



Living Wage Banana Project

Several Dutch supermarkets* who are affiliated to the CBL signed the 'Living Wage Banana Commitment' in 2019. The aim of this commitment is to ensure that Dutch supermarkets selling bananas source them from farms where the workers are paid a living wage. Three years after the commitment, a total of 332 banana farms have signed up to the tracking study. This is substantially more than the 217 who did so in the second year. An analysis of the third year reveals an **average living wage gap of 15%**. Compared to the second year, fewer plantations have this gap. Here are the other results:

About the study

- The information provided by 332 banana plantations was taken into account in this study. These 332 plantations account for around 88% of the total volume of bananas bought by supermarkets in the Netherlands.
- Supermarkets in the Netherlands buy 14% of the total banana crop that these 332 plantations produce.
- Of the 332 plantations, 223 did not report a living wage gap, while 109 plantations do have a gap.
- At the plantations that do have a living wage gap, the average difference between their current wage and the living wage is 15%.
- The [IDH Salary Matrix](#) was used to gather the data and support the analysis of living wage gaps.
- Coinciding with the third year of this project, the new Rainforest Alliance certification program started requiring farms to make an annual comparison of the remuneration of all workers against the living wage benchmark using the Salary Matrix. Whilst capacity to audit the Salary Matrix will increase over time, the organization has already reported that from the 272 farms for which Rainforest Alliance certificate holder numbers were made available, 120 are certified. For more information, please visit [this link](#).

Keen to know more?

If you'd like to find out more about the Living Wage Banana Project, then check out [IDH website](#) and keep an eye on the [CBL website](#).



Conclusion

The third year of the Living Wage Banana Commitment gives supermarkets an even better understanding of the opportunities and challenges for those who are trying to close the living wage gap. In doing so, supermarkets are working hard to reveal the root causes of the living wage gap that has been identified. This investigation will help with the implementation of feasible and practical solutions to close the gap between what workers currently earn and the living wage.

Next steps

- The project currently covers for 88% of the total volume of bananas bought by Dutch retailers. The target for the coming year is to roll out the Salary Matrix so that it covers 100% of volumes purchased. Having access to relevant and recent benchmarks is crucial to this.
- During the coming year, supermarkets will continue to push for improvements in the data validation process so that they can ensure that the information is as reliable as possible. They are doing this in collaboration with certification authorities and retailers in other countries.
- Now that light has been shed on most of the range, supermarkets are going to focus even more on formulating and implementing suitable and tangible solutions.