

Healthy planet, healthy pets



TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY IN THE VETERINARY PROFESSION

September 2025



“Environmental sustainability challenges are so complex that we cannot solve them alone. Cross-sector collaboration is critical to identify opportunities and solutions that will accelerate positive environmental impacts for our planet, and the people and pets depending on it.”

MARGO MOSHER, GLOBAL HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY,
MARS VETERINARY HEALTH

Special thanks to our funding partner, Mars Veterinary Health

We wish to express our sincere thanks to Mars Veterinary Health whose generous funding has made this publication possible. The global veterinary network's expertise and ongoing environmental sustainability leadership expands the reach of this critical topic and inspires action across the pet health sector.

MARS
Veterinary Health



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Toward sustainability together

STRENGTHENING COLLECTIVE EFFORTS FOR A HEALTHIER PLANET THROUGH SHARED ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY BEST PRACTICES

“It's becoming increasingly clear that the human-animal bond is not only mutually beneficial for people and pets – it is also essential for a healthy planet.”



At the Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI), we work to advance through science, education and advocacy, the vital role of the human-animal bond in the health and well-being of people, pets, cultures and communities. It is becoming increasingly clear that the human-animal bond is not only mutually beneficial for people and pets – it also helps support a healthy planet.

One Health, focusing on the interconnected health of people, animals and the environment, serves as an essential framework for the veterinary profession as we examine current approaches to sustainability and begin to chart a future course. This dynamic concept is influenced by many factors, but depends largely upon one of this community's greatest strengths – our collective commitment to the human-animal bond. That's why HABRI is honored to partner with a select group of veterinary leaders to share best practices on environmental sustainability so we can all strengthen our efforts by learning from one another and embracing shared goals for a more sustainable environment, healthier animals and healthier people.

Each of the companies contributing to this white paper is prioritizing environmental sustainability investments and has made significant gains along the journey. While the focus of this paper is on environmental sustainability and

associated activities such as waste reduction, energy and water usage, pharmaceutical stewardship, and stakeholder engagement, we acknowledge these efforts are often part of a broader view of sustainability. Companies profiled are also actively building a more sustainable future for the veterinary profession more broadly with such efforts as mental health and wellness programs, monetary educational support for aspiring veterinary professionals, and volunteer opportunities to support shelters and under-served communities.

Together, these organizations are strongly committed to the human-animal bond and to building a healthier future for all. Many thanks to Boehringer Ingelheim, Hill's Pet Nutrition, MVI Animal Health, Virbac Corporation, Zoetis, and our funding partner, Mars Veterinary Health.

I'm confident that no matter your role, this publication will serve as a meaningful resource. Whether you work in a small independent clinic, a non-profit organization, or support environmental strategy locally or globally – you will find valuable information you can apply to continue making a positive difference for our planet and the people and pets relying on it to thrive.

Steven Feldman
President, Human Animal Bond Research Institute (HABRI)

Striving for more

MANY BELIEVE THIS IS THE DECISIVE DECADE FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION, COMING TOGETHER IN INNOVATIVE AND MEANINGFUL WAYS TO STRIVE FOR MORE

In 1987, the United Nations Brundtland Commission introduced the concept of sustainable development, addressing environmental concerns with economic growth. It defined sustainability as 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. Fast forward to present day, and the idea of sustainable business practices has become a fundamental value and core strategy for many companies around the world.

There is broad awareness that the future well-being of humans, animals and the planet are inextricably linked – the concept of One Health – supported by growing expectations among stakeholders for stronger collective action.

There's increasing evidence that veterinary professionals are invested in environmentally sustainable care practices. A 2022 [study](#) published in the *Journal of Veterinary Medical Education* found 76% of veterinary clinic staff surveyed in the U.S. felt it is very important to know their clinic strives to be as environmentally sustainable as possible. In the U.K. a 2019 [survey](#) by the British Veterinary Association (BVA) found 89% of veterinarians desire to play a more active role in sustainability.

Similarly, pet owners are demanding greater levels of action and accountability. A [study](#) published in *Frontiers in Veterinary Science* revealed 65% of pet owners want to be informed about the efforts their veterinary clinic makes to reduce its environmental impacts. Additionally, clients would value some form of sustainability certification to aid in identification of such practices, and over 50% of pet owners would pay more for veterinary services at a clinic with reduced environmental impact. That number grows to approximately 65% for Generation Z, underscoring the purpose-based choices made by younger generations when it comes to doing business with companies whose values align with their own.

Veterinary professionals want to know their clinic is practicing sustainable medicine

Many believe this is the decisive decade for collective action with leaders coming together in innovative and meaningful ways to strive for more.



76%

of veterinary staff feel it's important to know their clinic strives to be as environmentally sustainable as possible

65%

of pet owners want to be informed about efforts their veterinary clinic makes to reduce environmental impacts



Veterinarians: a trusted advisor and powerful ally

Delivering on growing expectations from employees and pet owners will require participation from all stakeholders in the profession.

Veterinarians, however, are in a unique position to influence sustainable choices every single day. A 2025 survey of animal owners from Boehringer Ingelheim and Kynotec shows that veterinarians enjoy remarkable levels of trust. Given their deep medical expertise and the critical role they play in society, veterinarians share a relationship of respect and confidence with animal owners that gives them a unique vantage point. As such, they have the opportunity to promote more sustainable choices for their clients and local communities.

Here are just a few ways veterinarians can be powerful allies for animal owners and others who want to make sustainable choices.

- Support preventive care to reduce the threat of disease
- Advise on proper disposal and recycling of medicine and pet food packaging
- Provide information on pet foods that offer sustainable sourcing
- Promote responsible feeding and portion control to mitigate carbon footprint
- Implement sustainable green practices in clinics by installing recycling bins and energy efficient lighting, and sourcing sustainable clinic supplies
- Embrace opportunities to educate the next generation of veterinary professionals by encouraging environmental sustainability curriculum
- Provide educational workshops and outreach efforts focused on sustainability to amplify the message and support a culture of environmental responsibility

These topics and others will be further explored in this paper as we spotlight best practices and share a range of efforts taking hold across organizations.

95%

of animal owners trust veterinary professionals

91%

recognize them as essential or very important to society



The companies that have generously contributed to this white paper are implementing a variety of measures to improve environmental sustainability.

In the pages that follow we will spotlight specific company programs and best practices that can inform efforts across the broader veterinary profession.

Educational program



ACCELERATING SUSTAINABILITY AWARENESS AND ACTION WITH FIRST-IN-CLASS ACCREDITED SDX PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Boehringer Ingelheim aims to embed sustainability along the entire value chain, proactively looking for ways to accelerate sustainability awareness and action. For the Boehringer team in the U.S., this meant creating passionate sustainability advocates who are empowered to implement the company's global sustainability framework: Sustainable Development for Generations.

The framework is based on three pillars: MORE HEALTH to improve access to healthcare for humans and animals, MORE POTENTIAL to enable people and communities to realize their full potential and impact, and MORE GREEN to protect the well-being of the planet.

The team understood that to implement the global sustainability framework in everyday action they would need a formalized employee effort that provided specific sustainability knowledge and was aligned to strategic business outcomes.

In early 2024 the U.S. team sought out an academic partner to help build a robust, pedagogically-sound program they called Sustainable Development Excellence, or SDX. The University of Georgia's Terry

College of Business in Athens, Georgia, was selected and together, they established the program's learning objectives: develop a sustainable mindset among participants by creating awareness about relevant sustainability topics; help participants translate theory into practical actions they can implement through their role at Boehringer; and foster a cultural shift to embed sustainability into the organization.

