



SUMMERDOWN

IMPACT REPORT

2021 - 2022



DISCOVER

A note from Jo	3
We're the Peppermint People	4
Our Mission	5
Reflecting on 2021-2022	6
B Corp	8
UN sustainability goals	11
Our Approach	12
Supply chain transparency	13
Sustainable ingredients sourcing	14
Sustainable packaging sourcing	15
Looking after land	16
Looking after people	18
Carbon footprint	19
Using our voice	20
Giving back	21
Where next?	22

A NOTE FROM JO

This, our first ever impact report, isn't so much about numbers, but more about our story, our approach and an insight into what makes us tick at Summerdown.

We are a small family farm and team, at the beginning of our B Corp journey. Though we're very proud of what we've already achieved, we are constantly learning how best to make business decisions which benefit people and place. We've been operating on the land for nearly 100 years and are now planning for the next 50 years to ensure we're always leaving the land in better condition than when we first started farming here.

*'There are no un-sacred places,
just sacred and desecrated places'*

Wendell Berry, poet

At our heart, we are a regenerative business – that is to say we work to make sure growth is never at the expense of people or place.

A regenerative approach recognises that everything is connected and importantly everything is either geared towards regeneration or (sadly) towards degradation.

Our whole business, not just our farming, is built on our regenerative principles.

We aim to be an operation which creatively restores all that the business comes into contact with:

Our suppliers

Our customers

Our team members

The land

Summerdown really is a very special place and we genuinely believe that what we are doing here is rather unique. Hopefully this report captures some of the areas where we're putting these principles into practice and also sets out our future goals.

Jo Colman,
Head of Sales & Marketing
and Sir Michael, our founder's Grandson



WE'RE THE PEPPERMINT PEOPLE

We grow, harvest and distil our signature Black Mitcham peppermint on our farm in Hampshire - and have been doing so for over 25 years. Its refined, distinctive taste inspires our wonderfully refreshing range of chocolates, teas and treats.

Black Mitcham is an extraordinary peppermint prized for its pure, bright character. It's a taste that had been all but lost to England, until we brought some back from America over three decades ago. We now grow around 100 acres of Black Mitcham, transforming it into our own single-estate peppermint oil, so that we can share its unique qualities with mint-lovers across the world.



OUR MISSION

Sharing the world's
finest peppermint
whilst caring for
our planet



REFLECTING ON 2021-2022



Gained a B Corp certification, only the 2nd farm in the UK to achieve this



Partnered on research projects with South East Water, RSPB Fair to Nature, Plantlife and continued our Countryside Stewardship work



Launched 6 new 100% plastic free products



Partnered with rePurpose Global to offset our plastic packaging through impact driven projects in India



Shared best practice: we joined the B Corp RegenAg working group and invited them for a farm tour, we briefed community groups and we hosted two ministerial visits



Welcomed two new members of the team - Rosie joined as herb grower and apprentice to Ian and Alice joined to help with our expanding logistics





Commissioned our first carbon report through Our Carbon



Carried out the Big Farmland Bird Count in one field in February 2022, with a total count of 175 birds across 22 species (3 on the red endangered list). We want to conduct more regular surveys too



Won Cotswold Fayre – Sustainable Supplier of the Year award



Planted 30,000 new peppermint plug plants and 5,000 new lavender plugs



Opened our new distillery, reusing existing equipment, including our trusted 41 year old hospital boiler! Water and heat created in the distillation process is recycled to reduce energy usage



Won two further Great Taste awards and came runner up in the Chocolate category of Fine Food Digest's Best Brand survey

