





























## Introduction



In 2016, when we started thinking about raising the first dedicated fund for the Food sector in Europe, environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria were an integral part of our vision. Back then, we set off on a journey to take a proactive and leading role in our sector, with a conviction that the food and agricultural sectors lend themselves very well to driving sustainable change in the world we live in.

In addition, we hope that our approach to ESG will perhaps inspire some of the investors in our fund to apply the same thinking to other funds, sectors and geographies, hence acting as a multiplier for impact.

As professional investors, we are aware of our responsibilities. We believe that when we decide to back specific companies in a given industry, directly or indirectly, we contribute to shape their impact in their social, economic and environmental context.

ESG is both an engagement and performance matter. That is why our ESG policy will influence our whole investment process and our interactions with targets and portfolio companies.

At the pre-investment phase, we designed an ESG check-list, allowing us to identify the main ESG metrics of a company's business and organization as well as the specific ESG risks it may create. In case we need to deepen our understanding of one or more ESG risks, we created an ESG due diligence format.

At the investment stage, we created an ESG clause allowing us to access essential ESG-related data creating a right to information regarding ESG incidents and strategic decisions involving a potential ESG risk. As shareholders, we want to increase entrepreneurs' awareness about ESG topics thanks to training sessions and ESG reviews during strategy and board meetings, where applicable.

Our goal is to help our portfolio companies integrate responsibility-related criteria as part of their overall performance. As an example, we encourage all our portfolio companies to become B-Corp certified. In addition, we have created a dedicated ESG questionnaire allowing us to gather and analyze data at portfolio level and implemented a detailed impact measurement methodology of invested capital. Next year, we will share our first quantitative ESG report.

Finally, as a management company, we also firmly believe we have a role to play. The company's members are now well aware of the ESG matter. We are pursuing the annual off-setting of our business travels' carbon footprint. We have made a donation to the charity Hop Hop Food giving tools to trade and individuals in order to give meals to students and families in need. We have started investigating the process of our own certification as a B Corp company. Finally, 2020 marks the second edition of our ESG report, offering complete and transparent information to our limited partners. This exercise is also an opportunity for us to receive your advice on how to improve ourselves during our ESG journey.

Ivan Farneti, Partner

Man Loueki

Niccolo Manzoni, Partner

#### Five Seasons Ventures is a proud supporter of



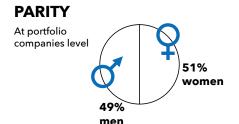
Hop Hop Food is a Paris-based non-profit association of general interest giving tools to trade and individuals to lower their food waste and serve meals to students and families in need in the Paris region. Since their inception in 2016, Hop Hop Food has saved 50 tons of food and delivered an equivalent of 140 000 meals with the help of more than 100 volunteers.

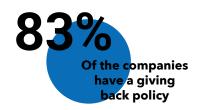
#### > Five Seasons Ventures 2020 carbon emissions were offset by



The GoodPlanet Foundation was created by Yann Arthus-Bertrand, renowned photojournalist, with the aim of raising public awareness on environmental issues and environmental protection. Thanks to direct donations and a carbon offsetting platform, it supports environmental field projects and local populations. Since 2005, 150,000 people have been helped through 41 projects in 21 countries while offsetting 180,000 tons of CO2.

#### Some of our portoflio companies' achievements







### > OUR INITIATIVES AT A GLANCE

# **PRE-INVESTMENT PHASE**

- . A check-list allowing to identify ESG risks of any given company in due diligence
- . An ESG due diligence format with direct impact on dealterms

## **INVESTMENT STAGE**

A legally binding clause allowing access to key ESG data, creating a right to information regarding ESG-related incidents and strategic decisions involving a potential ESG

## **AS SHAREHOLDERS**

- . Raising awareness of ESG considerations with all portfolio companies, through training materials
- . Covering ESG topics during board meetings
- . Sending every year an extensive ESG questionnaire to portfolio companies
- . Monitoring key ESG KPIs and measuring the ESG impacts of our invested capital

**AT MANAGEMENT** 

**COMPANY LEVEL** 

- . Raising awareness of ESG considerations among team members
- . Editing an annual ESG report in order to share transparent information with our limited partners
- . Compensating CO2 emissions related to our business travels