The team understood that to implement the global sustainability framework in everyday action they would need a formalized employee effort.

Interest in the program is strong and applications are open to employees at any level with a passion for sustainability and who have manager approval to apply for the program. Thirty-one participants completed SDX in 2024. A second cohort of 38 participants graduated in June 2025, and given the tremendous results, the program will return in 2026.

“

We want to build a network of empowered sustainability champions within Boehringer who can create change and lead by example within their functions. And because we believe sustainability initiatives gain momentum through collaboration, we've made the model open and accessible in hopes of inspiring similar efforts in the industry.”

KELLY ROTKEWICZ,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABILITY, BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM

To maximize relevance, the content is anchored in Boehringer's sustainable development framework and follows a blended learning approach with live sessions, virtual intersessions, self-paced e-portal learning and hands-on small-group projects. Lessons are taught both by University of Georgia faculty members who bring subject matter expertise on sustainability topics and Boehringer leaders who bring the content to life with practical examples from within the company.

To receive the accredited certification, employees must fully participate in the classes, pass a knowledge assessment, and successfully complete a capstone strategic team project based on advancing the company's sustainability goals. Project challenges include topics like "How might we use eco-design principles to establish a medical device takeback model?" Upon completion,

participants are expected to evaluate each module to ensure relevance and program quality.

In an industry where intellectual property is often closely guarded, Boehringer is sharing its SDX model and insights to drive collective progress on some of the world's pressing sustainability challenges.

"We want to build a network of empowered sustainability champions within Boehringer who can create change and lead by example within their functions," said Kelly Rotkewicz, Executive Director of Sustainability. "And because we believe sustainability initiatives gain momentum through collaboration, we've made the model open and accessible in hopes of inspiring similar efforts in the industry."

- ✓ Class ratings averaged 4.7 out of 5 with all modules scoring 4.5 or better.
- ✓ 31 people completed the program in June 2024 and have engaged 4,255 additional people through their outreach achieving a remarkable 1:140 reach ratio.
- ✓ One SDX team identified a substantial savings opportunity to reduce animal health product returns, not for quality issues but because of ordering errors or logistical challenges. Another team proposed an equipment "marketplace" swap program, aiming to cut landfill waste by thousands of pounds and save millions of dollars.
- ✓ Learn more about the [SDX Program](#).





Additional actions for impact at Boehringer Ingelheim

CARBON NEUTRAL OPERATIONS

In 2024, the company's Fulton, Georgia, site achieved carbon neutrality, their 3rd in the U.S. and 14th globally to achieve this milestone as part of their commitment to achieving carbon neutrality across all operations (Scope 1 and 2) by 2030.

LEED CERTIFICATION

The state-of-the-art Animal Health Global Innovation facility in Athens, Georgia, achieved Silver LEED certification, becoming the first Boehringer Ingelheim building in the U.S. to earn this prestigious designation.

SAVE A HEART

Boehringer Ingelheim supports the Greater Good Charities Save a Heart program, which aims to reduce euthanasia in overcrowded animal shelters. More than 15,000 at-risk shelter pets from the South have been successfully transported to new homes on the East and West Coasts.

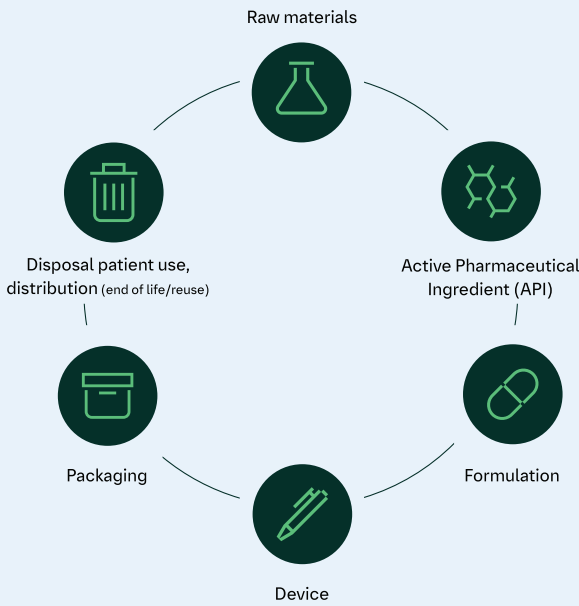
MEDICINES FOR ANIMALS IN NEED

In 2024, Boehringer Ingelheim Cares Foundation partnered with Greater Good Charities, to distribute over 2 million doses of medicines to underserved communities and those impacted by disasters.

Applying eco-design principles to animal medicine

Animal medicines play a vital role in improving the health and well-being of animals. The animal health industry strives to maximize the life-changing benefits of animal medicines while minimizing the environmental footprint.

To accelerate action on the topic, Boehringer Ingelheim has identified sustainable medicines as a key priority program that focuses to apply the principles of eco-design and green chemistry to its R&D projects and products. Eco-design aims to incorporate eco-friendly choices into product design and development with the goal of reducing the environmental footprint throughout all stages of a medicine's lifecycle from the raw materials for making the drug substance, the drug product, the device and packaging, all the way to distribution of the medicine and patient use. The company is using a number of [tools](#) to ensure eco-design becomes part of product R&D, including an Eco-design Playbook, the industry's first advanced green chemistry metric, and an open sciences portal.



Green building design



IN OCTOBER 2024 HILL'S UNVEILED ITS NEW 'SMART' PLANT IN TONGANOXIE, KANSAS, A SHOWCASE IN GREEN BUILDING DESIGN

When Hill's Pet Nutrition, a division of Colgate-Palmolive, needed to expand the company's production capacity for canned pet food, it decided to set a new standard in traditional pet food manufacturing – one that would be kinder to the planet.

Alongside design firm Gray, and in partnership with local utilities and state government, Hill's incorporated sustainability principles into the facility's design and construction from the outset of the project. At the same time, it prioritized the latest in automation, robotics and innovative technologies to enhance safety and labour efficiency. The result is an award-winning plant that is LEED Gold certified – the first site within Colgate-Palmolive operations to achieve that standard.

"Tonganoxie is designed to be kind to the planet and the people that work here. It uses fewer resources while creating a healthier work environment," said Noel Wallace, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Colgate-Palmolive.

The 365,000-square-foot "smart" facility is home to 100 employees and produces more than 170 varieties of wet pet food. The design principles reflected the full spectrum of environmental concerns, including energy usage, carbon footprint, water quality and quantity, waste reduction, minimized transportation, eco-friendly materials, and indoor air quality.

The Tonganoxie plant is the first site within Colgate-Palmolive operations to achieve LEED Gold certified standard.

A primary feature of the plant is a state-of-the-art water reclamation system that reduces water usage. It harvests rainwater and wastewater to be recycled and repurposed for future use – a significant savings considering the importance of water to wet food processing.



“Tonganoxie is designed to be kind to the planet and the people that work here. It uses fewer resources while creating a healthier work environment.”

NOEL WALLACE, CHAIRMAN & CEO,
COLGATE-PALMOLIVE

Another innovative feature is the deliberate use of vertical space to leverage gravity to move raw materials through the processing stages, avoiding the need to use power while delivering energy savings. It also boasts high-efficiency wall materials and windows that minimize heat transfer, high-efficiency LED lighting, and recycling efforts throughout the operations.

