

**Nominated for the Public Eye Positive Award 2007**

**by Hivos (Humanistisch Instituut voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking), Netherlands**

## **Eosta**

Headquarters:	Waddinxveen, The Netherlands
Branch of trade:	Food
Turnover / Profit:	€70 million / €1 million (2005)
CEO:	Volkert Engelsman
Owned by:	Triodos Bank (principal shareholder)
Employees:	70 (2006)

### **Summary**

*Eosta is a successful and innovative Dutch produce company that offers a large selection of organic and/or biodynamic<sup>1</sup> certified fruits and vegetables. Eosta is committed to high standards of quality, and consistently advocates organically sustainable and ethical production. To encourage the increasing responsibility of both producers and consumers, Eosta developed, based on documents on transparency regarding production and processing, the pilot project Nature&More. This innovation makes it possible for the consumer to find information on all production steps of Eosta products via their Web site, it motivates producers to continually improve their production standards, and at the same time it encourages transparency in the production chain.*

### **Responsible Corporate Behavior**

While most companies concentrate on maximizing profits, the Dutch produce company Eosta takes a different path, demonstrating that economy and ecology can go hand in hand. With transparent production under fair conditions, Eosta places more emphasis on ecological and socio-ethical values.

Eosta sells a wide selection of fresh fruits and vegetables in the Netherlands. All products result from organic and/or biodynamic cultivation and carry certificates in accordance with international standards. In addition to the cooperation with certification organizations and the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IOFAM), Eosta also supports organizations in the global organic movement. It aims for long-term relationships with producers and is committed to the interests of consumers and other concerned parties. To increase demand and production, Eosta promotes organically-grown produce in the marketplace, and thus supports its producers.

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<sup>1</sup>An ecological and sustainable agriculture system based on the anthroposophical teachings of Rudolf Steiner.

In the fresh produce market, certificates assure consumers that international standards are observed. However, more precise information about production conditions are usually not obvious. Eosta responded with the creation of its pilot project *Nature&More*. Eosta always emphasized transparency and thus meticulously tracked the social, ecological, and economical In- and Outputs during production and processing. Based on these reports, the unique quality assurance system *Nature&More* was implemented, resulting in a web service to be accessed at [www.natureandmore.com](http://www.natureandmore.com). Every Eosta product is equipped with a purple label containing a special code. When that code is entered on the *Nature&More* home page, the history<sup>2</sup> behind the product is presented. Eosta costumers learn that their choices make a difference. *Nature&More* became an independent foundation in 2004, and today it is a supplier to the most important vendors in the European organic produce market, such as Coop, Migros, Edeka, Rewe, and Carrefour.

### **Achievements**

Eosta has created a pioneering instrument for the organic market with *Nature&More*. The project stands for complete transparency, which encourages the social and ecological quality of products, since producers want to meet the demands of consumers. Eosta received special attention for *Nature&More* from the Dutch and German ministers at the 2004 World Organic Trade Fair in Nürnberg. In 2005, it was honored with the Dutch Corporate Social Responsibility Award which is given to agriculture enterprises that take their responsibility towards humankind and the environment seriously.

### **Further improvements**

In the future, Eosta hopes to further enlarge the market for the production of organic products, to sign up 20 new importers of tropical fruits for *Nature&More*, and to accompany the foundation on its way to autonomy and financial independence. The Web site should also be extended, so that small farming concerns can be included. In addition, Eosta is planning a ranking system that compares and evaluates producer's output. This should motivate producers to make further quality gains and to reward them for exceptional products. In order to make the most consistent evaluations possible, Eosta is in discussions with certifying organizations and is advocating the harmonization of rating standards.

### **Further Information:**

- [www.eosta.com](http://www.eosta.com)
- [www.hivos.nl](http://www.hivos.nl)
- [www.natureandmore.com](http://www.natureandmore.com)

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<sup>2</sup> Information regarding the country of origin, the production steps and their locations, and the production standards