

Sustainability Case Study 3

Engaging Stakeholders, Creating Impact

Singapore's leading "retailer with a heart" strikes a balance between doing good and doing well.



By

SEAH KIAN PENG

Group CEO, NTUC FairPrice Co-operative Limited

For over 40 years, FairPrice has stayed true to its social mission of moderating the cost of living. While doing so, we remain mindful of being a responsible corporate citizen by ensuring our efforts are sustainable through the four pillars of responsible retail, community care, sustainable environment and wonderful workplace.

FairPrice SME Suppliers Support & Development Programme

These days, customers are increasingly conscious of their dietary habits and are always looking to lead healthier lifestyles and improve their overall wellness. We complement these efforts by providing a broad selection of Healthier Choice Symbol and transfat-free products in our stores as well as promoting healthy eating initiatives and campaigns.

Besides caring for our customers, we extend our support to local small and medium enterprise (SME) suppliers in various ways. One is through the FairPrice SME Suppliers Support Development Programme, which helps SMEs reduce their cash flow pressures, provide market support, and build their business expertise and network. In addition, FairPrice regularly holds a "Made in Singapore" Fair to promote awareness of

locally-made products. In 2016 alone, we invested over a million dollars in these initiatives, helping over 300 SME suppliers.

Community Care

Other than making sure that daily necessities remain affordable for the masses, we also "Do Good" for our community.

One of the ways in which we do so is through the FairPrice Foundation. Launched in 2008, it is a nation-building and community-galvanising platform in which to do more for the poor and needy. To date, FairPrice has donated S\$108 million to FairPrice Foundation to support like-minded causes.

Beyond corporate philanthropy, we stay engaged with the community through the FairPrice Volunteers Programme, which encourages our employees to volunteer with charities. Since 2012, we have collectively contributed more than 5,000 volunteer hours on a yearly basis to a wide spectrum of social causes.



Sustainable Environment

As we grow our business, it is inevitable that our environmental impact become more significant. We look into ways where we can reduce this not only through changing our physical infrastructure but also continually engaging our customers to join us in our attempt to reverse climate change.



For instance, we adopted the Building and Construction Authority's Green Mark Scheme for Supermarket in 2012. Today, 26 of our stores are Green Mark stores with 21 of them awarded at least a gold rating.

On the same thread, we seek to reduce food waste by repackaging unsold but still perfectly wholesome food and selling them at a marked down price, through our "Great Taste Less Waste" programme. Since it piloted in May 2015, as much as 210,000 kilograms of fruits and vegetables were saved.

FairPrice donates \$20,000 worth of unsold grocery items every month to Food from the Heart, a non-profit charity that reaches out to the less fortunate by alleviating hunger through their food distribution programme. These initiatives have managed to reduce our food waste by about 45 per cent since it started.

FairPrice also encourages customers to reduce the use of plastic bags by giving out a 10-cent rebate when they "BYOB" (Bring Your Own Bag). Last year, the BYOB scheme helped saved over 10.9 million plastic bags.

Wonderful Workplace

We want to make FairPrice the best place to work for our employees. We employ nearly 10,000 people, all of whom are from diverse social backgrounds, ethnicity, religion, age and abilities. We provided our employees with over 210,000 hours of training in 2016 alone. We would support and fund the academic pursuits of those employees who wish to upgrade themselves.

While we strive to ensure competitive remuneration, we believe in retaining good employees through effective engagement via platforms such as internal communications, dialogues as well as recreational activities. For employees who have done well, we recognise and commend their achievements by awarding special badges, achievement certificates, overseas incentive trips, and FairPrice vouchers.

Our sustainability journey has unveiled a multitude of opportunities that allow us to develop internally and expand externally. We are optimistic of the times ahead and we look forward to working closely with our stakeholders as Singapore's leading retailer with a heart, here to make everyone's lives better. ■