Chad Sharp, director of manufacturing for the Hill's Tonganoxie plant, said, "We were committed to create a new standard for the future of our organization, and with this plant design, we found a way to embrace sustainability alongside operational excellence that will live on past all of our time here in Tonganoxie."

74%

of construction waste diverted from landfill for reuse or recycling

1,000+

motors running at peak efficiency with variable-frequency drives (VFD)

Water reclamation

20

gallons per minute for reuse in non-potable processes

Zero permanent irrigation for

100%

elimination of outdoor water use

Low-flow plumbing using gray water system in restrooms for

65.98%

water savings

Condensing

95%

efficient hot water boilers for space heating





Additional actions for impact at Hill's Pet Nutrition

PACKAGING INNOVATION

In 2024, Hill's was awarded a Gold Award for Sustainability for a new pet food flexible packaging portfolio developed by Berry Global, Inc. and Peel Plastic Products Ltd. using certified circular plastic. Since 2019 Hill's has been using recyclable corrugated boxes made with 65% recycled content, and 70% of Hill's global packaging (by weight) has been recyclable.

CLIMATE-SMART PRACTICES

Hill's Pet Nutrition and Riceland Foods, Inc. partner to incentivize Riceland farmer-members to grow rice using climate-smart practices as part of the 2024 Riceland Carbon Ready™ program.

INVESTMENT IN ALTERNATIVE PROTEINS

Hill's continuously explores new technologies to provide more sustainable ingredient solutions for pet nutrition, such as proteins developed through fermentation, through their ongoing partnership with Bond Pet Foods.

INGREDIENT SOURCING

Hill's is focused on responsibly sourcing ingredients, ensuring traceability and certification from organizations like the Marine Stewardship Council, Marine Trust and Friends of the Sea, to meet quality and sustainability standards.

Proteins with a purpose – best-practice sharing

In 2023, Hill's Pet Nutrition introduced a new formula in the U.S. for its popular Science Diet Sensitive Stomach & Skin line, which includes sustainably sourced MSC-Certified Pollock in the dog and cat recipes and innovative insect protein in the dog recipe. MSC-certified pollock is a traceable ingredient from a sustainable fishery with a 1% bycatch rate that meets requirements across three principles: only fishing healthy stocks, being well-managed so stocks can be fished long-term, minimizing their impact on other species and the wider ecosystem. The company's innovative insect protein, used in the dog recipe only, is raised in North America and offers pet owners another alternative source of fiber and beneficial nutrients.



We selected these proteins with purpose because they promote optimal digestive and skin health for pets, while also keeping sustainability top of mind. This innovative approach to ingredients is part of our guiding philosophy, which includes delivering science-led nutrition, bringing people and pets together, and helping the planet for the next generation."

NICK ROZZI, VICE PRESIDENT OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, HILL'S PET NUTRITION

Anesthetic gas capture pilot

MARS Veterinary Health

PROMISING FIRST-OF-ITS KIND ANESTHETIC GAS CAPTURE TECHNOLOGY IN VETERINARY MEDICINE

Did you know that, during a typical anesthetic procedure, less than 5% of the volatile anesthetic agent delivered to a patient is absorbed and metabolised – leaving approximately 95% of the volatile anesthetic – harmful greenhouse gases – to be exhaled?

As a leading global provider of veterinary care, Mars Veterinary Health, through its U.K. veterinary group Linnaeus and in partnership with Waltham Petcare Science Institute, piloted a first-of-its-kind partnership with SageTech Veterinary to introduce an innovative anesthetic gas capture solution that helps prevent harmful greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere. The innovative technology is now being used in 17 Linnaeus clinics in the U.K. and resulted in a pioneering research [study](#) with the University of Nottingham published in the *British Journal of Anesthesia*.

"Anesthesia enables veterinary professionals to perform life-saving procedures for pets, but studies show up to 95% of volatile anesthetic gas delivered to a patient during a typical anesthetic procedure is exhaled and released into the atmosphere," said Margo Mosher, Global Head of Sustainability, Mars Veterinary Health. "Anesthetic gases can be 530 times more potent than carbon dioxide, thus,

they contribute to climate change and therefore are critical to address as part of our carbon footprint. As a leading provider of veterinary medicine, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to find solutions to help minimize a veterinary clinic's overall greenhouse gas emissions – at scale."

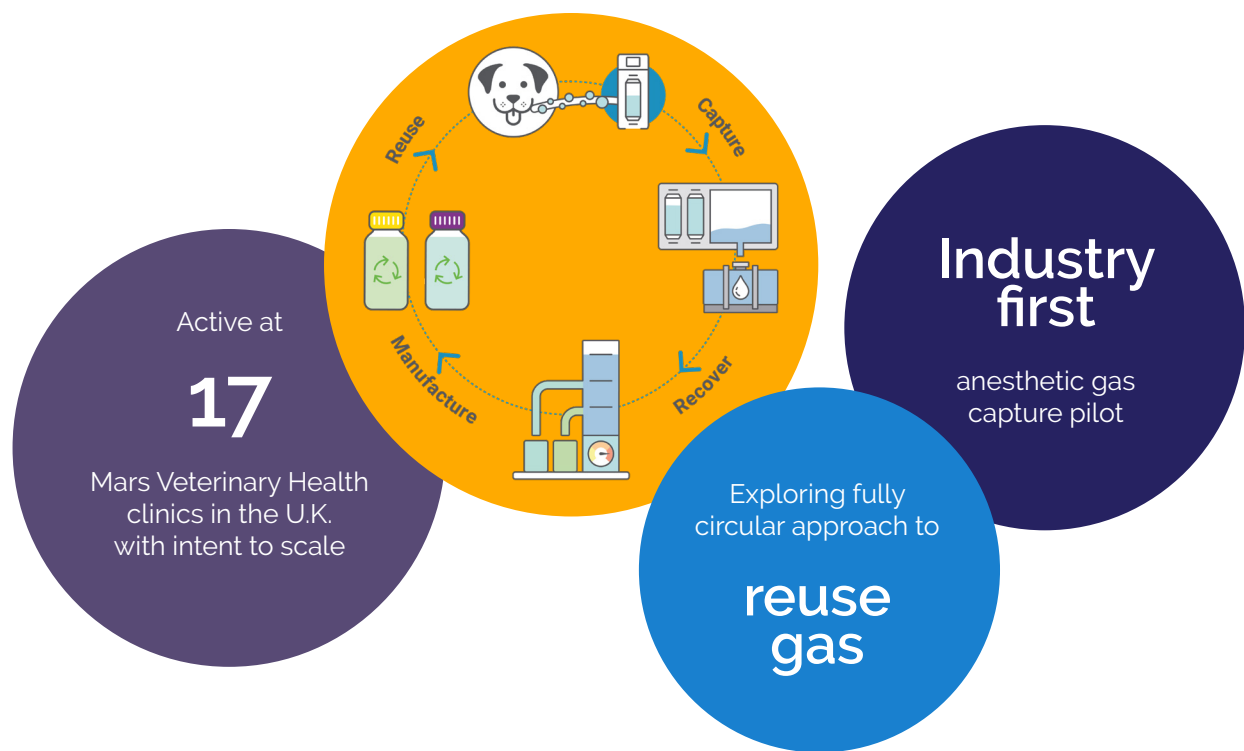


Dr. Ellie West and the team pioneering sustainable practices in veterinary medicine.

