

Circular coffee – can we make coffee sustainable?.mp3

Matt Eastland [00:00:06] I think it's fair to say that people all across the globe love coffee. The British Coffee Association found that in 2021, British consumers drank up to 98 million cups of coffee a day. In the same year in Europe, over 35 billion cups were drank and globally this works out to be over 9 billion kilos of coffee a year that we consume, which is a lot. And as I say, we love coffee, but such demand for our daily cup of Joe has brought with it some undesired consequences with coffee growing trading and production often having negative impacts on both our physical and social environments increased water scarcity, deforestation and poverty, to name but a few. So the industry is in need of sustainable change. But is that actually happening? Hi everyone, I'm Matt Eastland and welcome to the Food Fight Podcast. And in this episode we're diving into coffee industry issues and hearing more about all the sustainable solutions, breathing new life into this booming industry. And for this conversation, I'm joined by two innovators obsessed with coffee and passionate about sustainability. First of all, I'd like to welcome head of coffee from Kiss the Hippo Kane Staton. Kiss The Hippo is one of London's most innovative and sustainable coffee companies, being the first in the city to produce carbon negative coffee. They opened in 2018 and since then have been a hub for sustainable innovation focussed on protecting the planet and its people. In many ways they're helping revolutionise the coffee industry and I can't wait to hear more about the work they're doing. Kane, it's a pleasure to have you on the show.

Kane Statton [00:01:43] Hey, pleasure to be here.

Matt Eastland [00:01:45] And also joined by co-founder and CEO of Café Bueno. Juan Medina Café Bueno is a B Corp company utilising coffee By-products converting spent coffee grounds into ingredients for personal care products, functional foods and beverages. Café Buenos mission is to better utilise coffee waste and to fully exploit its health properties in an environmentally friendly way. Really excited to have you on the show, Juan.

Juan Medina [00:02:09] Pleasure to be here. Thanks for the invitation.

Matt Eastland [00:02:12] So coffee and sustainability. Can we just take a moment then, just to be clear on what we're actually talking about, because I guess the word sustainability gets bandied around a lot. So what does the word sustainable mean to the coffee industry and to you specifically? Kane, Maybe we can start with you.

Kane Statton [00:02:30] I think on the producer side, the farming side, that means farming in ways which are long term effective, both economically for the farmer and then obviously for the planet, for the soil, for the farms. So that's what's going to sort of first springs to mind in speciality coffee. I think there's been a huge focus on quality. Number one, improving the actual taste of coffee. Secondary to that, there was obviously a huge push towards sustainable buying practices, so paying farmers more for that quality, so then producing high quality coffee are paying them more money and then they can, you know, not be in poverty like a lot of coffee farmers are, I think. Then thirdly, now there's been more of a focus on the economy side of things and making sure the soil is healthy, making sure that they're looking at the environment, not using too much water, etc.. So I think that's a newer side that's been brought in the last couple of years.

Matt Eastland [00:03:26] Great. Thanks very much, Kane. And one of you, do you sort of see this the same way from your perspective?

Juan Medina [00:03:32] Yeah. I mean, there are too we want to put it in a very simplistic term. It's of course, about responsible, let's say, production and responsible consumption. And I think the take a as you mention us, we like a lot coffee, coffee as being one of those crops that has been industrialised in a way in some countries. Of course there are different practices here and there, but always this push of society in general to get the cheapest option always has pushed farmers for to, let's say, for conditions that might not be the best ones for the environment and for society at the end of the day. And that, in my opinion, has what has skyscape a lot of different consequences. As mentioned, I think responsible consumption has been put by, let's say, the third wave of coffee, a speciality coffee that focussed more on the quality and the willingness to pay for that quality and appreciation for the actual work that is done at the farms. I think that of course as help and has. Let's say you try to balance or change the balance sheet to a more responsible consumption and a better coffee value chain. And then of course, comes the wage component. That is where we work, I think. I mean, coffee has been so good as Barrick that we have totally forgotten that it has so much more things left there. And that's kind of what we focus on, trying to make more aware that work that farmers to brilliant.

Matt Eastland [00:05:15] Thanks, Juan and I definitely want to get into the whole the whole idea around is that coffee waste and how we repurpose it. But before we get into solutions, I really think it'd be great to hear about all the amazing work you're both doing because, you know, having done some research on you both, obviously there is a lot of what, you know, amazing things that you're doing. So, Juan, maybe we can continue on with you. So I understand that you and your co-founders are all from Colombia and that coffee is very close to your hearts. So how did the idea of for Café Bueno, how did that start? Where did you begin?