### > PORTFOLIO COMPANIES INDEX

**01** Tropic Biosciences

02 Butternut Box

**03** | This

04 Cortilia

05 Yfood

06 Just Spices

**07** | Yamo



**SECTOR** AgriTech

**INVESTMENT DATE** 2018

Tropic Biosciences

LOCATION

Norwich, UK

Founded in 2016, Tropic Biosciences is an AgriTech startup developing high-performing commercial varieties of tropical crops such as bananas and coffee beans. Its goal is to reduce the use of pesticides and chemical products pre and post-harvesting, and to shrink waste by lengthening products shelf life thanks to cutting edge genome editing technologies.

#### **CHALLENGE**

Since inception, Tropic Biosciences tackles three challenges. 1) Food security: the ability for any human being to obtain safe and wholesome food. In the case of bananas, some species might totally disappear in less than 10 years due to fast-spreading diseases. 2) The social and financial situation of local farmers in emerging countries thanks to higher yields and lower production costs. 3) Environmental stewardship thanks to immune to disease edited-plants from needing less fungicides and pesticides.

#### **STRATEGY**

Tropic Biosciences uses advanced genome editing technologies to develop new and high-performing commercial varieties of banana and coffee plants that are resistant to diseases, such as fungal and bacterial infections. Its work will ultimately safeguard the future of these crops, ensuring sustainable sources of food globally, improving cultivation yields and increasing incomes for farmers.

While 700 millions of banana plants die every year due to a single specific pest, gene-edited bananas that are more resistant to diseases will reduce the use of agrochemicals. Fungicides are currently applied 30 to 90 times per year in most commercial plantations. Such a reduction has many benefits. Fungicides and pesticides generate health issues to banana plantation workers (e.g. cancer and infertility).

30 to 90

Times per year, fungicides are applied to bananas plants

30%

Of bananas get wasted during transportation and storage

700m

Plants of bananas die of one specific pest every year



"We develop high-performing commercial varieties of tropical crops which promote grower wellbeing, enhance consumer health, and improve sustainable environmental practices."
Gilad Gershon, CEO

Reducing chemicals use also provides significant health benefits to consumers due to the fact that inputs are carried through the supply chain. Finally, as the industry spends roughly 30% of production costs on fungicides, a decrease in agrochemicals will transfer value upstream allowing higher incomes and profits for farmers.

Tropic Biosciences also works on editing bananas' genes to help the very perishable fruit survive longer while it is delivered to consumers - for instance by extending the banana's green phase before ripening by 5 to 10 days. This can significantly reduce food waste as 30% of bananas get wasted worldwide during transportation and storage.

In the case of coffee, Tropic Biosciences has developed a bean variety with two key features. First, its yield is on average higher by 7% compared to regular coffee. Secondly, it has been genetically edited to become decaffeinated allowing to skip the chemical process used today to get rid of caffeine. It will also allow to save up to \$0.5/kg in production costs, knowing that the coffee price is about \$2.6/kg. A portion of these savings will be transferred to the growers at no additional operating costs.



Five Seasons Ventures has committed to support Tropic Biosciences during its fundamental research phase. The team is convinced that Tropic Biosciences will eventually improve the standard of living of millions of farmers worldwide and provide safer and cleaner food products.

\$0.5/kg

Saved thanks to the decaffeinated bean variety 7%

Average increased yield of TB's coffee variety

50%

Of women amongst the researchers of the company



## BUTTERNUT BOX

**SECTOR** Pet food

**INVESTMENT DATE** 2019

LOCATION London, UK

Set up in 2016, Butternut Box is a London-based startup employing 80 people that produces and delivers home-cooked dog food in Europe. Butternut Box highly personalised dietary offer and its innovative digital marketing approach enable consumers to experience a new category of healthy dog food cooked with humangrade ingredients.

Buitternut

#### **CHALLENGE**

Butternut Box aims at reducing pet food's considerable ecological footprint due to its high consumption of meat, vegetables and pulses. Besides, it is also tackling pet health issues including canine obesity and the high cost of vet fees for dog owners.