“

Anesthesia enables veterinary professionals to perform life-saving procedures for pets, but studies show up to 95% of volatile anesthetic gas delivered to a patient during a typical anesthetic procedure is exhaled and released into the atmosphere. A greenhouse gas that can be 530 times more potent than carbon dioxide, anesthetic gas contributes to climate change and therefore is critical to address as part of our carbon footprint."

MARGO MOSHER, GLOBAL HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY, MARS VETERINARY HEALTH



Although anesthetic agents contribute just 3-5% of a veterinary clinic's total greenhouse gas emissions, they are a direct emission from healthcare provision which previously had few options available for reduction.

SageTech's trusted gas capture technology – which is currently used in human healthcare – works by capturing the waste anesthetic agent breathed out during a procedure by safely absorbing it into a specially developed reusable canister. These waste anesthetic agents can then be extracted from the filter, avoiding current routes for disposal of volatile anesthetic agents of incineration, landfill, or release into the atmosphere, and opening the eventual possibility of reuse of the drug. The canisters can generally be reutilized for up to ten years.

In partnership with Linnaeus, the Waltham Petcare Science Institute, and the University of Nottingham, Mars Veterinary Health's global sustainability team conducted a clinical research study led by Dr. Ellie West, anesthetist and environmental sustainability lead, on the innovative gas capture technology, collecting data during routine anesthetic veterinary procedures.

Together with Waltham researchers, ethics colleagues, and data analysts, a proof-of-concept study found that, on average, 75% of the anesthetic agent delivered to pet patients was captured.

Initial findings showed over 75% of anesthetic agent delivered to the patients could be captured, on average.

While the technology is currently in use at 17 Linnaeus clinics in the U.K., Mars Veterinary Health is assessing the potential for broader implementation across its global care network.

"It's an honor to advance high-quality, sustainable veterinary medicine and share our research findings with the broader veterinary community," said Mosher. "Together, we can innovate, collaborate and make the sustainable choice the easy choice for veterinary professionals around the world."



Additional Actions for Impact at Mars Veterinary Health

SOURCING RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mars Veterinary Health is sourcing 100% renewable electricity for 2,300+ clinics across the U.S. and U.K..

TRAVEL IMPACTS

To address the travel impacts of in-person meetings, Mars Veterinary Health planted nearly 25,000 trees in 2024 with the support of One Tree Planted to support reforestation and biodiversity.

RECYCLING

Company Associates' collected more than 18,000 pet food packs for recycling across the U.S. and U.K. between 2023 and 2024 through flexible plastic recycling initiatives.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Given most GHG emissions in healthcare come from the supply chain, in 2024 the company delivered climate transition training to several top suppliers.

A more sustainable future for veterinary medicine

Mars Veterinary Health's approach to sustainability focuses on three key areas:

- 1 Climate change, including achieving net zero emissions by 2050 as part of the Mars Sustainable in a Generation Plan
- 2 Waste reduction, including employing circular approaches to reduce waste and increase reuse and recycling
- 3 Pharmaceutical stewardship, to promote high-quality care through responsible use of drugs and protect the efficacy of antimicrobials for pets and their owners – now and in the future



Learn more in the Mars Veterinary Health 2024 environmental sustainability [report](#).

Reusable tote packaging

MWI Animal Health®
cencora

**MWI'S REUSABLE TOTE PROGRAM IS CHANGING THE GAME
FOR VETERINARY CLINICS AND THE PLANET**

MWI Animal Health, part of Cencora, is on a mission to protect customers' bottom lines as well as the planet. The company has launched a major initiative in the U.S., building upon successful efforts in the U.K. where MWI has been delivering using reusable totes for several years.

The program targets both dry shipments as well as those that require refrigeration or freezing, shipped via a dedicated courier partner. Orders are placed into reusable packaging that reduces the need for single-use cardboard boxes, Styrofoam containers and other protective padding. The potential impact for MWI and the planet is significant considering the company uses roughly 1.2 million single-use Styrofoam coolers across its network annually.

Since its launch in January 2024, the U.S. reusable tote program has been adopted by 2,300 customers in the U.S. including Mars Veterinary Health, a founding partner of this initiative with 61% of its locations already using totes. So far, MWI's reusable totes represent 10% of monthly shipped packages, and the company has nearly eliminated single-use cardboard and Styrofoam in deliveries to these customers.

"Not only does this cut down on waste, but it also saves veterinary practices valuable time and physical effort that would've been spent breaking down and throwing out disposable packaging," said Julia Loew, MWI's Chief Commercial Officer.

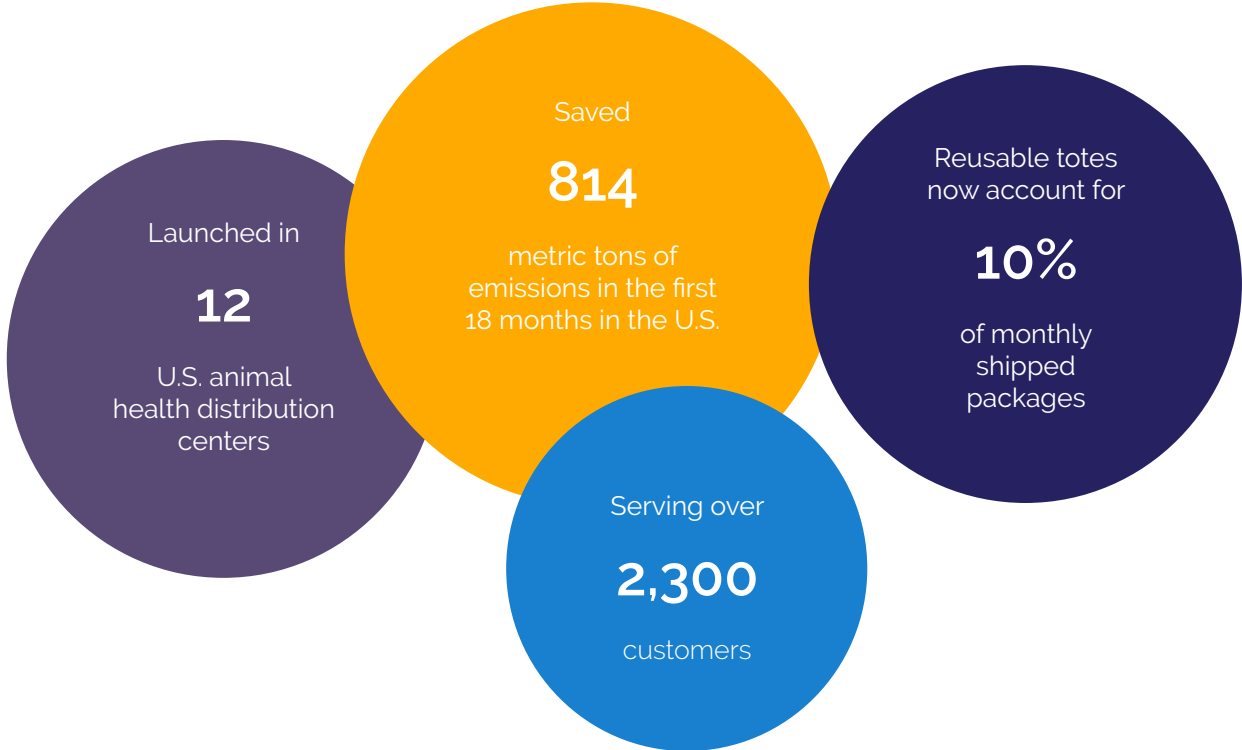
Since its launch, the U.S. reusable tote program has been adopted by 2,300 customers and has nearly eliminated single-use cardboard and Styrofoam in deliveries to these customers.

