

CIRCULAR TRANSITION INDICATORS

CASE STUDIES



Organization Name:
Sovena

Industry:
Food industry

Number of employees:
1,051

Annual revenue:
EUR 1, 072 million

Website:
www.sovenagroup.com



Working towards a more circular economy is critical to ensure that we can continue feeding the future. At Sovena, we are committed to improve not only the efficiency of our processes but also to reduce our waste flows, converting them into new resources for other industries. The continuous monitoring of our performance is essential to identify new goals and opportunities.



João Basto,
New Ventures & Sustainability Director, Sovena

Why are circular metrics interesting to your company?

Sovena is a Portuguese family company, leader in seed and olive oils, with a strong international presence. Produce food in an increasingly sustainable, efficient and circular way are important pillars of our 2021-2023 sustainability strategy. Our activity integrates all steps of the value chain and having circular processes impacts both the preservation of the planet resources and the economic viability of our business. Circular metric tools are important instruments to evaluate our processes, allowing us to monitor our evolution in the process of “closing the loop” and identifying goals for improvement.

Key challenges

We run the CTI assessment on our FULA sunflower oil, present in every Portuguese home for over fifty years and recognized for its high quality.

The collection of information involved a multidisciplinary team, with the participation of the sustainability department, the marketing department, and the production and environmental area of our extraction and packaging plants.

Having the input and output flows well mapped simplified the process. The main obstacle we found was the lack of information about the collection and recycling of used cooking oils in Portugal, which forced us to adopt the most conservative scenario in terms of outflows.

Solutions

To minimize the impacts of our extraction and packaging processes, we work continuously to improve the efficiency and circularity of our industrial processes.

The CTI framework is a user-friendly tool, with well-defined criteria, which allowed us to quantify the impact of the work we have been developing and to identify the areas we should act on to increase the circularity of our processes. Additionally, by encouraging the involvement of different areas within the organization, it fostered a transversal discussion on the importance of the topic.

Results

The use of renewable raw materials combined with our efforts at an industrial level and through searching for sustainable destinations for our by-products, allowed us to achieve a high rate of global circularity. We found that the uncertain and low recycling rate of used cooking oil is our main barrier to a more circular process. This insight reinforces the need to continue working with consumers - in coordination with other stakeholders - to raise awareness of the importance of used cooking oils collection and valorization.