

What is Ethical Sourcing?

Green America Approved Business

Environmental Criteria

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Sourcing from China

What is Ethical Sourcing?

Ethical sourcing means ensuring that the products being sourced are created in safe facilities by workers who are treated well and paid fair wages to work legal hours. It also implies that the supplier is respecting the environment during the production and manufacture of the

products.

This is an issue we take very seriously. We go to great lengths to ensure our products are ethically sourced, whether the product is one of our own [Sanctus Mundo](#) products, or from another supplier. Some of the key

details of our sourcing policies are laid out below with respect to environmental and labour criteria we consider when sourcing products.

Green America Approved Business

Life Without Plastic is a Green America Approved Business

- Green America

is “a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to harnessing the economic power of consumers, investors and businesses to promote social justice and environmental sustainability.” The

Green America Seal of Approval

that we sport indicates we have gone through a rigorous screening process by the

Green America Screening Team

to ensure that we:

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Focus on using business as a tool for positive social change.

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Are "values-driven," as well as profit-driven.

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Are socially and environmentally responsible in the way we source, manufacture, and market our products and run our facilities.

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Are committed to and

employ extraordinary and innovative practices that benefit: 1) workers, 2) communities, 3) customers, and 4) the environment.

Environmental Criteria

When considering a new product, we look at it from several environmentally-related angles and ask the questions laid out below, which also have health-related criteria mixed in. We consider both positive screening criteria – i.e., desirable attributes –

and negative screening criteria – i.e., undesirable attributes. We verify these criteria through discussions with the supplier in question, ideally in person with high level company representatives, and when possible during an on-site visit to the supplier's facilities. We seek to develop long-term trust relationships with suppliers

who are actively and openly interested in helping the environment and who consider environmental criteria in the manufacture of their product(s).

For products sourced from Canadian and U.S. suppliers, but

manufactured elsewhere, we rely heavily on discussions with, and representations of, the Canadian or U.S. supplier because it is generally not possible to contact the actual manufacturing facility directly (confidential business information). Again, we seek to develop long-term trust relationships with our

Canadian and U.S. suppliers, and we choose suppliers who are actively and openly interested in helping the environment and who consider environmental criteria in the manufacture of their product(s).

For our Canadian-made

products, we have met and have close trust relationships with each of the suppliers, and we speak to them regularly. For the ones close to us, we regularly visit their facilities.

Here are the environmentally-related

questions we ask when deciding whether or not to source a product from a particular supplier:

The Product:

Material and Process

What is the environmental impact of the material and process used to make the product? (e.g., Are toxins released into the environment during manufacture? Is energy efficiency considered?)

What is the quality of the material and the final product? (e.g., Is it high quality food grade stainless steel, ideally 300 series, such as 304?; if 200 series, do the independent test results meet our quality standards?)

Do the independent test

results meet our quality standards? (e.g., re lead, endocrine disruptors)

Other features

Does the product contain any plastic? What kind of plastic? Does it contain

phthalates or bisphenol A?
For food and drink
containers, does the plastic
come into contact with the
content of the container?

Is there paint? If so, what
type of paint is used? For
food and drink containers,
does the paint come into
contact with the content of

the container?

Is the product durable and well made? What is the level of quality of workmanship?

Can it be recycled at the end of it's functional life?

The Supplier:

Does the supplier follow all applicable environmental regulations in the country of operation?

Can the supplier meet our requirements for environmentally-friendly product packaging?

What environmental measures does the supplier, including the manufacturing facility, have in place (e.g., recycling, waste management,

pollution control measures,
emissions control
measures)?

Does the supplier have an
environmental
management and/or quality
management system in
place (e.g., ISO14000,
ISO9000) or any other
environmental

certifications?

Is the supplier interested in helping the environment? If so, how?

Labour Criteria

When considering a new product, we look at it from several labour-related angles and ask the questions laid out below. We consider both positive screening criteria – i.e., desirable attributes – and negative screening criteria – i.e., undesirable attributes. We verify these criteria through discussions with the supplier in

question, ideally in person with high level company representatives, and when possible during an on-site visit to the supplier's facilities. We seek to develop long-term trust relationships with suppliers who respect their workers and provide safe, fair working conditions.

For products sourced from Canadian and U.S. suppliers, but manufactured elsewhere, we rely heavily on discussions with, and representations of, the Canadian or U.S. supplier because it is generally not possible to contact the actual manufacturing facility directly (confidential business information).

Again, we seek to develop long-term trust relationships with our Canadian and U.S. suppliers, and we choose suppliers who respect their workers and provide safe, fair working conditions.

Here are the labour-related questions we ask when

deciding whether or not to source a product from a particular supplier:

Does the supplier employ children to work at any of its facilities?

Is the workers freedom of

movement unreasonably
constrained by the supplier
(e.g., is prison or
“sweatshop” labour used)?

Do employees receive a
fair wage for their work (at
or above the national
minimum wage)?

Do employees have
reasonable work hours?
What are the average work
hours?

Are there safety
precautions in place for
workers? If so, what?

Are health benefits available for employees? If so, what?

What policies and/or management systems are in place to ensure worker health and safety?

What is the supplier's health and safety record?

Has the supplier been involved in any legal actions related to discrimination in the workplace or employment equity issues?

Do workers receive paid leave?

Are workers free to express their opinions and make suggestions to management?

Is there a profit-sharing

program in place?

Does the supplier have any labour-related certifications (e.g. fair trade, social accountability, unionized)?

Is there anything else the supplier does to make the

employees working
conditions positive?

Sourcing from China

We are often asked if any
of our products come from
China. *[Note: The country
of origin for every single*

product we sell is clearly indicated near the bottom of each product description.]

We have made a conscious decision to be extremely careful about sourcing anything from China. This decision is based on environmental,

labour and human rights reasons, and also for trust-related reasons flowing from previous experiences we have had with a former Chinese supplier and interactions with other Chinese suppliers. Regarding the former supplier, we had ordered a particular type of food container made of 100% food grade, 304

stainless steel and when we tested the initial sample received it was fine. All seemed fine. When the actual shipment arrived and we began selling the containers, we started getting complaints from customers that the clips holding on the lid of the container were rusting. Clearly, the clips were not made of stainless steel –

or at least not the same quality as the rest of the container. The company did send us replacements for one detachable part of the clip, but they never really acknowledged the problem or admitted any wrongdoing.

We have deep respect and

admiration for the Chinese people and their rich culture and history. Our main problem is with the repressive dictatorship that is the Chinese government, and its sometimes questionable environmental, labour and human rights records. There are many examples to choose from to illustrate the problems, but a few big

ones include the widespread ongoing use of coal-fired energy, the invasion of Tibet, the continuing oppression of the Tibetan people and the ongoing persecution of other minorities in China, such as the Uyghur people and practitioners of the Falun Gong/Falun Dafa belief system.

Life Without Plastic does sell some carefully chosen products made in China, such as the Klean Kanteen, EnviroSax bags and Lunchbots, but these products and the facilities where they are made are closely checked by the manufacturers (and from the health perspective, we

tend to test the products ourselves for toxins, even if the manufacturer has done their own testing).

Currently, no Sanctus Mundo products are sourced from China.