



News release

From Sierra National Forest to farms in California's Central Valley, ofi, USDA Forest Service, National Forest Foundation and Knorr partner on forest resilience and water restoration efforts

Chicago and London, July 14, 2022

onion food ingredients ("ofi"), a global leader in naturally good food and beverage ingredients, the USDA Forest Service, the National Forest Foundation, and Knorr, a Unilever brand, have partnered on a series of restoration projects within the Pine Flats watershed focusing on improving the health and resilience of forested watershed to improve conservation of water resources and reduce the potential impact of severe wildfire. The watershed also plays a key role in supplying water to San Joaquin Valley's communities and farms – California's top producing agricultural region¹.

These initiatives directly address known problems with conifer encroachment on historically open meadows and will also use a series of controlled burns to help maintain ideal vegetation conditions for adequate water drainage and CO2 absorption. Combined, the two flagship programs are expected to replenish over 660 million gallons of water and lead to a reduction of over 80,000 metric tons of CO2 in California's Central Valley, delivering positive impact to regional growers and communities in the process.

Located less than 100 miles from ofi's West Coast offices in Fresno, Calif. and many of its key US processing facilities, the Sierra National Forest and surrounding watersheds across the Sierra Nevada provide roughly 50% of the water to Californians, including that used by ofi's local onion, garlic, and parsley growers².

"ofi's purpose is to be the change for good food and a healthy future, and these latest initiatives support our wider vision to give more back to our environments than is taken out through ingredient production. Not only is this the right thing to do but it's also increasingly what people expect from their food and beverage manufacturers," said Greg Estep, managing director and

¹ Public Policy Institute of California, 2019. "Water and the Future of the San Joaquin Valley."

² USDA Forest Service, Nature's Benefits Infographic: Water.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/r5/landmanagement/?cid=fseprd565422>



CEO, [spices at ofi](#). “We’re incredibly proud to be partnering with the USDA Forest Service, National Forest Foundation and Unilever to build more resilient natural ecosystems and support our local growing communities. We believe these programs will make a real impact on water supplies in one of our country’s most important agricultural regions, and help our farmers cultivate even more produce along the way.”

Dean Gould, Forest Supervisor for the Sierra National Forest stated, “The Sierra National Forest’s proximity to California’s San Joaquin Valley provides a tremendous geographic advantage for this partnership – this work will help sustain and protect a vital watershed that thousands of people, households, and businesses rely on daily.”

“The exacerbated impacts of climate change on the Pine Flats watershed have become clear over the past few years with larger and hotter wildfires leading to sedimentation increases in rivers, creeks and streams. The local communities that depend on healthy forests for clean water, recreation and forest products have found this critical economic resource in peril,” said Mary Mitsos, president and CEO of the National Forest Foundation. “We are thrilled to be partnering with **ofi** and the USFS to restore, protect and maintain these public lands for today’s and future generations.”

From Forest to Farm

In addition to the two major watershed restoration projects, **ofi** is also partnering with Knorr on three further initiatives designed to encourage sustainable growing practices across its supplier farms. These include a project for improving soil health and biodiversity in **ofi**’s key onion and garlic fields with tailored treatment plans, a scheme through which green waste from several Californian municipalities is converted into quality compost, and a third program which aims to reduce water usage and costs for onion crops through drip irrigation.

“Knorr is committed to supporting the growing of food with a positive impact on nature through Unilever’s Regenerative Agriculture Principles which we launched last year,” said Gina Kiroff, North America Marketing Lead for Knorr, at Unilever. “We are proud to partner with **ofi**, the US Forest Service, and the National Forest Foundation as we continue to put these principles into practice to impact nature and climate projects that are good for people and the planet.”

For more information on these new projects and how **ofi** makes sustainable sourcing real across its spices portfolio, visit ofi.com/spices.

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About the USDA Forest Service

The Forest Service manages 18 national forests in the Pacific Southwest Region, which encompasses over 20 million acres across California, and assists state and private forest landowners in California, Hawaii and the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. National forests supply 50 percent of the water in California and form the



watershed of most major aqueducts and more than 2,400 reservoirs throughout the state. For more information, visit www.fs.usda.gov/R5.