The demand from customers continues to grow. What started as a pilot project in one facility has grown to 12 distribution centers and has already saved 814 metric tons of CO2 emissions in its first 18 months. This is equivalent to the emissions from two million miles driven in a passenger car.

“Seeing the sustainable impact of our efforts, and knowing we've minimized substantial waste in the environment, is deeply rewarding and makes me incredibly proud.”

MICHAEL LANGFORD, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS,
MWI ANIMAL HEALTH ORLANDO DISTRIBUTION CENTER





"Seeing the sustainable impact of our efforts, and knowing we've minimized substantial waste in the environment, is deeply rewarding and makes me incredibly proud," said Michael Langford, Director of Operations, MWI Animal Health Orlando Distribution Center, where the program was first implemented.

MWI is also exploring how its sustainable tote delivery program can be a solution to help its large manufacturer partners achieve their sustainability goals. Under this initiative, those partners send their product in bulk to MWI distribution centers where it can be shipped in a reusable tote to shared customers. By partnering on tote delivery, MWI can help its suppliers eliminate single-use containers and reduce the number of deliveries a hospital receives, further having a positive impact on emissions and reducing the time spent receiving orders.

"Many of our partners ship direct to our veterinary customers via single use Styrofoam and cardboard containers," said Loew. "Due to our position in the supply chain, we are able to make resources and capabilities available for large manufacturer partners and suppliers as their products flow through MWI's system," Loew continued. "This unique position is a gamechanger for sustainability solutions."



Additional Actions for Impact at MWI Animal Health

AUTO PACKER

MWI's distribution centers utilize auto packer technology that processes an order every eight seconds and places orders into custom-fit cartons which require less cardboard and no padding thereby reducing packaging waste.

EV FLEET

In the U.K., 5% of MWI's delivery fleet is currently electric, emitting zero nitrogen oxides and reducing their CO₂ footprint by 87.15 tons per year.

GREENER SUPPLIES

Sustainable products are available on mwiah.com such as Securos Surgical biodegradable Instrument Prep-Clean Foaming Spray, Nova-Tech IV fluids in PVC free bags, and VetOne Biodegradable Nitrile Exam Gloves. Since the program's launch in January 2025, over 4,700 customers have purchased over 145,000 boxes of gloves!

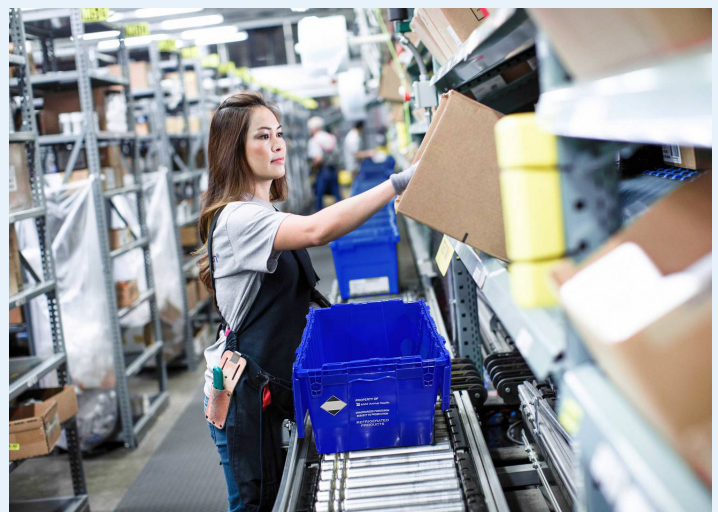
INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Partnered with the Veterinary Sustainability Alliance, Mars Veterinary Health and Zoetis to identify ways clinics can reduce their carbon footprint.*

Order consolidation makes a difference

MWI's order consolidation allows customers to place orders anytime, while limiting the picking and packing process to twice a week. This approach results in more densely packed boxes, fewer boxes and coolers used, and reduced emissions from fewer shipments – all contributing to greater operational efficiency and a positive environmental impact.

The program has been ongoing since its pilot in 2020, where MWI saw a 19% reduction in packaging, saved 146,424 pounds of cardboard, 1,245 trees and 315,161 pounds of carbon dioxide emissions from delivery vehicles. Veterinary practices participating in order consolidation reported that they saved up to 40% of the time they previously spent managing inventory.



*Sustainability Rx: A guide to reducing your practice's carbon paw print, August 21, 2023

Reducing cardboard consumption and waste



BY DISCONTINUING THE USE OF INDIVIDUAL CARDBOARD DISPLAYS FOR TOOTHPASTE, VIRBAC CHALLENGED INDUSTRY NORMS AND MATERIALLY REDUCED PACKAGING WASTE

Overpackaging is a problem faced by most manufacturers, generating waste that pollutes landfills, can be harmful to wildlife and damage ecosystems, and the use of valuable resources that are consumed to produce packaging materials in the first place.

Efforts to minimize packaging can be further complicated by long-standing beliefs about how to pack, wrap, display and ship products. However, by challenging traditional thinking around packaging, Virbac discovered powerful synergies between cost efficiencies and environmental stewardship.

It all started with a project that originally targeted cost savings associated with toothpaste display packaging. Within Virbac, historically, toothpaste products were packaged with individual cardboard display boxes. A dedicated operator was needed to manually load six individual folding toothpaste cartons into each display, which was a significant bottleneck in the processing line. As part of continuous improvement, it was identified as an opportunity to reduce operational costs by adjusting this labor-intensive and material-heavy step

in the packaging process. However, it soon became apparent to the project team that there was an equally important opportunity to minimize Virbac's environmental footprint by reducing the manufacturing, and subsequent discarding, or unnecessary cardboard display packages.

The project delivered tangible environmental improvements, most notably the reduction in cardboard waste, both in the consumption of virgin materials and the volume sent to landfills.