Juan Medina [00:05:50] Yeah, as you mentioned, where I originally from, Colombia, the three co-founders actually, when how it started looking for when we started in London. We work and study there for almost four years. And in 2016, the war started last year there. Coffee farmers in Colombia were going at the moment into a price crisis because they were getting paid less than the actual market price. So they were losing money basically. So it was a hot topic in Colombia at the moment. I'm office a community and it goes back and forth. We're in a better place today, but the moment that was the problematic time. So we were seeing all these waste basically that was being created in London. I was in a job interview and then the CEO of this company started talking about the shift to our economy. And we have been talking about upcycling coffee. Initially we wanted to do like a coffee shop where people bring back their ground, so we give them back things in return. Yeah, I mean, a lot of things came to each other and we started developing this concept of Biorefinery going back in Colombia Coffee, as you said, for more than just a beverage. You use it in food, in bakery, in confectionary, or for example, your grandma also puts it in your wallet if you fall into the ground. So, I mean, there are different uses that you have seen growing up. So yeah, that curiosity helped spark on site researching more if all these good things were stealing the coffee grounds after it was consumed. And yeah, I mean, we develop a business plan, we apply to a start up visa program that in my case, they really like it. And we were younger at the moment in time. So we we said, well, I mean, you just people think that there is something good here. Maybe we should jump into it and the rest is history. Now here we are.

Matt Eastland [00:07:47] Basically amazing. Love it. And on your website, you talk about unlocking Coffee's health potential. So what health potentials are you in looking exactly and what sort of products are you working with to do that?

Juan Medina [00:08:01] Yeah, I mean, was also anything like a, you know, friends circle with the people that we initially we discussed even before we give away, you know, for me and for my partner was quite annoying that many people relate that coffee was bad for your health. Somehow some people have that connotation and they related to some toxic stuff, which didn't make any sense, eh? Because, I mean, there's more than hundreds of studies that associate coffee consumption with different health benefits. Of course, like everything, there's a limit. Then there say, let's say like they say the virus, everything is poisonous at the setting dogs and.

Matt Eastland [00:08:43] Necessarily everything in moderation.

Juan Medina [00:08:44] Right? Exactly. So but they I mean, they say what we're trying to focus basically is kind of to reverse engineer coffee from that sense. So we're trying what we have been doing is looking into the different health benefits that has been associated to the beverage. And we have been trying to break down the coffee to different molecular compounds. And then in the lab we run different cell lines in beta studies to try to find a hits that are related to these particular parts. And that's part of what we do and how we do it. But around obesity, cardiovascular diseases, I mean, for, you know, the urine, I mean, coffee's amazing, really.

Matt Eastland [00:09:25] Well, we'll probably have it need to have another podcast about a health benefits of coffee than just you know because again, reading about it, when Cain and I were just talking before we recorded about the polyphenols and I know that's just one tiny, tiny element of all the great things that coffee has in it. So thank you very much. One. Cain. I know that having a positive, sustainable impact on the coffee industry is really what Kiss the Hippo holds really close to its heart. And online, you say you're serious about coffee, even more serious about nature, which is fab. So what inspired the idea for Kiss the Hippo? And also you have to tell our listeners about the origin of the name. Just just to get back in the.

Kane Statton [00:10:07] Way as the name suggests. Yeah, there is a focus on nature as well as coffee. And yeah, we started in 2018, in Richmond, in London, and we now have four cafes across London, and yet we see that the main focus is, is quality of coffee, as you just touched on. But alongside that, we're an organic certified roastery and we try to buy either certified or organically farmed coffees. Mostly we can get into sort of why, but that's mainly to do with the benefits on on soil and and on carbon sequestration and that sort of thing. And the name actually came from the owner. It's just it's favourite animal. It's sort of a fun name. I always tell people, like when you look at coffee registries around London, around the world, they always have these quite like masculine aggressive names where it's like roast house or workshop or whatever the name is. It's quite an aggressive, manly sounding industrial name and kiss. They're both quite fun, you know, it's it's a nice name and yeah. Is it was the founders favourite Adam also sort of made sense.

Matt Eastland [00:11:09] Got it. Yeah. It definitely stands out as a brand name.

Kane Statton [00:11:11] Yeah, for sure.