#### **STRATEGY**

Since its inception, Butternut Box has put in place a responsible ingredients supply chain: it sources almost all of its proteins (meat and fish) locally, directly in Ireland and England, near its production facility in order to reduce GHG emissions related to transportation. Every year, it uses more than 2,400 tonnes of vegetables rejected by supermarkets on appearance standards. This approach offers upcycling solutions and allows the business to efficiently fight food waste. Simultaneously, the company stresses the importance of transparency in the pet food sector and advocates easy-to-read and detailed packaging labels. To avoid waste at consumption level and help prevent obesity amongst dogs, food is portioned according to a dog's breed, weight, sex and exercise regime before it is delivered to consumers.

Logistics-wise, Butternut Box packaging is made out of recycled cardboard, sustainably produced -as part of a closed loop. Its WoolCool insulating material is made from recycled sheep wool and is biodegradable.

100%

Carbon neutral delivery system

100%

Recyclable dog food pouches

87%

Very high employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS)

67%

Percentage of women in the company



"For a can of dog food to be labelled as 'with chicken', it only needs to contain 4% chicken. We think dogs deserve better. That's why we only use ingredients that you can see and say." Kevin Glynn, CEO

The company has worked with its insulation supplier to reduce the plastic liner thickness around the wool by 33%. It has also launched a circular economy model based on a packaging return system in order to facilitate reuse of the WoolCool. Moreover, in 2017, Butternut Box shifted from delivering chilled food products every week to delivering frozen ones every 2 to 6 weeks, further reducing miles traveled by an average of 67%. All the remaining deliveries made by the company are carbon neutral thanks to an offsetting partnership.

With its many initiatives and key partnerships, Butternut Box is already an environmentally and socially conscious company that ensures even the office is climate positive via payments to Offset Earth. Since its investment, Five Seasons has strongly been supporting its path and is even asking it to go further. The company is currently aiming to obtain a B-Corp certification.



#### **GIVING BACK**

The company has a very active "give back" ethos. It is well aware that not every dog can be as lucky as a Butternut Box dog. That's why, for every new furry consumer that signs up, it donates a much-needed meal to a less fortunate animal that's found itself homeless or in a shelter. For that purpose, Butternut Box actively partners with several dog shelters including Foal Farm (Kent, UK) and The Mayhew (London, UK). Its employees are also keen on charity work, often volunteering at dog shelters and the local community food bank.

40k

Meals donated (or cash equivalent) in 2019

600

Hours of employees' social work

500+

Dogs taken care of in the two shelters



### THIS

SECTOR
Alternative Proteins

INVESTMENT DATE 2019

LOCATION London, UK

Founded in 2018, (Plant Meat Ltd, trading as) THIS produces **hyper-realistic meat alternatives** using plant-based ingredients. The company is based in London and employs 6 people. THIS products look and taste like actual meat helping "vegicurious" customers transitioning towards plant-rich diets.

#### **CHALLENGE**

THIS tackles the environmental impact of cattle farming and meat production on global resources (land, soil and water to name a few): 16% of protein consumed worldwide is indeed meat, and requires 70% of agricultural land and hence is unsustainable. While people have already started eating less meat, there is still a poor offer of attractive alternatives.

#### **STRATEGY**

The meat industry is now under a lot of scrutiny due to its environmental impact. Global livestock represents 15% of all human GHG emissions. It is one of the main causes of deforestation, soil pollution and inefficient use of ressources, as beef steak needs, for instance, about 4,500 liters of water throughout its production process.

THIS products are predominately made from soybean protein, pea protein and water. Soybean is a healthy leguminous plant, high in nutrients and minerals offering essential amino acids. The soy used by the company has been certified GMO-free. Besides, the company plans to move away from soy and has started research with alternative sources of plant-based proteins. Peas are particularly efficient from a soil occupation perspective. While 920 sqm of land are required to produce 1kg of beef, 415 kg of peas can be obtained on the same surface. THIS products are fortified with vitamin B12 and iron to deliver balanced nutrition. They are high in protein and do not contain nitrates nor antibiotics. By comparison, in the UK, 1kg of average meat contains 50 mg of antibiotics. Finally, THIS has obtained one of the highest food safety grade certifications (AA grade) from the British Retail Consortium.