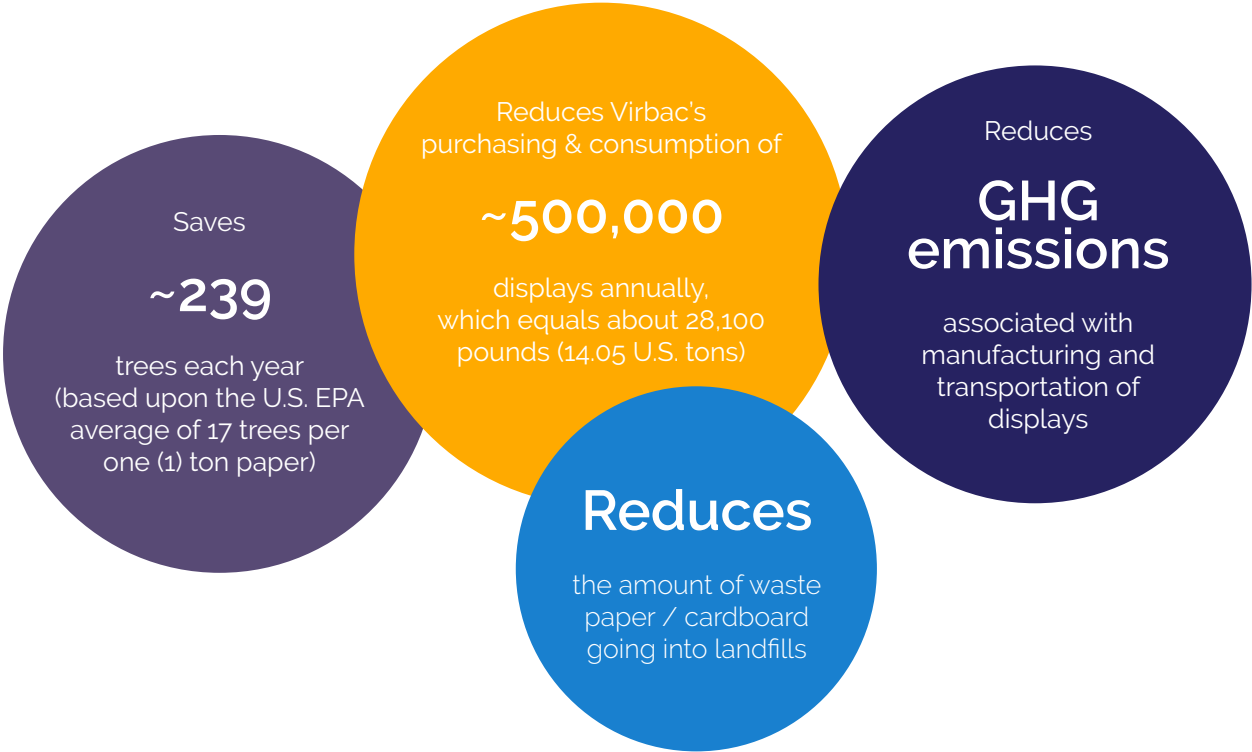
For years, anecdotal evidence and market observations consistently indicated that customers typically removed the toothpaste tubes from the displays immediately upon purchase, making the displays redundant. And while this was inherently known, conventional thinking stood in the way of substantial change, until a cross-functional project team was assigned to think innovatively and globally about both efficiency and sustainability.

“

By challenging long-standing practices and embracing a mindset of continuous improvement, we're not only shaping the future of animal health but also crafting the blueprint for a more sustainable world, together.”

GIOVANNI ABRUZZINI,
PRESIDENT AND CEO, VIRBAC NORTH AMERICA





Teams from various departments, including operations, supply chain and marketing worked together to assess the opportunity and identify a creative solution. Rather than redesign the displays, they chose to eliminate them completely and remove the display assembly step entirely from the packaging process.

Given Virbac's international operations, a global approach was critical. The team coordinated with various regional markets to ensure a standardized implementation and minimize disruptions.

The project yielded significant positive outcomes, including cost savings associated with materials for the cardboard displays and labor for their assembly. It delivered tangible environmental improvements,

the most significant being the reduction in cardboard waste, both in the consumption of virgin materials and the volume of waste sent to landfills. It achieved its goals on operational efficiency, delivering faster throughput and better resource allocation.

"At Virbac, we believe sustainability isn't just a goal; it's a continuous journey of questioning, innovating, and improving not only the physical environment but the professional environment of veterinarians and their healthcare teams," said Giovanni Abruzzini, President and CEO, Virbac North America. "By challenging long-standing practices and embracing a mindset of continuous improvement, we're not only shaping the future of animal health but also crafting the blueprint for a more sustainable world, together."



BEFORE



AFTER



Additional actions for impact at Virbac

RECYCLED PACKAGING

Revived their range of shampoos and a hygiene product with recycled packaging.

SUSTAINABLE HEALTH SUPPLEMENT

Launched a new joint health supplement in more than 28 countries (Europe and Asia), which incorporates ingredients from a sustainable culture (krill meal with MSC label), packaged with 25% recycled material.

REDUCING WASTE

Reduced packaging by 20% for small pet food formats (3 kg packages and under).

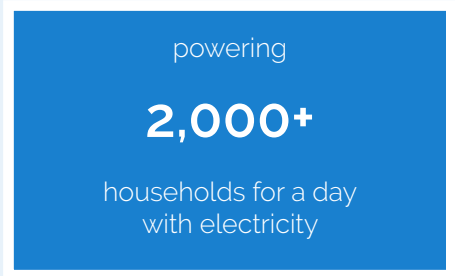
PRODUCT INNOVATION

Stopped marketing single chewable strips in France while developing recyclable alternatives.

Virbac’s waste to energy program delivers impact

At Virbac’s St. Louis plant, solid waste with low BTU values is mixed and burned with trash and other industrial waste. As the fire is burning, water or liquid waste (for example shampoos) is sprayed on top of the burning material to generate steam, which is in turn used to generate electricity.

One drum of waste can create enough electricity to supply two homes for a day; a gaylord or skid of solid products would create 4x the electrical supply or 8 households a day. Based upon the 2024 waste shipments, Virbac could power 2178 households for a day with electricity!



Sustainability strategy development



DRIVEN TO CARE – ZOETIS SET SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES BY ENGAGING WITH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

When Zoetis embarked on its sustainability journey, they cast a wide net to ensure their priorities and targets would resonate deeply with stakeholders. Their comprehensive approach resulted in Driven to Care, a strategy that is built around three pillars: Communities, Animals, and the Planet, and one that offers a framework for organizations of any size that want to integrate sustainability goals into business operations.

"From the beginning, we emphasized purposeful partnerships with customers, colleagues, communities and industry collaborators," said Shari Westerfeld, VP U.S. Sustainability Customer Engagement. "We didn't want a few people in a room setting targets and timelines, but rather deep conversations with our stakeholders that would reveal what truly mattered to them."

Zoetis used surveys, interviews, and industry benchmarking to engage 300 individuals across 8 stakeholder groups, taking the time to understand expectations as well as business relevance. They asked stakeholders to rank sustainability-related topics, and because inputs varied

and included broad perspectives from veterinarians, livestock producers, investors, colleagues (employees) and suppliers, Zoetis developed a robust materiality assessment to help plot the feedback and prioritize goals.

To get started, Zoetis asked stakeholders to rank sustainability-related topics to ensure that its priorities were both impactful and aligned to stakeholder values.

The next step was to create a visual map of internal and external stakeholder input, which they evaluated against the potential impact on Zoetis' business. The team aligned these with global frameworks like the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB), and Taskforce on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), which are leading global frameworks for sustainability reporting that aim to standardize sustainability disclosures, enhancing comparability and transparency for stakeholders.

“Our approach is rooted in our desire to create long-term value for partners and build trust with a wide range of stakeholders so we can accelerate positive impact together.”

SHARI WESTERFELD,
VP U.S. SUSTAINABILITY CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT, ZOETIS



The outcome was a materiality matrix that highlighted key focus areas such as access to veterinary care, innovation, animal welfare, employee well-being, and environmental impacts. This assessment laid the groundwork for Zoetis' long-term sustainability strategy, Driven to Care, and helped ensure that their efforts were both impactful and aligned with stakeholder values.

"One of our strategic priorities at Zoetis is to advance sustainability in animal health for a better future. An important way we are making this happen is by listening to our customers to truly understand their needs, deliver progress on topics that are important to them, and add value in helping them achieve their own sustainability goals," said Westerfeld.