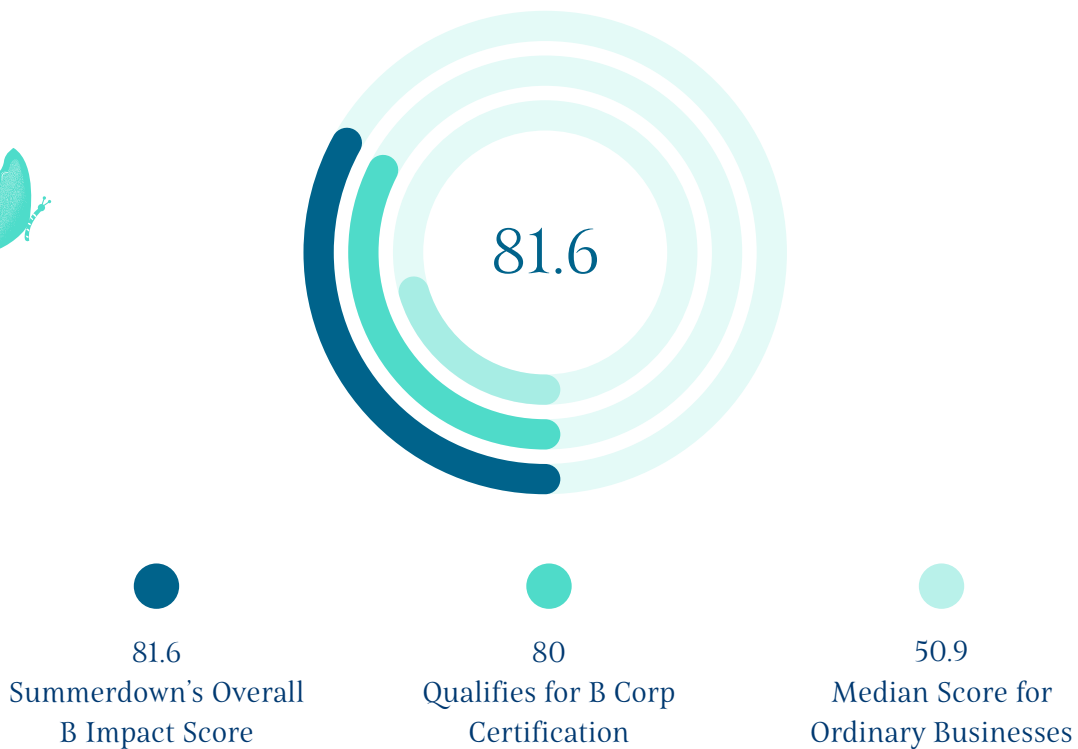


B CORPORATION

Our approach at Summerdown is to make decisions which actively enhance place, people and profit collectively. In November 2021 Summerdown became a certified B Corp, achieving an overall score of 81.6. The B Corp framework gives us the ability to focus and align our strategy to ensure we're using our business influence as a force for good.

A certified B Corporation is a company verified by B Lab to meet high standards of social and environmental performance, transparency and accountability. To be granted and to maintain certification, companies must receive a minimum score of 80 from an assessment of social and environmental performance, integrate B Corp commitments to stakeholders into company governing documents and pay an annual fee based on annual sales.

Companies must re-certify every three years to retain B Corporation status.



We were only the second farm in the UK to receive a B Corp certification. We're very proud of this!

GOVERNANCE 6.7

Governance evaluates a company’s overall mission, engagement around its social/environmental impact, ethics, and transparency. This section also evaluates the ability of a company to protect their mission and formally consider stakeholders in decision making through their corporate structure (e.g. benefit corporation) or corporate governing documents.

Mission & Engagement	2.1
Ethics & Transparency	2.1
+ Mission Locked	2.5

What is this? A company with an Impact Business Model is intentionally designed to create a specific positive outcome for one of its stakeholders – such as workers, community, environment, or customers.