1,2kg

of CO2 emitted per kg of THIS vs 50kg for 1kg of beef 121

liters of water per kg of THIS vs 4,500L for 1kg of beef 15%

of global GHG emissions are due to global livestock





"We have quickly realised that it was urgent to eat less meat to decrease our environmental footprint. The obvious conclusion, was to make our own plant-based meatalternative products." Andy Shovel, CEO

THIS packaging is made by RAP, a market leader in food packaging. It contains 90% less plastic than common packaging and is fully recyclable. THIS products can be kept for 28 days, a shelf life far longer than fresh meat and the company is thinking about launching a frozen offer to lengthen it further and contribute to food waste reduction.

Five Seasons Ventures has invested in THIS because it is addressing one of the biggest dietary shifts in the food industry, towards plant-based diets, and it does so with a clear environmental strategy, a sustainable supply chain, clean ingredients and minimally processed products. THIS is considering establishing an internal R&D center, to continue its effort to use ever more sustainable and healthy ingredients and processes while moving away from soy.



#### **GIVING BACK**

During the coronavirus crisis, in April 2020, THIS gave over one ton of their food to City Harvest London (CHL) and Made In Hackney (MIH). These two charitable organisations usually collect food surplus from restaurants, hotels and caterers and offer it to underprivileged families. While restaurants and other food services were closed, the team at THIS stepped in to provide free food to these charities and help those in need.

1,056kg

Food given to two charitable organisations 80k

meals distributed in one week by CHL 3,000

tons of food rescued to date by CHL and MIH





Created in 2012, Cortilia is an Italian foodtech company, offering an innovative model bringing seasonal Italian super-fresh food to the online generation while aiming at high sustainability goals. It has 37 direct employees and it employs more than a hundred indirect labour staff in logistic operations

#### **CHALLENGE**

Demand for convenience is growing in the food industry, as modern consumers continuously fight between the quest for wholesome, fresh and seasonal food and the lack of time to choose, buy and prepare it. More responsible consumers are also showing increased interest in sourcing from local producers and farmers supporting them and the associated environmental benefits of locally sourced food.

#### **STRATEGY**

Cortilia is the perfect embodiment of a company at the edge of technology on one hand, and promotion of local craftsmanship and sustainable production on the other. It appeals to conscious buyers interested by the very best seasonal and organic products. Cortilia's reach is not limited to urban and tech savvy customers, it is also benefiting members of local communities as more than 50% of deliveries are made to small to medium municipalities in the North part of Italy.

Since inception, Cortilia has carefully selected and curated 2,000 products (including fruits and vegetables, meats, fish, dairy, eggs and bread) from local and artisanal producers. To keep the supply chain as lean and short as possible, Cortilia established long term relationships with more than 200 of these suppliers (who normally do not have access to large retailers), and used technology to boost their efficiency and challenged them in delivering consistent quality and sustainability of their products and services. For instance, suppliers have access to Cortilia's operations system and can check in real-time the estimated incoming orders, hence reducing lead times and allowing a near-zero food waste.

2,000

Super-fresh products available

50%

Organic products 200

**Partnerships** with local producers and farmers

<1,5%

Of food wasted



"Cortilia's philosophy is made up of a unique set of ingredients: a large variety of flavorful food, freshly harvested products, craftsmanship and respect for the environment." Marco Porcaro, CEO

> 700kg of food donated for a single charity event in 2019

11,400 People helped every day by the Food Bank of Turin

The delivery of fresh products is an expensive and complex process: that is why Cortilia has full control of its processing and logistic operations, in order to make the process more efficient and less wasteful. Founder and CEO Marco Porcaro's previous startup was a route-planning software business, which is used today by Cortilia to minimize the mileage between deliveries made by its refrigerated vehicles (1.3 million km driven in 2019) and helps reducing GHG emissions by 10 to 20% on average. Furthermore, Cortilia's fleet is made of last-generation vans, powered by low impact fuels.

Since Five Seasons Ventures has invested in Cortilia, the topics of sustainability and social engagement have been discussed at Board level. Five Seasons Ventures is also a supporter of the CEO's plan to obtain the B-Corp certification in the coming years. Cortilia plans to provide detailed measurement of its carbon footprint during 2020.



