

# Sustainable Solutions Consulting

<u>Team Member Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Major</u>
Megan Towzey	2021	MBA
Flor Dadone	2022	MBA
Joseph Bacon	2022	MBA
Harvey Clarke	2022	MBA
Isabella Roman-Secor	2021	Master of International Business

**Advisor:** Dr. Brian Ray

**Topic:** Cargill: Fighting World Hunger by Destroying the Planet

**Audience:** Cargill Inc. Board of Directors

## Sustainable Development Goal

SDG #2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

SDG #8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.

SDG #12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

## Executive Summary

When asked to think of large corporations in the food production space, there are a lot of companies that might come to mind, but Cargill probably is not one of them. Referred to by Forbes as a “silent giant,” this 155-year-old company is the largest private company in the United States with over \$115 billion in annual revenue. Cargill has a presence in over 70 countries, employs over 166,000 employees, and makes up one fourth of the US grain and meat markets. Cargill has expanded the availability of food through its production channels, but has done so by destroying the very resources upon which its production depends. This strategy is antithetical to every tenant of sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

In a 2019 article that appeared in *Mighty Earth*, Cargill was named the “worst company in the world” based on its pollution, deforestation, labor practices, and falsified reporting. Although Cargill prides itself on the slogan “nourishing the world,” over the past 20 years the firm has paid over \$175M in regulatory fines and lawsuits. Due to Cargill’s scope of operations and financial resources, no single government on its own can set meaningful ethical boundaries and/or establish effective regulations. What ethical obligation does Cargill have to not only comply with minimum standards of current laws and regulations but also take affirmative steps to rebuild squandered resources? We will address this question, analyzing the legal, financial, and ethical implications of Cargill’s practices, and ultimately suggest a long-term course of action designed to sustain both Cargill’s operations and the resources from which it profits.