuries of genocide.

### [Kiss the Ground](#)

Reveals that, by regenerating the world's soils, we can completely and rapidly stabilize Earth's climate, restore lost ecosystems and create abundant food supplies.

### [Living Soil](#)

Tells the story of farmers, scientists, and policymakers working to incorporate regenerative agricultural practices to benefit soil health for years to come.

### [Common Ground](#)

This sequel to the film Kiss the Ground, explores the next steps in regenerative agriculture, focusing on the global impact of these practices on climate change, food security, and ecosystem restoration.

### [Live to 100: Secrets of The Blue Zones](#)

A documentary that explores the lifestyles, diets, and cultures of the world's Blue Zones, regions known for their high concentration of centenarians, to uncover the secrets behind their longevity and health.



## PODCASTS

### [How to Save a Planet](#)

Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson & Alex Blumberg

### [Gastropod](#)

Cynthia Graber & Nicola Twilley

### [New Food Order](#)

Food+Tech Connect & AgFunder

### [The Heritage Radio Network](#)

### [Food Talk with Dani Nierenberg \(by Food Tank\)](#)

Danielle Nierenberg

### [The Doctors Farmacy](#)

Dr. Mark Hyman

### [The Genius Life](#)

Max Lugavere

### [What's the Juice](#)

Olivia Amitrano

### [Feel Better. Live More](#)

Dr. Rangan Chatterjee



## EXPERIENCES

### [Kiss The Ground](#)

#### [Introduction to Regenerative Gardening Class](#)

A comprehensive 8-module course designed for all skill levels, covering the history of gardening, soil and plant understanding, troubleshooting, and harvesting, led by Tashanda Giles-Jones and featuring various experts to empower students to start or enhance their regenerative gardening journey confidently.

### [IndigiKitchen Cooking Classes](#)

Cooking classes from IndigiKitchen provide an immersive experience in preparing traditional Indigenous foods, emphasizing sustainability and cultural heritage.

### [Ron Finley Gardening MasterClass](#)

Teaches the art and science of growing your own food in any space, focusing on urban gardening and community empowerment.





# Sources

1 Crippa, M., Solazzo, E., Guizzardi, D. et al. Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions. *Nat Food* 2, 198–209 (2021)

2 Canadian Society of Soil Science. (n.d.). Soil Health and Management. University of Saskatchewan. Edited by Laura Van Eerd, Kate Congreves, Melissa Arcand, Yvonne Lawley, and Caroline Halde. Retrieved Dec 18 2023

3 New Mexico State University (NMSU). Nitrogen Fixation by Legumes (Guide A-129). In NMSU Agricultural Publications. Revised by Robert Flynn and John Idowu. College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, New Mexico State University. Authors: Extension Agronomists, Department of Extension Plant Sciences, New Mexico State University.

4 Cardinale BJ, Duffy JE, Gonzalez A, Hooper DU, Perrings C, Venail P, Narwani A, Mace GM, Tilman D, Wardle DA, Kinzig AP, Daily GC, Loreau M, Grace JB, Larigauderie A, Srivastava DS, Naeem S. Biodiversity loss and its impact on humanity. *Nature*. 2012

5 Díaz, S., Settele, J., Brondizio, E. S., Ngo, H. T., Agard, J., Arneeth, A., Balvanera, P., Brauman, K. A., Butchart, S. H. M., Chan, K. M. A., Lucas, A. G., Ichii, K., Liu, J., Subramanian, S. M., Midgley, G. F., Miloslavich, P., Molnár, Z., Obura, D., Pfaff, A., ... Zayas, C. N. (2019). Pervasive human-driven decline of life on Earth points to the need for transformative change. *Science*, 366(6471), Article eaax3100.

6 Ceballos G, Ehrlich PR, Dirzo R. Biological annihilation via the ongoing sixth mass extinction signaled by vertebrate population losses and declines. *Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A*. 2017 Jul 25;114(30)

7 Gordon, T., & Hussain, T. (2021). Food system impacts on biodiversity loss: Three levers for food system transformation in support of nature. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

8 Yang, T., Siddique, K. H. M., & Liu, K. (2020). Cropping systems in agriculture and their impact on soil health-A review. *Global Ecology and Conservation*, 23, e01118.

9 Dicks, L.V., Breeze, T.D., Ngo, H.T. et al. A global-scale expert assessment of drivers and risks associated with pollinator decline. *Nat Ecol Evol* 5, 1453–1461 (2021).