COMMUNITY 11.9

Community evaluates a company’s engagement with and impact on the communities in which it operates, hires from, and sources from. Topics include diversity, equity & inclusion, economic impact, civic engagement, charitable giving, and supply chain management. In addition, this section recognises business models that are designed to address specific community-oriented problems, such as poverty alleviation through fair trade sourcing or distribution via microenterprises, producer cooperative models, locally focused economic development, and formal charitable giving commitments.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	3.5
Economic Impact	1.3
Civic Engagement & Giving	1.4
Supply Chain Management	2.1

ENVIRONMENT 36.9

Environment evaluates a company’s overall environmental management practices as well as its impact on the air, climate, water, land, and biodiversity. This includes the direct impact of a company’s operations and, when applicable its supply chain and distribution channels. This section also recognises companies with environmentally innovative production processes and those that sell products or services that have a positive environmental impact. Some examples might include products and services that create renewable energy, reduce consumption or waste, conserve land or wildlife, provide less toxic alternatives to the market, or educate people about environmental problems.

Environmental Management	3.1
Air & Climate	1.8
Water	2.8
Land & Life	11.3
+ Land/wildlife Conservation	11.8

What is this? A company with an impact Business Model is intentionally designed to create a specific positive outcome for one of its stakeholders – such as workers, community, environment, or customers.

WORKERS 23.4

Workers evaluates a company’s contributions to its employees’ financial security, health & safety, wellness, career development, and engagement & satisfaction. In addition, this section recognises business models designed to benefit workers, such as companies that are at least 40% owned by non-executive employees and those that have workforce development programs to support individuals with barriers to employment.

Financial Security	10.1
Health, Wellness & Safety	4.5
Career Development	1.3
Engagement & Satisfaction	2.4





UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

Alongside the B Corp pillars, our sustainability strategy has been born out of the following UN sustainability goals:



OUR APPROACH



SUPPLY CHAIN TRANSPARENCY

At Summerdown, we actively seek out suppliers who share our goals and values. We think about our interaction with our suppliers much like we do when we think about our ecosystem - we recognise that everything has a connection and we tend to these connections with care.

We avoid contracts or relationships that are based purely on transactional value, instead looking for partners whose practices we can reasonably assess for ethical intent and who are sustainable, which is reflected in another of our values 'integrity without compromise'. We will forego the best available price in the short term in favour of a more sustainable partnership over the long term. We carefully consider the impact that any new product, venture or shift in emphasis might have all the way through the value chain.

PRINTING

We recently chose a new printing supplier for marketing materials because they are a carbon neutral business.

DISTRIBUTION

Cotswold Fayre, a major partner, were the first UK food wholesaler to be both carbon neutral and a B Corp.

PARTNERSHIPS

We collaborate with other environmentally progressive brands like Jordan's Cereals and Jude's Ice Cream (the world's first carbon negative ice cream brand) and find we are approached for our peppermint tea leaf and essential oil by wholesale customers who specifically want to source British mint with a sustainable ethos.



SUSTAINABLE INGREDIENTS SOURCING

*Striving to provide our customers with the best possible ingredients
doesn't just stop at our peppermint*



We source all our chocolate sustainably. We buy a large proportion of our cacao through the Cocoa Horizons project, a not for profit impact driven programme with the vision to drive cocoa farmer prosperity by creating self-sustaining communities that protect nature and children. We believe this is even better than buying Fairtrade. Their aim is that by 2025 they will have a 100% sustainable supply chain and this is of the utmost importance to us.

COCOA HORIZONS 3 AREAS OF FOCUS

- 1.** Productivity and helping farmers prosper
- 2.** The environment: no deforestation and becoming carbon positive
- 3.** The community: zero child labour

We source the single origin cocoa in our chocolate bars from the Luker family in Colombia. They are part of The Chocolate Dream, the aim of which is to add true value at origin through improving farmer income, strengthening the social wellbeing of local communities and maintaining an environmental balance in cocoa growing communities.

When it comes to our body, bath and home range, we are currently in the process of updating all of our formulations so we can be 100% happy about our ingredients. For example, currently, some of our products contain derivatives of palm oil which is not RSPO certified. Any new formulation will only contain RSPO certified palm oil. There is much debate about the use of palm oil in self care products – please see our website for further details on the pros and cons.





SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING SOURCING

Where possible, we are moving towards removing petrochemical based plastic from our range. Our pyramid tea and our chocolate bars are our first products to be 100% plastic free and use Natureflex. Our teabags are made from 'Tearoad Soilon' which is polylactic acid (the base material is plant starch).

We have pledged that any new product launched will be 100% virgin plastic free.

Where, at present, it isn't economically viable to totally remove petrochemical based plastic from our existing range, we are moving towards using 100% recycled plastic products – we currently use 50% content recycled products. We now use clear recycled plastic trays to overcome local council recycling restrictions and to ensure universal recyclability. Any future plastic material purchases will be 100% recycled plastic material (RPET).

We've also looked at ways in which we can take steps towards offsetting our plastic.

What is natureflex? A biodegradable cellulose product derived from wood pulp, sourced exclusively from responsibly-managed plantations, which is suitable for both home and industrial composting.



We are now certified plastic neutral – working with RePurpose Global, we're removing as much plastic waste from the environment as we put into it by supporting a low value plastic recovery project in India.

We also work with our largest customer as part of a plastic reduction taskforce to achieve the ultimate reduction or eradication of plastic.

We ensure any wood based packaging materials are FSC certified.

Did you know? We use shredded newspapers and magazines from people living on and around the farm, to protect products during delivery.



LOOKING AFTER LAND



Summerdown has been in the Colman family for almost 100 years and during this time a commitment to look after the land for future generations has always been of the utmost importance.

We score very highly in the B Corp ‘environment’ pillar and we believe that’s because sustainability has always been a way of life at Summerdown, from the way we farm, to the sourcing of our chocolate.

Our core value of ‘seeing the environment come alive’ is at the heart of what we do – we are working towards implementing our definition of High Quality Land into our farming practices.

INCREASING THE LEVELS OF ORGANIC MATTER IN OUR SOIL

Keeping Summerdown’s soil as healthy as possible is a real priority. We need to make sure it remains as nutrient-rich as the day we started farming – after all, that’s the soil our peppermint and other crops originally fell for. Over time, we have increased the soil organic levels by nearly 2%. We intend to increase them by another 1% over the next 5-10 years. Though we have minimal tillage on our existing plough, we are moving towards direct drilling. As a result of 20 years’ worth of care, our soil health is considerably better than expected in the North Hampshire headlands.

PROTECTING AND RESTORING WATER-RELATED ECO-SYSTEMS

We are currently involved in the long-term Woodgarston project with South East Water and Natural England. Its main goals are to reduce nitrogen entering the water system, help farmers capture nitrogen in the soil, create a best practice model to be shared around the country and increase collaboration between farms. We’ve increased the amount of our over winter ground cover, covering 90% of the farm and aim to move to 100% cover when our Higher Stewardship agreement completes this year. Our agreement requires us to leave 10% of winter stubble.



What is the High Quality Land definition? All land should be looked after in a way that provides for nature and people in equal measure. High quality land offers real hope. This is hope based on taking responsibility and finding the tools to fix something broken and restoring it into a better state that it once was.

Biodiversity is crucial to everything we do at Summerdown and is championed by our peppermint. The team shares a holistic approach to the farm - we view every area of the farm as connected. The health of our peppermint, for example, is dependent on hedgerows and the wildlife found within them.

Farm Manager & *Master of Mint* Ian has turned Summerdown into a haven for wildlife, insects and flowers. Wildflowers and plants are the life support for all our wildlife. As a corporate partner of conservation charity Plantlife, we run an active calendar of conservation initiatives, for example planting feed crop for birds and wildflowers for pollinators, encouraging new creatures to thrive around the edges of our fields and woodlands.

We position bee hives around the borders of the peppermint fields. The honey bees are shut in their hives during the cooler months and we feed them sugar water whilst they're waiting for warmer weather.

Birdlife is abundant, with a wealth of hedgerow birds. These include fieldfares, sparrows, various finches, green and spotted woodpeckers, stone-curlew and lapwing, blackbirds and thrushes.