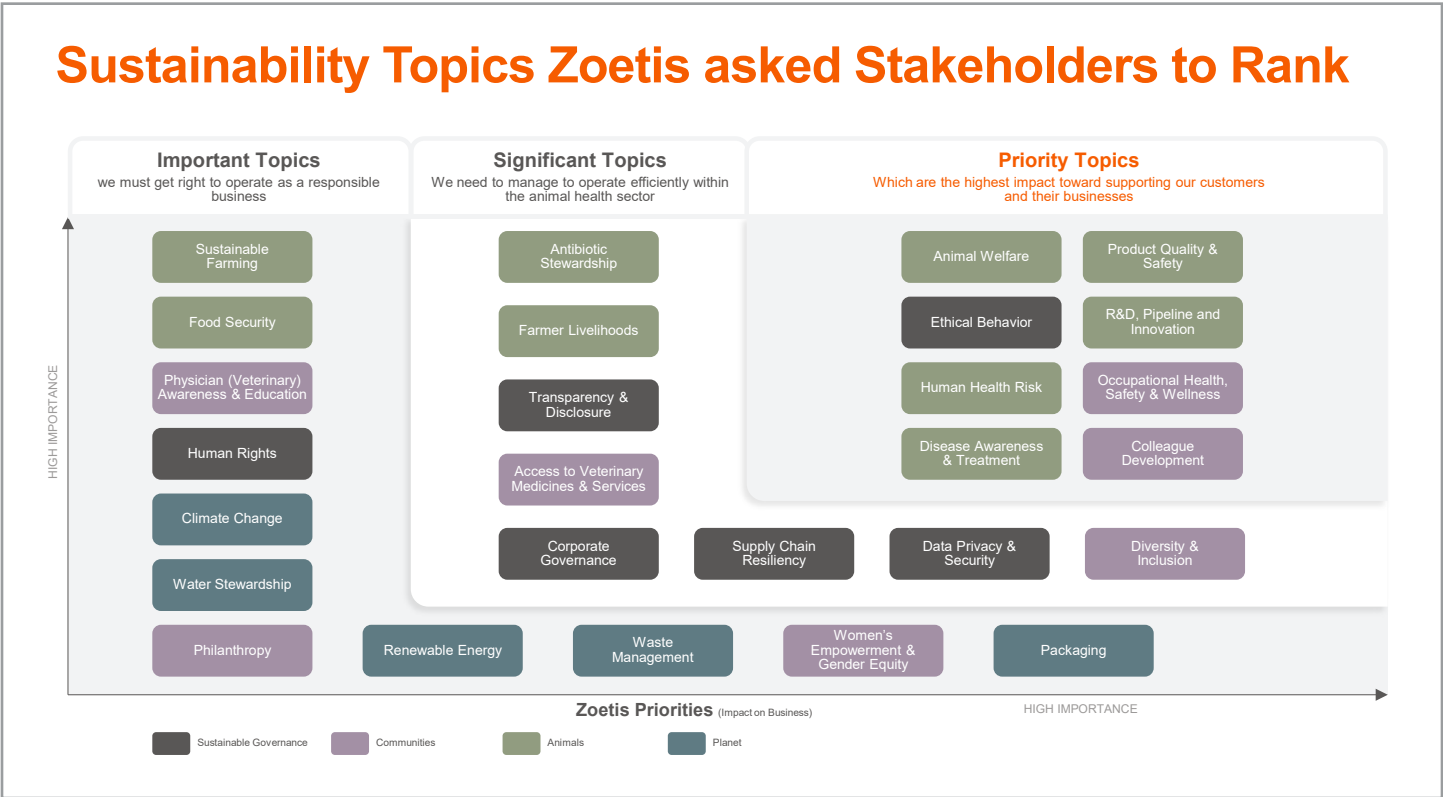
Stakeholder feedback, including insights from customers, highlighted opportunities to better engage local teams across Zoetis offices and sites worldwide. In response, Zoetis has embedded sustainability into its operations across diverse functions, empowering these teams to lead local initiatives such as energy conservation and enhanced waste management. These efforts reflect a

broader commitment to continuous improvement, as teams actively seek new ways to support, recognize, and share innovative practices that strengthen the company's culture of sustainability.

To further engage its colleagues, every July Zoetis celebrates Purpose Month – a global initiative that brings employees together to reflect on and activate the company's core mission: to nurture our world and humankind by advancing care for animals. Over the years teams have volunteered in their communities to clean beaches, support local animal shelters, plant trees, and build bird boxes, insect hotels, and bat boxes for conservation groups.

"Our initiatives integrate sustainability into our culture at Zoetis, creating experiences that reflect who we are as an organization," said Westerfeld. "We've implemented a framework that is effective but also adaptable, offering a roadmap for teams to drive meaningful change."

Learn more about Zoetis' process and original materiality matrix in their [2020 Sustainability Report](#).





Additional actions for impact at Zoetis

THE ZOETIS FOUNDATION

\$26.2 million in grants distributed from 2021-2024 through the Zoetis Foundation, including funding for more than 1,800 veterinary student [scholarships](#).

INNOVATION AND ANTIMICROBIAL STEWARDSHIP

Supporting innovation and antimicrobial stewardship, in a large study, dogs receiving Apoquel® for atopic dermatitis required fewer antimicrobial courses for skin infection.*

PACKAGING

Replaced plastic clam shell packages with paperboard boxes for the [Vanguard®](#) Rabies vaccine in the U.S., cutting PVC plastic use by about 8 metric tons. Transitioned [Cerenia®](#) to a recycled paper pouch in the U.S., reducing its packaging footprint by an estimated 55 tons per year. In 2022, removed cotton from [Rimadyl®](#) chewable products packaging in seven markets worldwide, reducing an estimated 6,000 pounds per year.

SOURCING RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY

More than 80% of our global electricity demand is covered by renewable sources, including 15 manufacturing sites covered by 100% renewable [electricity](#).

How can your clinic get started on its sustainability journey?

- ✓

Seek input from key stakeholders such as clinic staff, clients, community members and partners, and ask them to rank what matters most to them. Use Zoetis 2020 Sustainability report materiality assessment as inspiration for who and what to ask.
- ✓

Align on themes, areas of impact and intersection points with your company's/clinic's priorities.

Set meaningful and achievable goals, including timeframe and metrics.
- ✓

Get creative with fun events – zero-waste week, DIY pet toy upcycling, and trivia games with eco-friendly prizes.
- ✓

Activate a "Green Team" focused on delivering quick wins to foster a culture of sustainability. Empower teams to ideate and drive meaningful actions that build momentum and show progress. A few ideas to get started – use energy saving checklists to ensure equipment is powered down or in standby mode when not in use; inventory management to avoid the potential for overstocking and waste from expired inventory; and consider transitioning to digital records to cut down on paper use and streamline workflows.
- ✓

Share progress updates at a regular cadence. Use a wall chart or digital dashboard to log energy savings, waste reductions, or staff participation. Share photos and celebrate wins – maybe even plant a tree in the team's name!

See our resources list at the back for ideas!

*Rynhoud et al. The effects of oclacitinib treatment on antimicrobial usage in allergic dogs in primary practice: an Australia wide case-control study. BMC Vet Res 18, 151 (2022)

A whole-of-industry approach for meaningful long-term impact

WHILE MANY PLAYERS IN THE ANIMAL HEALTH SECTOR HAVE MADE STRIDES IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL, THERE IS ROOM FOR STRONGER INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

Environmental sustainability in the veterinary sector is gaining traction, with several organizations guiding practices toward more sustainable operations. However, there remains limited cross-industry alignment on a clear global framework for comprehensive environmental sustainability action and reporting. Unlike sectors such as human pharma or food, there is no major global alliance driving shared environmental goals across the animal health supply chain. Players often follow their own Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) frameworks, making it hard to compare progress or hold each other accountable. Yet there is tremendous opportunity for sector stakeholders to align on priorities, potential solutions, and guide partners and suppliers toward a common vision.