Matt Eastland [00:11:13] I mean, I think you start to touch on this, but I know that you're the. The first carbon negative coffee company in London. Yeah. First of all, congratulations. And secondly, what does that actually mean? So you're not carbon neutral in carbon negative? How are you achieving that? What does it mean?

Kane Statton [00:11:27] Yeah. So you may also hear the term climate positive. They're both basically the same term. So it just means we are basically the 50% more carbon that we're offsetting than we're producing as a company. And that's that's what that means. And we do that with a company called On a Mission and they are a reforestation project and we plant most of our trees in the poop. And yeah, you're probably seen actually in the press. Some of these companies are a little bit maybe not doing what they should be doing. They're planting trees in some parts of China where they can't grow, but also we're making sure we're working with a sustainable and legitimate reforestation company. And then basically most of the emissions as a coffee roastery come from the transportation. So that's shipping coffee from Colombia to London. That's where most of the emissions are produced. So we are offsetting that plus 50%.

Matt Eastland [00:12:15] Got it. And that's clear. Thank you. And I know that you're doing loads of other stuff, but you have to tell me a bit about your lowering smart super eco roaster that you have.

Kane Statton [00:12:25] Yeah, so that's a coffee roaster. They make them in San Francisco. Actually in the US is like a recirculation roaster. So part of the air that's used it basically most roastery roaster. Sorry, they're like big cast iron drums and they're powered by gas and there's a big flame at the bottom. And then that drum will spin as a little bit different is more like an oven. I guess it's more convection based rather than conduction based. And it has like a patented recirculation technology where it uses less energy so it can be up to 80% less energy than a more traditional wow roaster. It's a little bit cleaner as well. It produces less smoke, less carbon going into the air. And you kind of see you can kind of use these roasters in more residential areas rather than just in big warehouses because they are a little bit cleaner, a bit less smelly, a bit less noisy.

Matt Eastland [00:13:15] Makes me wonder why, you know, all coffee roasting companies use these types of types of roasters, but maybe it's a cost thing. I'm not.

Kane Statton [00:13:23] Sure. I think that's probably. Yeah, correct to assume.

Matt Eastland [00:13:26] Okay, fair enough. Got it. So I guess we've already started to talk a little bit about solutions, so let's go with it. And I'd like to ask you both the same question. So how can we make coffee more sustainable and what needs to happen? And maybe you can use some examples from both your sides. You know what change needs to happen here to make the industry much more sustainable? One, What do you think?

Juan Medina [00:13:49] I mean, I think it's a systemic and general change. And, you know, they everyone has to do its part. But I think, of course, it's value chain effort in general. I think there's no one act for that. Can Really? Of course. Yeah, you can catalyse change, but you need, of course, help of the other parts of the value chain, how we approach it in Q4 when we start. I mean, our mission since day one, again, exploration, the coffee waste was more to help farmers in Colombia using those new value, profits, revenue, whatever value is, and bring it back to coffee farmers in Colombia in the form of education and technology that will help them improve their farming practices, efficiencies and yeah, have better practices. The biggest emission drivers in the coffee value chain is of course the farming part, which can be done of course much better. And then the waste board that is done, we work. So we try to focus on reducing directly that waste by valorising it into actual food for human consumption. Because coffee is a super food and I mean you can use it for compost or fertiliser or, you know, burn it for energy, which is

better than landfills. But still there's like a pyramid of hierarchy of food waste. Maybe you have seen it that of course, first you can try to avoid the food waste initially, but if you cannot avoid it, you should put it back into the food value chain. So that's kind of where we focus us on the with the successes and we're trying to what our project is to try to help them Valorise, Side streams and origin to produce more better fertilisers, organic fertiliser or what. We are also trying to work on a system to help them reuse the water that is a big part of their emissions. So that's kind of our approach.

Matt Eastland [00:15:54] I think I read somewhere that 99% of coffee is being wasted from this process. Is that right?

Juan Medina [00:16:00] In general, yes. I mean, Eastern countries rely maybe 10 to 15%, but it's maximum normal coffee. Yeah, that's what they use.

Matt Eastland [00:16:11] Yeah. So basically what you're looking to do is obviously once people have had their coffee, you're taking the the spent grains and granules and then you repurposing into something which I guess makes really great use of water, whatever's left, right, Correct.

Juan Medina [00:16:24] Ideally even a better use than what it was before. Difficult to to do but yeah.

Matt Eastland [00:16:31] Yeah. Okay. Ideally better. Good. And came from your side, you know. How do you think coffee can or should be made more sustainable?