#### **GIVING BACK**

From day one in its history, Cortilia has donated the daily unsold products to the Food Bank of Lombardia. Cortilia has always been at the side of this organization contributing to the fight against poverty. Cortilia also engages in noble causes: throughout the month of October 2019, it supported the Italian Cancer League prevention campaign, designed to raise women's awareness about breast cancer prevention tools. Since the beginning of the coronavirus crisis, Cortilia has increased its usual donations. It has for instance offered 10,000 meals to workers of a Hospital in Brescia, Lombardy. Furthermore, they have also arranged a priority service and free deliveries to medical employees and eldery customers.







**SECTOR** Nutrition **INVESTMENT DATE** 2019

LOCATION Munich, Germany

Munich-based YFood was founded at the end of 2017 to create a nutrient-rich, healthy and convenient drinkable full meal solution for millennials. The company has already grown to over 60 people.

#### **CHALLENGE**

While the demand on millennials' time is ever growing, meal skipping and junk food appear as relevant solutions for up to 88% of young adults. YFood promotes health consciousness and balanced diets with convenient ready-todrink meals, satisfying hunger and providing the body with all the essential macro and micronutrients.

#### **STRATEGY**

YFood ready-to-drink meals are the result of an intensive development work led by renowned food technologists specialized in nutrition, food science and complex manufacturing processes. They contain carbohydrates, proteins, the 26 essential vitamins and minerals, and fiber. The products have a long shelf life of 12 months without the use of preservatives at room temperature. The company has recently expanded its product range with self-mixing powders and vegan versions of its existing drinks.

All YFood products are manufactured in Austria. As the cow's milk represents a major ingredient in the recipes, a sustainable sourcing was a key concern for the company. After long research, all its milk proteins are now supplied by small local farmers, with small herds with an average of only 12 cows, guaranteeing raw material quality, animal welfare and support to the local economy.

100%

Of the essential vitamins and minerals

100%

Recyclable bottles

Average number of cows per farm



Whether with our drinking meal or drinking powder - we want to do our part to curb excessive junk consumption. food We want to make it easier for even more people to find a balanced diet." Noël Bollmann, CEO

Packaging-wise, YFood bottles are 100% recyclable and made from 30% of recycled plastic. However, dealing with single-use plastic is one of YFood's current top corporate priorities and the company aims at getting rid of plastic bottles. It is already scouting innovative options worldwide to make the jump as soon as possible.

Consumers in most European countries are supplied via YFood's online shop. In order to promote sustainable logistics initiatives, the company offers large size orders. Instead of being delivered every week, consumers can choose to receive YFood products only once every six weeks.

Backed by Five Seasons Ventures, YFood intends to widen its product portfolio into more plant-based and vegan products, while staying at the edge of eco-responsibility. The company has started an internal carbon footprint assessment of its business, in order to reduce its GHG emissions. It is also considering applying for a social and environmental certification such as B-Corp.



#### **GIVING BACK**

YFood involvement in health-related issues was also concretely translated during the corona virus crisis. At the end of April 2020, YFood had already shipped 12,000 ready-todrink meals to hospitals and clinics in Germany in order to support nursing staff.

3,000

Individual packages shipped to hospitals



12,000

Bottles of YFood given during the coronavirus crisis



Founded in 2014, Just Spices is modernizing the spice market, with innovative spice mixes and a digitally-enabled experience. Just Spices employs 70 people and offers two main product lines: Spice Mixes (a range of spice blends) and the organic references "In Minutes" (to be paired with specific recipes).

#### **CHALLENGE**

Just Spices tackles the increasing desire from consumers for fast, handy and yet still healthy food offers. With 120 different spices offered in single, mixed and ready-to-cook versions, the company allows people to take back control of their time and prepare their own dishes thanks to a most convenient offer.

#### **STRATEGY**

Because all spices are not created equal - there are enormous differences in intensity and aroma - Just Spices sources high quality products from International Featured Standards (IFS) and BIO certified suppliers only. The spices meet very strict hygiene standards and are developed, tried and bottled in Germany.

The company pays a strong attention to deliver spices with intense aromas without any added artificial flavoring. All their spice mixes are 100% natural and free from chemical additives supposed to boost taste. At the end of 2018, Just Spices launched an organic range called In Minutes. The content of these spice pouches, for 2 to 4 people, can be directly mixed with easy to prepare recipes such as gnocchi, spaghetti or curry. In Minutes already represents almost 10% of the company's sales and is growing at a very fast pace.