And where there are hedgerow birds, there are always kites and buzzards circling. Barn owls roost in various locations around our farm buildings in specially fitted owl boxes. Hares pairing and boxing in the fields, are also a regular sight. We work closely with the RSPB on their 'Fair to Nature' programme and are proud to be involved as it sets the gold-standard for nature friendly farming. Fair to Nature is the only UK certification scheme with a focus on biodiversity and a proven approach to restoring the balance of nature in farming.

At Summerdown, we are proud of our many miles of flourishing hedgerows (75km in total). We purposefully delay hedge cutting until mid November - this allows the birds to feast on the berries first. We also supplementary feed wild birds weekly from December through to March, which is known as the 'hungry gap'.

Another key focus is woodland management. 186 hectares of woodland has been managed carefully for many years, creating some wonderful habitats. This not only includes managing existing woodland, but also looking at less productive areas on the farm to plant new trees.



FAIR TO NATURE



Plantlife

South
east
water

LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE



Summerdown is owned and operated by its founder, Sir Michael Colman. Like many family farms in the UK, we're registered as a Sole Trader. For Summerdown, this creates an enormous benefit to the farm as it enables us to act with real integrity in how we care for the land for the long term.

As a leadership team and family, we actively make financial decisions which prioritise people and place. Our core business value of seeing the environment come alive is reflected in a management structure that purely exists for responsibility; everyone who works here feels equally valued and supported whatever their role.

This is reflected in an extremely low staff turnover and a long retention rate. The team often quip that you leave the business feet first (not due to a safety issue on the farm!) because Summerdown gets under your skin. It is a real team effort to look after the land here and it is widely felt that we are privileged to work in such a special place – our soil, our fields, our wildlife, it draws such inspiration for the work we do.

Diversity is a real challenge that we are looking at, actively and currently. We hope to continue to build a diverse team which truly reflects the talent and ability of our local community.

We are also committed to the future – this is not a short-term business venture, this is the family's home and the home of many others who live on the farm. Sustainability is now such a buzz word, however we've been working sustainably for many years and we'll continue to champion sustainability for years to come, regardless if it's fashionable or not.



CARBON FOOTPRINT

Our over-riding objective is to achieve net carbon zero across the whole Summerdown business.



As a farm, we are now carbon negative as a result of our sustainable development practices. However, when we calculate all activity that takes place across the business we are currently sitting in a net positive position.

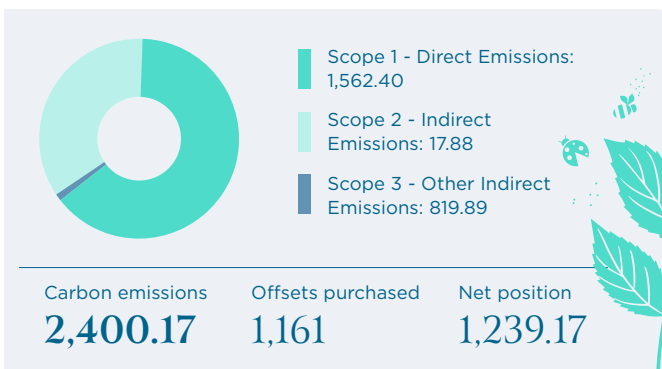
This year, we commissioned our first carbon report by Our Carbon, to calculate our actual carbon activity across the business.

Our carbon accounting methodology is aligned with ISO standard 14064:1 and includes scope 1.2 and most of scope 3. We particularly liked the fact that Our Carbon recognises uncertainty when it comes to measuring carbon and therefore applies a 'weighted total certainty score' – this not only reduces the chances of error but is a representation of the quality and depth of data.

Whilst this no doubt gives us a higher carbon score, we would rather be cautious and hope that over time, we can apply more certainty to our measurement and further reduce this score.

We are now in the process of analysing the report and will work together to reduce this carbon score.