Kane Statton [00:16:41] I think on a farm level, I think using regenerative techniques is probably the main one. I think we're actually starting to see some coffee farmers becoming certified carbon neutral like we are, and they're doing that through the use of like cover crops and having 60% plus trees on their farm. So one thing you might start seeing is a thing called shade grown coffee. And especially in India, 60% of their land is dedicated to cover crops or trees, and this basically absorbs more carbon, sequesters more carbon, and also means that coffee plants take less carbon to produce the cherry to produce a kilo of coffee. So I think that's that's one aspect. And then also we need to sort of figure out a solution for shipping. At the moment, I don't know of too many solutions to basically filling up a container on a on a ship and shipping it across to the UK. Some people are working on like sailboats that are powered by either solar or wind that are transporting coffee. But at the moment that's that on quite a small scale. It's not done on a large scale, it's not done by the container load. So we do need to figure out the the transportation. I mean, that's a major hurdle right now to making coffee more sustainable. Also with speciality coffee, we've seen an increase in fermented coffees, natural coffee, as we call them. And this basically means when we pick the coffee cherry, we're drying it inside that coffee cherry. That's two seeds. Those seeds are basically the roasted bean that we get at the end that you guys see with natural coffees. You just ferment the whole cherry. So there's about 90 to 95% less water usage doing this method. So that's a lot more energy efficient as such. Yeah, there's loads of little, little things you can do to improve the sustainability of coffee and make sure it's produced in a in a cleaner way.

Matt Eastland [00:18:28] And on the point about fermented cough, is this something that keeps the hippo already doing or is this something you're looking into?

Kane Statton [00:18:35] Yeah, we're already doing the majority of our offering is a natural process, coffees or fermented coffees. Sometimes these are called dry process as well.

And you're seeing it really widespread now across lots of registries and coffee producers. It's becoming more and more common. There also are ways of traditionally coffee is washed out. You'll see it's called wash process. There are now methods where they're pulping the cherries, the coffee cherries before they're washing them. And this can also reduce the water usage quite heavily. So yeah, farmers, especially in Colombia, actually that's putting to the forefront of the of the movement for fermented coffees. They're always working on ways to reduce water usage and reduce energy usage.

Matt Eastland [00:19:13] Perfect. Thank you very much. And Kwame, you know, just coming back to you and just picking back up on the wasting it. I guess what I'm really interested in is do you think we'll ever be able to have a fully circular coffee production system? Do you think this is always going to be quite niche or is this is this the way that things are moving?

Juan Medina [00:19:32] I think, of course, increasingly every year there's more and more awareness of of the situation. So I think eventually we will get there. Well, that's a very that's a very good question, because as you mentioned, it's 9 million kilograms of steel that are laying around and there is a huge logical component on that. Not so much, I think, sometimes about the willingness of doing it or not. You said there the logistics might be complicated in different scenarios because of course coffee consumption is very distributed, which makes it a bit more complicated. But I do believe that in the future, yes, a lot. Eventually, probably ideally in the next ten years, 30 to 40% of the coffee being wasted right now will be repurposed into some added value applications, not what is done right now for sure.

Matt Eastland [00:20:28] Positive. I like that. Okay, great. And I guess moving from the environmental to the social aspect of coffee, I mean, you you've both spoken about the importance for, you know, making sure that the standards of farmers in, you know, where coffee is being farmed is, you know, a really high level. And and Cain, I know that kids the hippo pays 50% above the fair trade price which is again, brilliant initiative, I guess, for our listeners. What are the ethical issues around farming coffee? Do we all need to be aware of one, maybe we stay with you and then Cain, maybe you can chip in.

Juan Medina [00:21:06] I think very much depends, say, or in the country and the practices that the country has. I think that that, of course, influenced a lot. But I what I do believe is that, I mean, I think there are some new companies around the world that say that might try to antagonise coffee farming on the farmer itself and try to come up with their internal the solution that they say it's more climate friendly, which might or might not be true. And I think that's a bit sometimes one sided because of course you can not solve a problem and then create another one. I think coffee is a very important crop around the world and farmers can be part of the solution. As Jane mentioned, if farming is done the right way can be carbon positive. Right? I'm no, we're not talking about beef or pork. I mean, we're talking about plants at the end of the day that can sequester carbon. So I think if this is done correctly and with the right incentives, they can become part of the solution. But again, trying to replace them or change them and remove them, part of the ago-I think does have a agrees to it. And I that's the word that they know. These coffee consuming countries have been consuming coffee from all these developed countries for a while, and then they just want to change for something that is more shiny right now. I think there's a social component that needs to be taken into account. Again, I don't know the exact solution. Of course, any good effort of making coffee more ethically sustainable is welcome. But I think there are there are different considerations that should be taking into account beyond the environment.