99%

Of recyclable packaging

100%

Natural products 0%

Artificial flavor enhancers

10%

Of sales are organic references



"We are very proud to say that all of our products are 100% natural, reflecting the desire of consumers to eat healthier and healthier." Florian Falk, CEO Just Spices has always wanted to avoid the plastic packaging used by its competitors. It partnered with a German company, Sonoco, now producing almost 260 different designs of cardboard packaging for the brand. Overall, 99% of the packaging used by Just Spices is recyclable.

Just Spices' logistics relies on an external partner, DHL. Beyond the competitiveness of its offers, DHL has made a strong push on the «green logistics» market and is on the mission to become the industry benchmark for responsible business practices. As such, it wants to achieve zero GHG emissions by 2050.

Five Seasons Ventures strongly supports Just Spices initiatives. In the forthcoming months, the company intends to further strengthen its real-time data collection and analytic capabilities to optimize its product portfolio and reduce waste. The company also focuses its effort on growing its organic range and refine the upstream traceability of its different spices.



#### **WELL-BEING AT WORK**

Since inception, Just Spices has developed a very strong policy of wellbeing at work. Employees are regularly included in discussions regarding the future of the company, its recruitment and social policies. It explains the strong results of the surveys conducted internally showing that 87% of employees declare being very satisfied of their current job.

87%

Of the employees feel very satisfied at work 56%

Of women in the company

28

Average age of the employees



Founded in 2017, Yamo is a Swiss startup that produces and delivers chilled organic baby food. Thanks to a strong partnership with organic certified skilled and reliable production and logistics partners, Yamo's consumers can receive food for their babies at the doorsteps or find it in dedicated refrigerated shelfs of supermarkets. High pressure processing (HPP), a cold pasteurization technology, enables Yamo to provide a product that is less processed and retains the freshness of home made meals.

#### **CHALLENGE**

Progress in healthy and sustainable food has not reached babies yet. Noting that the existing offer of baby food is represented by over-processed products, Yamo wants to provide a fresher, natural and nutritious alternative for babies and a convenient choice to their mothers.

#### **STRATEGY**

Yamo sources its fruits and vegetables from organic certified suppliers. Most of them earned the Demeter organic label and others are biodynamic producers. Large part of the ingredients are locally sourced from Switzerland and Germany. Those which cannot be bought in Europe, such as mangos and bananas, are all Fair Trade certified.

HPP technology is indeed milder than heat pasteurization. Products are exposed to a pressure up to 6,000 bar inactivating microbes that can spoil the product or even be harmful. Vitamins, natural color, smell and taste are retained, not undergoing thermal damage. At the same time, product shelf life is extended up to several weeks in the fridge with no need for any preservatives. Yamo committed not to add artificial additives, flavor enhancers, salt and sugar to its products. As quality and safety are Yamo's top priorities, the company tests all raw materials upon receipt, and has each production batch tested by independent and certified laboratories.

100%

Organic products 100%

Recyclable packaging 0%

Artificial additives, preservatives, and flavor enhancers



"How is it possible these days, to sell in the supermarket baby food older than the child who eats it?" Tobias Gunze nhauser, CEO

Yamo's packaging are fully recyclable PET cups and pouches, free from bisphenol A. In addition, all the cardboard used by Yamo for its secondary packaging is recycled.

For its deliveries in Switzerland, Germany and Austria, Yamo's logistics partners with DHL. Beyond the competitiveness of its offers, DHL has made a strong push on the «green logistics» market and is on the mission to become the industry benchmark for responsible business practices. As such, it wants to achieve zero GHG emissions by 2050.

Five Seasons Ventures is delighted to support the company in its desire to refresh the baby food market and making it healthier and more sustainable.



#### **GIVING BACK**

Since its foundation, Yamo has developed an extremely ambitious giving back program. It supports families in need and hungry children in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and in the poorest regions of the world by providing them Yamo porridges. This initiative has reached so far 86,000 children. The goal is to increase this number up to 100,000 children worldwide by the end of the year.

86,000

Children supported since the inception of the company



2 Jumb

Number of charities supported by Yamo



#### Five Seasons Ventures

Venture Capital Fund investing in food and nutrition early-stage companies www.fiveseasons.vc







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