While there currently isn't a single global standard, a few key initiatives, joint efforts and organizations are shaping the field, including [The Veterinary Sustainability Alliance](#) (VSA) which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to embedding environmental sustainability into the North American veterinary sector. They collaborate with the [American Veterinary Medical Association](#) (AVMA), and [Canadian Veterinary Medical Association](#) (CVMA), and are supported by many leading companies.

Globally, groups have emerged including [Vets for Climate Action](#) in Australia; and in the United Kingdom, [Vet Sustain](#)'s Environmental Sustainability Policy Guide is a widely recognized resource. It helps veterinary practices identify areas of environmental impact—like energy use, waste, and procurement—and set achievable sustainability targets. It also aligns with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Practice Standards Scheme, which includes an Environmental Sustainability Module.

The animal health sector plays a critical role in One Health—connecting human, animal, and environmental well-being. Increased collaboration would not only reduce environmental impacts but also help the industry better navigate regulatory shifts and climate-related risks.

Opportunities exist to embed these principles deeper within the industry across more of the global supply chain and align efforts to both accelerate understanding and impact. For its part, HABRI has found the level of cooperation and sharing in developing this white paper to be a strong signal that greater collaboration is possible.

“

Urgent environmental issues require profession-wide action. We hope that our support for this publication triggers stronger collaboration among industry leaders and serves as an invitation for every industry player – from clinicians to large corporations – to be bold enough to name and tackle our role in addressing the veterinary profession's environmental challenges together.”

MARGO MOSHER, GLOBAL HEAD OF SUSTAINABILITY, MARS VETERINARY HEALTH

A new model: inspiring an industry-wide effort

MOVING THE INDUSTRY FROM ISOLATED SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS TO STRUCTURED, SCALABLE, AND TRANSPARENT PROGRESS WILL TAKE A NEW MODEL AND COULD INCLUDE ANY OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING.

1

FOUNDING A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER GLOBAL COUNCIL

Purpose: Develop a charter and shared vision as well as voluntary environmental targets, audit protocols, reporting frameworks. This could include joint materiality assessments to focus efforts on what matters most to all stakeholders.

2

SETTING SHARED PRIORITIES

Purpose: Develop industry prioritization of topics, supported by a joint understanding on critical issues and strategies to tackle them. Example topics could include replacing single-use items with reusables, supporting low-carbon versions of medical supplies, improving GHG emissions accounting methodologies such as for Purchased Goods and Services, water and energy use, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing among others.

3

SUSTAINABLE CLINIC GUIDELINES

Purpose: Create a comprehensive checklist for the industry / certification offering clinics of every size specific and meaningful actions they can implement to improve environmental sustainability, along with resources to support these efforts.

4

INNOVATION ACCELERATION FUND

Purpose: Pooled investment for such things as green chemistry, alternative ingredients in pet food, sustainable packaging, more reusable products, renewable energy at manufacturing sites, and sustainable sourcing in global supply chains.

5

EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

Purpose: United by a universal commitment to the human-animal bond, deepen the global understanding and access to guidance and tools, support veterinary education on One Health and climate risks, engage policy-makers with a unified voice.

6

PUBLIC REPORTING & BENCHMARKING

Purpose: An industry online dashboard or index for annual sustainability goals and performance, best practice case studies, and collective industry footprint.

Common themes

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS WHITE PAPER REVEALED A NUMBER OF COMMON THEMES AND BEST PRACTICES THAT HAVE ENABLED ORGANIZATIONS TO CHAMPION IMPROVEMENTS AND EMBED ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS WITHIN THEIR PRACTICES.



LEADERSHIP FROM THE TOP

Senior-level buy-in and active endorsement is fundamental. It fosters a unified direction through a clear focus and vision, streamlines decision-making and boosts pride within the organization for environmental initiatives.



HARDWARE SUSTAINABILITY INTO ALL PROCESSES

Successful organizations align environmental sustainability goals with broader organizational goals and embed policies and practices throughout business target setting, measurement and accountability frameworks.



STRONG EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Engaging the entire workforce is essential to accelerating environmental efforts. Organizations are developing a number of approaches, including tailored educational programs, volunteer projects, sustainability-related research and development protocols, and easy-to-follow playbooks and checklists.



ONGOING STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Regular check-ins with stakeholders offer important points for reflection, input and alignment to ensure environmental sustainability efforts resonate with partners and are mutually beneficial, thereby improving their likelihood of adoption and success.



BEST PRACTICE SHARING

Several leading organizations are already aligning resources and partnering on environmental sustainability efforts. Continued improvement depends on proactive and ongoing best practice sharing among industry stakeholders.

As a sector, we are just at the beginning of our journey together. This decade is a critical time to mobilize the entire veterinary profession so that as a collective, we can create lasting and long-term improvements for our planet and the people and animals who depend on it.

Resources

GET INSPIRED BY VISITING ONLINE RESOURCES AND READING ANNUAL REPORTS FROM CONTRIBUTING COMPANIES

BOEHRINGER INGELHEIM

Boehringer Ingelheim's [sustainability web page](#)
Boehringer Ingelheim's [sustainability story hub](#)

HILL'S PET NUTRITION

Hill's Pet Nutrition [sustainability web page](#)
Hill's Pet Nutrition parent company, Colgate-Palmolive's, [website and report](#)

MARS VETERINARY HEALTH

Mars Veterinary Health [sustainability web page](#)
Mars Veterinary Health [sustainability report](#)

MWI ANIMAL HEALTH

MWI Animal Health's [sustainability web page](#)
MWI Animal Health's parent company, Cencora's, [corporate responsibility site](#) and [annual ESG report](#)

VIRBAC

Virbac's [sustainability web page](#)
Virbac's [2024 corporate social responsibility report](#)

ZOETIS

Zoetis [sustainability web page](#)
Zoetis [2024 sustainability progress update](#)

LEADERSHIP FROM THE TOP

HABRI is a 501(c)3 non-for-profit organization that funds scientific research on the human health benefits of companion animals; educates people about the important role of pets for personal and public health; advocates for policies to strengthen and grow pet ownership; and plays a key role in convening and organizing the pet care community to work together on important issues affecting our shared future.

HABRI has worked with many partners to advance the veterinary profession through the lens of the human-animal bond. For example, in partnership with Mars Veterinary Health, we conducted an [economic analysis](#) showing how the health benefits of pet ownership save the U.S. health care system \$23 billion annually. This analysis continues to be cited in conversations with policymakers, helping to make the case for pet-friendly legislation and more. Zoetis and HABRI collaborated on a [10-country survey](#) of pet owners and veterinarians demonstrating the strong connection between the human-animal bond and increased preventive and therapeutic veterinary care. These insights help underscore the importance of communicating and honoring the bond in veterinary practice to increase trust, rapport and compliance.

Convening the companies showcased in this white paper fulfills HABRI's commitment to the One Health framework, demonstrating how necessary it is to include environmental sustainability as a vital and connected element in the health of people and animals.

This white paper also serves as an invitation to the entire veterinary profession to join with HABRI and one another to learn, grow and take action for healthy pets, healthy people and a healthy planet.



habri.org