Kane Statton [00:22:49] Yeah, Yeah. I think probably traceability is a really key point. So it's fine saying that you pay more money, you need to make sure where is that money going? Like, are you able to trace all the way back to the farm gate, you know, or is that just going to an importer and then they're giving their money out in some way that you don't know yet? Being able to trace the whole chain from start to finish, I think is very, very important. One of the things.

Matt Eastland [00:23:12] That is not easy to do with coffee, though.

Kane Statton [00:23:15] It's getting easier, it's been traditionally quite difficult. But that's why it's important with your buying practices that you know where you're buying from. And part of that is you see some of the registries in the UK and across the world now are visiting farms either on a yearly or bi yearly basis. So, you know, you can actually go to El Salvador, go and meet the farmers, do a little, almost like an independent audit yourself, check how the work is like because coffee picking is a seasonal thing. They don't work on the farm all year round. Normally they move from country to country to pig, so you can check like the housing, whether they have hospitals or education for children. And look at all of these things. If you're not doing that, then it's more based on looking at the importers you're working with and making sure they have a good trading history, basically, because there are a lot of people out there with questionable practices, I would say in coffee and have been for out there the centuries that we've been growing it. So, yeah, it's getting easier and it's easy if you're buying the right coffee from the right people, if you're buying some sort of commodity grade coffee on the futures market, which is the key market, that's when it becomes a little bit murky and a little bit more difficult. Yeah, So there's different ways of buying coffee and some are traceable once a month. So is down to us as registries to make sure we're buying from the traceable sustainable farms and importers.

Matt Eastland [00:24:36] Which I think is obviously brilliant. And that obviously takes a lot of the the difficulty of choosing the right coffee for consumers. But I'm just sort of thinking about the consumer aspect of this. Obviously, there is a consumer choice piece here, but maybe this is a sort of slightly punchy question, but do you think from your or from what you're saying, from your experience in your companies, do coffee drinkers really care about sustainability? Is this something they're making an active choice on?

Kane Statton [00:25:03] I think they do care, and I almost think if they don't care, it doesn't matter too much because as long as we are making sure that we're paying our farmers the correct price and we are doing the right things, it doesn't matter if the consumer cares that much because they're buying my coffee, they're buying our coffee, and we are then supporting the farmers. So I think it is important people care and they should care. But if they're not, as long as we are doing the right thing, we're still having a positive. Benefit on the whole chain. I think sometimes people just care about a where it's the sort of station logo or Fairtrade logo, and that can be a bit problematic because sometimes vacations aren't the answer. There are some issues of certifications and it's quite a big debate within the speciality coffee industry. KISS the We are certified organic and we do work with certified farms, but that sometimes is a problem. And I think yeah, occasionally, because if they do see a logo, they're like, Oh, I'll buy that. It makes me feel good. But I don't think that's necessarily a bad thing either. Like again, Organic Association Certified Coffees can be great and they can be really good. So whether they care or not is, I don't know, it's hard to say, but as long as we're doing the right thing and many of the companies are doing the right thing, I think we're okay.

Matt Eastland [00:26:13] Okay. And and, Juan, do you agree? Do you think that actually if you fix the problem at source, the consumer choice issue kind of becomes a bit of a moot point?

Juan Medina [00:26:24] Absolutely. I do agree that 100%. I think it's more on our on our shoulder. I mean, as King mentioned, we're the ones buying the coffee warriors and we're the ones doing that know they are just there to, let's say, consume and receive all those benefits that at the end they many of the times they are expecting you are ready to do it. They might they drink it for you if you are not doing it. But yeah, I think there's of course, way more awareness than before. Also, I think this new third way of coffee and all these new fermentation and I mean it's become more appreciated, let's say the, the work that goes into a coffee and it's not simply a shut off caffeine that you're going to take. You know, people actually enjoy stopping for coffee and, you know, taking it slowly, have their own time. And I see a lot of people that, for example, have subscriptions in the house. They have their nice coffees. So, I mean, I think for sure there's a lot of more consumer awareness on the sustainability issue. But yeah, again, I think the idea that consumers are very low part of that equation, I think we have more rights than them to raise their voice. But I think A, the action or execution power is more on the actors in the coffee. But yeah.

