



# RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERISM: WHY KNOWING THE SUPPLY CHAIN MATTERS

Presented by Laura Gooding (Pitt Oakland, 2018)



# What is Responsible Consumerism?

- Also called Ethical Consumerism
- “activism based on the premise that purchasers in markets consume not only goods but also, implicitly, the process used to produce them”<sup>1</sup>
- Way to support business that uphold certain ethical standards around the environment and labor
- Can incentivize companies to change their behavior

# WHY IT MATTERS



Image: "Trafficking, forced labor, slavery 'hugely profitable,' U.N. warns." CBS News.  
<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trafficking-forced-labor-slavery-hugely-profitable-u-n-warns/>

# What is the Supply Chain?

*‘Entire **network** of entities, directly or indirectly interlinked and interdependent in serving the same consumer or customer. It comprises of **vendors** that supply raw material, **producers** who convert the material into products, **warehouses** that store, **distribution centers** that deliver to the retailers, and **retailers** who bring the product to the ultimate user.’*

Read more:

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/supply-chain.html>



Colgate



# What Does This Look Like? : A Case Study of Palm Oil

- Palm oil is hugely popular, over 50% of products at the grocery store contain it
- Identified as a high risk product for human trafficking
- Increased popularity has led to deforestation
- Habitat destruction
- Decreased biodiversity



# What About the Ingredients List?

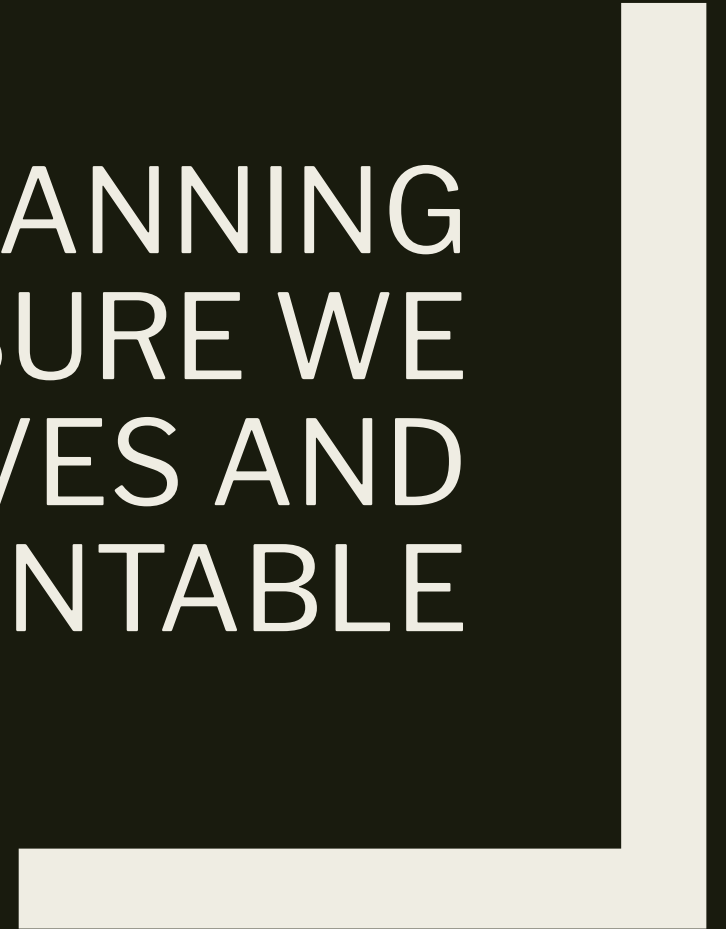
- **INGREDIENTS:** Vegetable Oil, Vegetable Fat, Palm Kernel, Palm Kernel Oil, Palm Fruit Oil, Palmate, Palmitate, Palmolein, Glyceryl, Stearate, Stearic Acid, Elaeis Guineensis, Palmitic Acid, Palm Stearine, Palmitoyl Oxostearamide, Palmitoyl Tetrapeptide-3, Sodium Laureth Sulfate, Sodium Lauryl Sulfate, Sodium Kernelate, Sodium Palm Kernelate, Sodium Lauryl Lactylate/Sulphate, Hyrated Palm Glycerides, Etyl Palmitate, Octyl Palmitate, Palmityl Alcohol
- **CONTAINS:** Palm oil

# So...Why Don't We Just Ban Palm Oil?

- Some countries have—sort of
  - *EU ban on Palm Oil use in biofuels<sup>2</sup>*
- It's useful
- It's comparatively efficient
  - *palm oil makes up 35% of all vegetable oils, grown on just 10% percent of the land allocated to oil crops<sup>3</sup>*
- Palm oil industry supports the livelihoods of millions of workers



THE SOLUTION ISN'T BANNING  
PALM OIL, IT'S MAKING SURE WE  
HOLD OURSELVES AND  
COMPANIES ACCOUNTABLE



# What Can You Do?

- Do your research!
  - *Corporate Responsibility Reports*
- There are no government restrictions on labeling (in the U.S.)
- Third Party Certification Organizations
  - *One of the best ways to make sure your products are ethically and sustainably sourced*
    - RSPO
    - Fair Trade USA
    - Fair Trade International
- TAKE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME!





# Human Trafficking in Palm Oil Supply Chains Final Report

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Ford Institute  
for Human Security  
[www.fordinstitute.pitt.edu](http://www.fordinstitute.pitt.edu)

# References

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<https://www.iscc-system.org/eco-business-winners-and-losers-from-the-proposed-ban-on-palm-oil/#:~:text=In%20January%2C%20the%20European%20Parliament,in%20mainly%20Indonesia%20and%20Malaysia>.
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Questions?