For us, it's about prioritising de-carbonising first, then offsetting second. We will look to decarbonise products and processes where possible, and then in areas where we can't decarbonise, we will increase areas of woodland and grow more crops which sequester carbon.



How is carbon footprint measured?

Our Carbon sources their emission factors from reliable sources including life cycle analysis studies and government databases and then carries out a thorough supply chain analysis to curate the most accurate emission factor. The emissions associated with any product and service will vary from supplier to supplier depending on their supply chain, hence applying a weighted total certainty score.

USING OUR VOICE



What we do here at Summerdown is completely unique. For this reason, we try to use our voice to share best practice, experience and learn from others as much as possible. We do this in the following ways:

We're an active member of the B Corp Regenerative Agriculture working group, which meets virtually, every six weeks, to discuss common themes.

We champion sustainable farming and over the past few years have welcomed farm visits from DEFRA and Government ministers such as George Eustice and Ranil Jayawardena.

We share experience through community talks e.g. the Going Green event at Silchester Farm, WI events, through local farming organisations and charities.

We're always encouraging stakeholders to visit the farm, especially during harvest when the farm is at its most vibrant. What we do here is really very special.

The national press and trade media have used us as a benchmark for others, featuring us on programmes and in press where they're emphasising sustainability. In the past few years alone we've been featured on BBC1's Countryfile, BBC Radio 4's 'On your farm', in Country Living, Country Life, Hampshire Life, The Observer and on BBC Radio 4's Food & Farming programme.

We help customers and consumers to make more sustainable buying decisions through regular communication, clear labelling and the sustainable choices we make as a business.



GIVING BACK



The Colman family's social endeavours have been well documented, with Jeremiah Colman's cradle to grave approach reflected today in our sustainability efforts on our farm and our revival of Black Mitcham peppermint which was almost lost to English soil during the war years.

Today, we partner with the Farming Community Network, (FCN), a charity supporting farmers and families within the farming community, particularly at times of financial and personal stress. We have committed to help spread the word about FCN initiatives through our website, marketing initiatives and relationships with some of Britain's best farm shops. As a farm team who understands the need to adapt and farm for the future, we also want to support farmers by sharing our own personal experience of weathering change and recognising the need for diversification.



We are also a corporate partner of Plantlife, the international conservation membership charity securing a world rich in wild plants and fungi.

Away from the land and farming community, we support our local NHS hospital trust with donations of treats to NHS staff who work so tirelessly to help others. This dials into our 'caring through peppermint' brand promise and we hope that a little gift of Summerdown helps bring a moment of joy.

Where we have excess stock, we donate to food banks through Fareshare.



WHERE NEXT?



SUPPLY CHAIN TRANSPARENCY

Continue to only work with suppliers who share our sustainable values.



INGREDIENTS SOURCING

Relaunch our body, bath and home range with improved formulations and sustainable ingredients (e.g. using RSPO certified palm oil derivatives).



PACKAGING SOURCING

Achieve a fully closed loop, continue to adhere to our pledge to be 100% virgin plastic free.



LOOKING AFTER LAND

Invest in solar and renewable energy. Introduce the definition of high quality land into our written farm policies. Invite Plantlife to conduct their rare plant survey, which they first carried out in 2013 when they identified us as a site of national importance.



LOOKING AFTER PEOPLE

Explore innovative ways to use the sole trader set up.



CARBON FOOTPRINT

Become carbon neutral as a business – decarbonise products and processes and then offset what we can't. Produce a more detailed carbon report.



USING OUR VOICE

Appear in more mainstream media to help educate the wider public on the importance of regenerative agriculture and use our model as best practice.



GIVING BACK

Establish a deeper connection with the Farming Community Network by using our marketing communications to spread the word about their fantastic cause. Continue to work with Plantlife.







SUMMERDOWN



@SUMMERDOWNUK

HELLO@SUMMERDOWN.COM

WWW.SUMMERDOWN.COM