Kane Statton [00:27:44] I think, I think one's right. Like there is a base level of quality now that has risen significantly in the last decade, especially in the last five years. And in speciality coffee with the higher quality coffees we have, people are called queue graders. These are people who taste coffee and basically the higher quality, the coffee, the more money we pay for that coffee. So with the quality of coffee rising, a by-product of that is higher prices being paid to farmers and that is consumer driven. So people are enjoying the nicer flat whites or the fruitier filtered coffees. So I think yeah, a little bit of the quality getting better is actually prices are getting better for producers and we are definitely seeing again, I use Colombia as an example all the time, but in Colombia the quality of life for a lot of farmers has increased quite dramatically. So we are definitely seeing some positive movements for sure.

Matt Eastland [00:28:36] Right. Okay, so this is nice then a bit more like a virtuous circle. I mean, obviously there's a lot to unpick, but it seems that what you're saying to me is that if coffee is becoming more sustainable and if the workers rights are actually improving, that effectively then translates to improved quality of coffee, which then means that consumers are really much more appreciating quality coffee and are prepared to pay maybe a premium price, and that then kind of restarts the circle. Yeah. Is that fair? Is that what you mean?

Kane Statton [00:29:03] That's how I see it. Yeah. It's like an elastic approach, you know, to the whole chain. Yeah.

Matt Eastland [00:29:09] Okay. But surely this means that there's quite a big burden on producers though. And I guess if we're talking about going forwards in the future and how to accelerate this process to make coffee more sustainable, it can't just be on your shoulders. So where does the responsibility for change then lie? And I appreciate this is probably one of these things which everyone has to play their part. But other than yourselves, who else need to get involved here to make sure that coffee is then sustainable? So one from your side, is this a policy thing or is this more something you have to do at a country level? Who else can support this process of change?

Juan Medina [00:29:45] I think that's a complicated question. You know, I mean, it should be very simple, but it has so many layers. But I think you say, yeah, again, a little bit of everyone in the value chain and of course you start could be certain incentives from government side too for more sustainable practices purchases. If you can put of course, again at the end day, everyone's running a business. If you can put an additional business benefit into it, I guess that would incentivise businesses to be more sustainable or have better environmental practices. I mean, of course I'll try. I mean from our side try to what arise for waste disposal by then. Of course, going back to the last question, that is not so much about the consumers. Right. And once purchasing big volumes in the market, those are the ones moving the price up and down on where the quality is, not priority rather than the price. So if there could be certain minimum standards for iron ore, I mean, some this goes beyond this conversation, but of course you start companies buying the big volumes who are the ones who can make a bigger impact if they do things in the right way, For example, how the smaller companies like the heap or are doing. There might be the thing by the reforms, you know, they're always yes, late they arrive late to the body when everyone already has done their part. So. But I mean.

Matt Eastland [00:31:18] And that's why we have great guys like you doing the hard work. Yeah, that's right.

Juan Medina [00:31:23] I mean, yeah, I mean, it's. It is. It is what it is. And, you know, they it's if we don't do it ourselves, then, I mean, I think we. I think people like us, any type of company, we would like to take action in our own words and eventually we can do that, change ourselves. We will do it. But of course, yeah, there can also be faster ways.

Kane Statton [00:31:45] Yeah, I think I think one touch on there is like it's kind of is down to the bigger players, the mass commodity traders and the chains. But we are definitely starting to see the chains sort of on, onto the speciality movement and, and definitely take some of the things that we're doing and apply it to their own businesses. So you'll start to see like single origin traceable coffees in the big chains, whether it's Starbucks or Cafe Nero. You will see that now. And I think that's a really, really positive thing. But yeah, I think the responsibility it does rely on probably governments. And then also we need better technology for things like transport, like how do we make ships less carbon emitting and that's obviously down to scientists to, to improve. And probably on the farm level with more down to the agronomy experts in government, all the people who are looking at incentivising farmers to do things better. So whether they should be subsidies for planting more trees, subsidies for using less water, these sort of things would definitely, definitely help. But yeah, for me, it's it's the transport one that I sort of feel a bit like helpless on that. I don't know how we fix that right now without the technology.