About Knorr

Knorr believes that wholesome, nutritious food should be accessible and affordable to all. That's not a reality for everyone in today's America. That's why we're on a journey to ensure all Americans can create healthy meals they feel good about. Whether it's creating high-quality products, offering simple chef-developed recipes, or supporting organizations and initiatives that provide access to healthy foods, Knorr remains committed to its long history of making good food available to everyone.

The business was formed in 1838, when founder Carl Heinrich Knorr pioneered experiments in drying seasonings and vegetables to preserve their flavor and nutritional value. Since then, Knorr® has become an international purpose driven brand offering a wide range of bouillons, soups, seasonings, sauces, soupy snacks, mini meals, side dishes, and meal kits.

About Unilever North America

Unilever is one of the world's leading suppliers of Beauty & Personal Care, Home Care, and Foods & Refreshment products, with sales in over 190 countries and products used by 3.4 billion people every day. We have 148,000 employees and generated sales of €52.4 billion in 2021. Over half of our footprint is in developing and emerging markets. We have around 400 brands found in homes all over the world – including iconic brands like Dove, Knorr, Hellmann's, Magnum, Axe, Ben & Jerry's, Degree, Seventh Generation, St. Ives, Suave, TRESemmé, and Vaseline.

Our vision is to be the global leader in sustainable business and to demonstrate how our purpose-led, future-fit business model drives superior performance. We have a long tradition of being a progressive, responsible business. It goes back to the days of our founder William Lever, who launched the world's first purposeful brand, Sunlight Soap, more than 100 years ago, and it's at the heart of how we run our company today.

The Unilever Compass, our sustainable business strategy, is set out to help us deliver superior performance and drive sustainable and responsible growth, while:

- improving the health of the planet;
- improving people's health, confidence and wellbeing; and
- contributing to a fairer and more socially inclusive world.

While there is still more to do, in the past year we're proud to have achieved sector leadership in S&P's Dow Jones Sustainability Index, 'Triple A' status in CDP's Climate, Water and Forest benchmarks, and to be named as the top ranked company in the GlobeScan/SustainAbility Sustainability Leaders survey for the eleventh consecutive year. For more information on Unilever U.S. and its brands visit: www.unileverusa.com. For more information on Unilever Canada and its brands visit: www.unilever.ca.

About National Forest Foundation

The National Forest Foundation, chartered by Congress, engages Americans in community-based and national programs that promote the health and public enjoyment of the 193-million-acre National Forest System, and administers private gifts of funds and land for the benefit of the National Forests. Working on behalf of the American public, the NFF leads forest conservation efforts and promotes responsible recreation. We believe these lands, and all they provide, are an American treasure and are vital to the health of our communities.

About ofi

ofi (olam food ingredients) is a new operating group born out of Olam. **ofi** offers sustainable, natural, value-added food products and ingredients so that consumers can enjoy the healthy and indulgent products they



love. It consists of industry-leading businesses of cocoa, coffee, dairy, nuts, and spices. ofi has built a unique global value chain presence including its own farming operations, farm-gate origination, and manufacturing facilities. **ofi** partners with customers, leveraging its complementary and differentiated portfolio of 'on-trend' food products, to co-create solutions that anticipate and meet changing consumer preferences as demand increases for healthier food that's traceable and sustainable. To subscribe to the **ofi** newsroom, please visit www.ofi.com (privacy statement [here](#)). If you do not wish to receive information from **ofi** please contact media@ofi.com. Follow [@ofi-group](#) on LinkedIn.



About Olam

Olam is a leading food and agri-business supplying food, ingredients, feed and fiber to 17,300 customers worldwide. Its value chain spans over 60 countries and includes farming, processing and distribution operations, as well as a sourcing network of an estimated 5 million farmers. Headquartered and listed in Singapore, Olam currently ranks among the top 30 largest primary listed companies in terms of market capitalization on SGX-ST. Since June 2020, Olam has been included in the FTSE4Good Index Series, a global sustainable investment index series developed by FTSE Russell, following a rigorous assessment of Olam's supply chain activities, impact on the environment and governance transparency. The FTSE4Good Index Series identifies companies that demonstrate strong Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) practices and is used by a variety of market participants to create and assess responsible investment funds. More information on Olam can be found at www.olamgroup.com. To subscribe to the Olam Newsroom please visit www.olamgroup.com and read the Privacy statement [here](#). If you do not wish to receive information from Olam, please contact media@olamnet.com.

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