

THE BUSINESS OF CARING

The multinational Strauss Group runs its business with an eye toward humanitarianism and the planet

The Strauss Group, a food and beverage multinational, places responsibility, improving quality of life globally and sustainability at its core. It's the reason the company invests in LEED-certified plants, addresses the global need for clean drinking water and has 60 percent of its global portfolio focused on healthy products.

"Because our business and our brands are influential, we choose to manage their impacts on people responsibly. Without transparency and consistent dialogue with stakeholders about how we run our business, we will be harmed, along with our customers and the entire world," says Ofra Strauss, Chairperson of the Group.

The second-largest food and beverage company in Israel, Strauss Group operates plants in 20 countries and employs nearly 14,000 people, and has delivered consistent growth for the past six years, with 2010 revenues of \$1.83 billion, of which 46 percent was generated outside of Israel.

Strauss is best known as the world's fifth-largest procurer of green coffee beans, and its other divisions include Strauss Water, Sabra, Strauss Israel and Max Brenner, the chocolatier.

Last year, in Virginia, Sabra, an international partnership with PepsiCo that's the market leader in fresh, healthy salads, hummus and spreads in the U.S., opened the group's first green plant. The plant is one of only a few food industry plants to earn the U.S. Green Building Council LEED Silver Award.

"Our business puts us in direct contact with fascinating and challenging subjects, most importantly sustainability, health, quality of life, and diversity and inclusion," Strauss says. The Sabra brand is one good example among many others. "We live in a multicultural country, so inclusion and diversity are a central focus for us, and we place them at the core of our activity in terms of employment and the development of new food categories," says Strauss. "The Sabra brand is about fresh, healthy dips and spreads that bring people and cultures together."

Strauss, who steered the company into globalization, says the group manages its business and corporate responsibility/sustainability agendas the same way: be consistent, seek the highest standards, constantly measure progress. "Corporate responsibility is a material part of our strategy, to the point where we are exploring businesses and investments through new parameters, aiming to build a company that helps improve the quality of people's lives."



Strauss Group Chairperson Ofra Strauss

This year the Strauss Group launched a dedicated website to better engage consumers and to extend the dialogue with its stakeholders regarding the responsibility of the company. The site houses a digital version of the annual sustainability report, "Driven by Responsibility." "Our goal is to talk less and listen more," says Strauss. "This site is an active and up-to-date CR arena, containing everything we do in terms of sustainability and responsibility."

A major initiative for the company is addressing the fact that 1 billion people worldwide drink polluted water, causing millions of deaths per year. Strauss Water has developed 10 patents for innovative water purification systems, including maze purification that removes bacteria, viruses, arsenic, lead, organic particles, sediments, coloring agents, odors and taste impurities, all without electricity or water pressure. Strauss Water does business in Britain and Israel, and last year teamed with home electronics giant Haier to provide quality drinking water solutions in China.

"Every person has the right to clean water," Strauss says. "Our entry to the water business is definitely a business step with extremely broad humane and environmental implications. We are making a genuine, important contribution to the issues that are humanity's top priority." •



Strauss

At the Heart of Corporate Social Responsibility