10 U.S. Geological Survey. (n.d.). Agricultural contaminants. Retrieved Dec 18 2023, from <https://www.usgs.gov/mission-areas/water-resources/science/agricultural-contaminants>

11 UNFCCC. (n.d.). Introduction to land use. Retrieved from <https://unfccc.int/topics/introduction-to-land-use>

12 Climate Week NYC. (n.d.). Event themes. Retrieved from <https://www.climateweeknyc.org/event-themes>

13 Gordon, T., & Hussain, T. (2021). Food system impacts on biodiversity loss: Three levers for food system transformation in support of nature. Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

14 Qu, X., Na, X., Yang, J., Yu, H., Chen, A., & Zhao, A. (2022). Reaching and maintaining higher dietary diversity is associated with decreased risk of all-cause mortality: A longitudinal study from the China Health and Nutrition Survey. *Frontiers in Nutrition*, 9.

15 Leeming ER, Johnson AJ, Spector TD, Le Roy CI. Effect of Diet on the Gut Microbiota: Rethinking Intervention Duration. *Nutrients*. 2019; 11(12):2862. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu11122862>.

16 Shoubridge, A.P., Choo, J.M., Martin, A.M. et al. The gut microbiome and mental health: advances in research and emerging priorities. *Mol Psychiatry* 27, 1908–1919 (2022).

17 Chen Y, Xu J, Chen Y. Regulation of Neurotransmitters by the Gut Microbiota and Effects on Cognition in Neurological Disorders. *Nutrients*. 2021 Jun 19;

18 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2023). Statistical Yearbook. World Food and Agriculture. Chapter 2: Production, Trade and Prices of Commodities. 2023.

19 Guinane CM, Cotter PD. Role of the gut microbiota in health and chronic gastrointestinal disease: understanding a hidden metabolic organ. *Therap Adv Gastroenterol*. 2013 Jul;6(4):295-308.

20 Healthline. (2024, January 26). Flaxseed: 9 Health Benefits and How to Eat.

21 Harvard Health Publishing. (2020, May 1). Seed of the month: Sunflower. Harvard Health.

22 Bryant, L. (2017). Regenerative agriculture, part 2: Principles. Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

23 Kimmerer, R. W. (2013). Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants. Milkweed Editions.

24 Understanding Ag. (n.d.). Soil health principles with context. Retrieved from <https://understandingag.com/soil-health-principles-with-context/>

25 Bioneers. (2022). Decolonizing regenerative agriculture: An Indigenous perspective. Retrieved from <https://bioneers.org/decolonizing-regenerative-agriculture-indigenous-perspective/>

26 Jayaraman, R. (2022, January 21). A return to native agriculture. Civil Eats. Retrieved from <https://civileats.com/2022/01/21/a-return-to-native-agriculture/>

27 Rodale Institute. The Farming Systems Trial. Retrieved November 29, 2022, from <https://rodaleinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/fst-30-yearreport.pdf>

28 Almond Board of California. (2023). 2023 Almond Almanac. Retrieved from [https://www.almonds.com/sites/default/files/2023-12/Almanac\\_2023.pdf](https://www.almonds.com/sites/default/files/2023-12/Almanac_2023.pdf)

29 Wallace, J. M., Williams, A., Liebert, J., Barroso, J., & Barbercheck, M. (2022). Barriers and motivators for cover crop adoption: Evidence from Pennsylvania. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, 77(2), 198–209.

30 Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). (2012). Managing cover crops profitably (3rd ed.). SARE Outreach.

[31 Wallace, J. M., Williams, A., Liebert, J., Barroso, J., & Barbercheck, M. \(2022\). Barriers and motivators for cover crop adoption: Evidence from Pennsylvania. Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, 77\(2\), 198–209.](#)

[32 Jose, S. \(2009\). Agroforestry for ecosystem services and environmental benefits: An overview. Agroforestry Systems, 76\(1\), 1-10.](#)

[33 Marques, L. \(2023\). Final Report: Radio Project executed by PUR Projet in Bouaflé "Acting for Tomorrow" 2023/2024. PUR Projet.](#)

[34 Tamburini, G., Bommarco, R., Wanger, T. C., Kremen, C., van der Heijden, M. G. A., Liebman, M., & Hallin, S. \(2020\). Agricultural diversification promotes multiple ecosystem services without compromising crop yield. Science Advances.](#)

[35 Djuideu, C. T. L., Bisseleua, H. D. B., Kekeunou, S., & Ambele, F. C. \(2021\). Rehabilitation practices in cocoa agroforestry systems mitigate outbreaks of termites and support cocoa tree development and yield. Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment, 311, 107324.](#)

[36 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service. \(n.d.\). Underserved farmers and ranchers. <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/underserved-farmers-ranchers>](#)

[37 Crippa, M., Solazzo, E., Guizzardi, D. et al. Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions. Nat Food 2, 198–209 \(2021\)](#)