Matt Eastland [00:32:57] Alright, maybe a topic for another day. Yeah, that sounds like it probably goes beyond just coffee and like you said, one, this is a very, very complex area, but I really appreciate your thoughts. And again, I can see the hard work that companies like yourselves are putting into trailblazers. So we EIT Food really salute you and support you on that side. So really well done. I'm just thinking maybe a bit broader about any of the great examples of of either coffee companies that you really want to champion who are driving this space or indeed any other companies or great examples that you've seen which are related to the coffee industry that you're big fans of. CAIN You said you haven't seen any great examples of, for example, improving shipping, but are there any companies out there that you think, Yeah, these folks, they're doing an amazing job to support this space other than your good service. Of course.

Kane Statton [00:33:49] Everything I get says probably one person I'd like to show one company is Calendar Coffee. In Ireland. They're a very, very small roastery, but they've just recently done a sustainability report and they have someone who actually works for them who just does sustainability. And they were looking at similar to us organic farming, organic certified farming and soil health. And but one of the problems in coffee is we're kind of like telling these small, tiny smallholder farmers, Hey, we want you to be certified organic. And with that comes cost, obviously, and, and problems. So they've sort of like said to a couple of farmers recently, we know that you're organic in your practices, but you're not certified. So we're going to basically pay for you and help you through that free transition to become organic certified. So yeah, I think canon of Coffee in Ireland, they're really small player, but they're doing some really amazing things. So yeah, definitely respect those guys quite a lot.

Matt Eastland [00:34:41] And from your side, any other great examples that you're saying?

Juan Medina [00:34:45] Yeah, I mean we try, I think in measuring Colombia, I think they're doing some very good work and coffee is very important for also I know farmers in Colombia, they they pay a lot of attention. I think the new generation of, let's say, farmers, they are going back to play more on the farm. They should with nature biotechnology. I mean, they're going back. Not basic, but, you know, using more nature in other abundance. So I think in general, I think Colombia, they put a lot of effort done on being sustainable, on on the quality of the coffee itself to keep that the leadership role that we have in the industry as a country. And then here, I think in the Nordics in general, I think also why we ended up creating a 4.0 in Denmark was because they drink a lot of coffee, but also they are aware of the sustainability and are willing to pay a little bit more for that sustainability in terms of the coffee quality and everything. So yeah, I mean one of our investors that is a public, that is a corporate, they sell a lot of coffee, but they are pretty I mean, they put a lot more effort into sustainability from the roastery, from the sourcing. So I think they are they are doing a pretty good job and we source a lot of our waste or microbe from them. And also another company here in in Copenhagen, which we also have some collaboration going on. They promote a forest coffee. So coffee that is like from a skin mentioned like forest, so has a lot of shade grown coffee. So they have opened stations in Southeast Asia. And yeah, I mean these, these regenerative coffee try to promote responsible consumption. I think that's a also a way that we try we don't show coffee, but we tell our customers or coffee waste producers that this company so good coffee, you can buy to them and we are pressure for us to take it from them.

Matt Eastland [00:36:41] So fantastic. Yes, exactly. One of the reasons I wanted to ask, because I'm sure there are loads of amazing organisations and entrepreneurs who are doing great things in this space, so we really need to celebrate and support them. So thank you both for that. And now looking forward. So it'd be really interesting to get your views on what your big bets for the future of the coffee industry are. So to use a coffee term, what's going to get a caffeine boost and what's going to end up in the compost heap, do you think? So where do you think the coffee industry is going? Why? I'm staying with you. What are your big bets for the future and what's going to change?

Juan Medina [00:37:17] Well, for sure, we're going to change the perception that people see coffee from only being a beverage to being actually a bio based resource. And I think that would be our role, and I'd say we'll do so for sure. I see the future having a lot of coffee, bio refineries around the world doing different bio processing chemicals, ingredients different, let's say, made from coffee. So I definitely think that coffee bio

refineries will be a thing. If I think from now, apart from our smoke, only other people will do it in their own way. Embrace this approach, that's for sure. I also think in farming there will be a lot of innovation. I think eventually automation, robots and things like that would eventually come into play at farm. Do I think that might take coffee to the next level, allow, let's say, to keep some reasonable prices for people while maintaining or improving the living conditions of Farmers Day? But of course, I hope, yeah, this is a wide industry for and that's why I think the nation farming automation and and robots farming will play a future and yeah buy refineries will become a norm.

Matt Eastland [00:38:36] Thank you very much Ram that's a really good forecast and keen what's your view?

