SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE: THE SUPPLY CHAIN AT A GLANCE

Nitrogen fertilizer and soil management drives agriculture … and significant pollution within the retail industry. Retailers and food companies are in the sweet spot to engage with this issue, execute on goals and lead the way to a more sustainable agricultural system.

1 Retailers
2 Consumers
3 Distributors
4 Consumer Packaged Goods Companies
5 Grain Buyers
6 Agricultural Service Providers
7 Farmers
When retailers align their sustainability and business goals, they start a chain reaction with their suppliers, all the way down to the farmers who actually manage agricultural lands and have an impact on the ground. Getting suppliers on board means retailers will have a reliable supply of more sustainably grown food far into the future – and consumer demand for that is only going to increase, even in a changing climate.

The majority of consumers say they’re actively searching for more sustainable products these days, especially when it comes to food and personal care products. They reward brands they perceive as sustainable with loyalty – and more and more often, consumers reject brands they perceive as unsustainable.

When distributors see retailers actively enforcing sustainability goals, they will be quick to stock more of the products that fulfill those goals – so they can continue growing their business.

Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) companies can make a significant impact by collaborating with retailers, grain buyers and farmers to help everyone understand the benefits of more efficient fertilizer use and better soil health practices – and figure out how to get started.

If food companies lay out goals for more efficient fertilizer use and improved soil health, then grain buyers and elevator companies will work with their supply chains to stock up on grains that meet those goals. They’ll communicate the new standards to farmers and, by sourcing more grain from farmers who use fertilizer efficiently, they’ll create financial incentive for improvement. Each grain buyer and elevator can develop different programs and partnerships to incentivize practices that meet the expectations of food companies and consumers.

Agricultural Service Providers, such as crop consultants and agricultural input retailers, play a crucial role – they help farmers learn how to meet the goals set by retailers and food companies.

With resources and support from retailers, CPG companies and ag services providers, farmers are better equipped to produce grain that meets those companies’ sustainability goals. Meeting those goals also benefits the farmers themselves – they’ll reap cost savings and improve resiliency. The environment benefits, too.