

Carrageenan: Sustainability From Farm to Table

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Over 200,000 tons of dried, farmed, tropical seaweed are produced every year. The majority of the world's red seaweed is farmed by nearly 60,000 family farmers in Africa, the Philippines and Indonesia. These families apply sustainable farming techniques that help to protect and preserve the habitats where they farm.

Seaweed farming is one of the most environmentally friendly types of aquaculture. Tropical [carrageenan](#) cultivation utilizes no chemical treatments, such as fertilizers. Seaweed farms help to preserve coral reefs by providing a sheltered habitat for local species of fish and invertebrates, which increases diversity where the seaweed is grown. Further, seaweed farming does not cause major physical landscape or seascape changes and can serve to mediate green house gas emissions and excess nitrogen in the water that causes harmful algae blooms.

Carrageenan is extracted from red seaweed with minimal processing. It is included in recipes for shelf-stable beverages, dairy desserts, baked goods and many other foods enjoyed across the world – foods that taste delicious with less fat and sugar, foods that are vegan, kosher and halal.

With 7 billion people in the world to feed, it is essential to have products that can travel distances safely and arrive to needful communities intact and nutritious. According to the Harvard School of Public Health, millions of people around the world suffer from protein malnutrition. When used in protein-enriched beverages, carrageenan aids in the extension and protection of the nutritional value of protein while improving the creaminess that is affected by processing. Carrageenan is used to stabilize liquid nutritional supplements for infants and young children, ensuring safe access to nutrition for children, particularly in regions with unreliable water quality where malnutrition is prevalent.

Beyond enhancing nutrition, carrageenan also contributes to the reduction of food waste. More than 1.3 billion tons of food are wasted globally each year. When used in packaged food and beverages, carrageenan enables processes and recipes that extend shelf life, making them more widely available and less prone to waste.

Carrageenan is a valuable food additive that helps to ensure the health, safety and reach of the global food supply. The product of seaweed harvested by hand by farmers across the globe provides a sustainable foundation for the creation of a food system that can feed the world.

To learn more, visit fmccarrageenan.com.