Kane Statton [00:38:40] Yeah, I think there'll be a big push towards things like shade grown coffee and farms, looking at how much carbon they sequester versus how much they produce. So I think there's a big focus on that. And I think as a standard, the bare minimum will be farms that are like carbon neutral. I think that's what we will see in the next few years. And then farms that are carbon positive. And yeah, I think the sort of regenerative agriculture aspect and that thing that we're looking at now is going to only become more and more prevalent, sort of going back to that style of farming, using less pesticides, using less chemical fertilisers, using organic methods, not necessarily certifications, but I think this will become more and more prevalent. We still need like a lot of research on farming methods. So whether it's from coffee varieties and say for instance in Arabica, there's only like a hundred varieties that are being researched and in strawberries there's 600. So there's like a lot of research to be done. This a lot of research has been done on soil health and yields and how we can improve yields through natural ways. So yeah, really just like digging down into literally the soil and how we, how we increase yields and yeah, more sustainable livelihoods for the farmers. Yeah.

Matt Eastland [00:40:00] Thanks, Karen. And yeah, we were talking about this before, just before we started recording. It seems to have been a bit of a constant theme. Have we gone through our discussion? We know we keep coming back to talking about more generative methods, bigger focus on soil health, biodiversity and yeah, it feels like we probably need a follow up episode goes just on regenerative and regenerative coffee. I'd love that. So maybe next time. So we're coming to the close of the show. Thank you both for your inputs. We've covered an awful lot of ground, but now that we've unpacked all of this, I wanted to get your honest view. Do you think that the coffee industry will ever be truly sustainable? So from what you're seeing now and your experiences so far and where we're projected to go, do you think we're going to make it as an industry client? What's your view?

Juan Medina [00:40:48] Absolutely. I think 100%. I think one again, as we mentioned, I think coffee will be part of the solution. We just need to do it in the proper way and make it part of the solution. That should be the focus in the next couple of years, how we change or adapt to these different products in the industry and make it part of the solution, I think. Coffee compared to all other crops on Earth. I don't know why he has this special hour that people just love it. There's a sentimental attachment to it, even. I get emotional now saying this amounts it. Yeah, because it's there's there's it's important to people beyond that needs you cannot explain it for people in Denmark and Colombia. I mean there's something that connects all these people around the world. So I think that power beyond description in words is what, of course, will push people and consumers and actors in the value chain to make it part of the solution. So absolutely, I think it will be part of the solution and will keep being one of the most loved plants and various around the world.

Matt Eastland [00:41:58] While loving this passion really like that. And I have to admit, I've I never really made that connection between the fact that everybody loves coffee. And when you then put this all around coffee together, it actually is something that really connects and binds us all. So maybe coffee can be a big part of the solution, and that would be amazing. And Kane, what's your view? Do you agree with Juan?

Kane Statton [00:42:21] Yeah, I completely agree. I think 100% it can be a net positive for the climate, for the environment, and the route to that is actually quite clear. I feel with these farms, with, you know, planting lots of trees and actually being good for the environment. As I said, it's that transport bet for me is the little tricky bit. And with technology I think we can, we can solve that, you know, with, with renewable fuel sources. Yeah. 100%. See the path to it being a sustainable industry and actually a net positive on the environment. Yeah. No doubt in my mind about that.

Matt Eastland [00:42:54] So fantastic. I love finishing these episodes on a real positive. So thank you both for that. And to wrap up, where can listeners go to find out more information about what you do and who you are?

Kane Statton [00:43:08] Yeah. Our website keeps the pocono of obviously there you can buy products, but there's also a lot of information about what we do as a as a company. And we have a blog that's good. And then yeah, we have our cafes in Fitzrovia, Shoreditch and Richmond. So come on down. Yeah, pretty clever comments. Really. The best, the best resource.

Matt Eastland [00:43:25] All right. Thank you very much. And I'm definitely going to visit one of your registries. Yes. And what about you?

Juan Medina [00:43:32] Yeah, like I say, go for one of the com. And we are in all social media. We're also pretty activating. We're very vocal as well. We're not afraid to say what we think and what we believe. So just feel free to follow as there were more, I mean to be company. But we we also publish a lot of the companies that are using our ingredients in the public. So you can also find ways of supporting us and supporting all the different things.

Matt Eastland [00:43:56] Say fantastic. Thank you both. So yes, that just leads me to say a huge thank you to Juan and Cain and thank you, everybody for listening. This has been the Food Fight podcast as ever. If you'd like to find out more, head over to the EIT Food website. W w w dot EIT Food dot EU. And please join the conversation via the hashtag EIT Food. Fight on our Twitter channel at EIT Food. Thanks for listening everyone. See you all next time.