

# Biodiversity and Innovation in Practice: Native



## Native: Innovate, produce and profit with respect

Native - Products from Nature ([www.nativealimentos.com.br](http://www.nativealimentos.com.br)), is a Brazilian example of how large-scale food production and biodiversity conservation can go hand-in-hand. Native's products reach consumers' tables in 60 countries on all continents. It is the world's largest producer of organic sugar and alcohol. It currently produces 6 million tons of sugarcane, 300,000 tons of sugar and 300,000 m3 of alcohol. The company also works with other products derived from cocoa, coffee and fruit juice. By joining the Union for Ethical BioTrade (UEBT) in 2012, Native reaffirmed its commitment to a better, healthier and more just world.

## Conservation and Ethical BioTrade

The preservation of ecosystems and the promotion of practices that conserve and restore biodiversity are basic principles for companies who want to become part of UEBT.

Thanks to research and technological development, Native was able to create innovative and sustainable practices for sugarcane cultivation and processing, while at the same time protecting the environment, water resources and reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. The production of organic food, ethanol and supplies for the cosmetics industry meets the criteria of ethical BioTrade.



## Research, Innovation and Biodiversity

The history of Native's successful biodiversity practices began in 1981. The company progressively develops and adopts several sustainable agronomic techniques within the Green Cane Project, which include biological pest control, the restoration of native vegetation in priority areas, green fertilizers in crop rotation and harvest mechanization in order to avoid straw burning on the fields. With this method, green leaves now remain on the fields, creating abundant mulch that helps regenerate the soil. Over \$ 25 million was invested in the Green Cane project that revolutionized methods of sugar production, ranging from land preparation to the development of special for the marketing of products. The correct plantation and land stewardship aim at keeping soil balance, restoring and enhancing its natural fertility. The company does not use synthetic chemical inputs or genetically modified organisms. The nutrients generated in the manufacturing process are reused. Bagasse, instead of being discarded, is utilized as a clean and renewable source of energy.



## Yielding forests

The Native Group keeps nurseries with enough capacity to generate tens of thousands of Brazilian native forest species on hundreds of acres every year. The priority areas for reforestation processes are the ones bordering watercourses, lakes and areas of high ecological interest, such as wetlands, which are breeding grounds for fish, birds, mammals, and other species.

Today, Native's farms cover large forest regions. By putting into practice the premises of organic crop production with the establishment of biodiversity islands, the company creates conditions for many species that would not be able to survive in conventional plantations. The agroecological stewardship enabled by the Green Cane Project allows the proliferation of many species of insects, arthropods, fungi and microorganisms that are beneficial to the cane fields.

Organic cane fields, wetlands, riparian vegetation, native forests, exotic woods and other habitats were identified in the agroecological farms of the Green Cane Project. This microfauna creates a consistent food basis in a relatively quiet environment. The cane fields are harvested only once a year, allowing a sophisticated and intricate food web of higher vertebrates. As a result, birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals colonize the plantation and its surroundings because they can find food, shelter and good breeding conditions here.



## Science confirms the success

In 2002, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation - Embrapa Satellite Monitoring, in association with the Brazilian government, led a team of researchers to conduct an inventory of the existing wild fauna in Native's farms in the countryside of São Paulo state (Brazil). About three thousand field surveys were carried out in order to detect and identify species. The results were astounding: So far, researchers have identified 333 species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians. The study is still in process, but results are very encouraging. In fact, many new species have started to appear in the farms over the last few years. All in all, biodiversity in these areas is 23 times higher than that found in conventional cane fields in the same region.



## Contact UEBT

UEBT is a membership-based, non profit organisation - [www.ethicalbiotrade.org](http://www.ethicalbiotrade.org).

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