As global markets tighten environmental standards, traceability requirements, and carbon emission regulations, greening production is no longer a trend-driven choice; it has become a prerequisite for export-oriented enterprises.

Agricultural processing is widely regarded as a sector with considerable potential to pursue Net Zero, yet it is also one fraught with significant challenges. Success demands more than technological upgrades within factory walls; it requires a complete restructuring of the entire production chain, from raw material zones to processing, distribution, and by-product management.

In Can Tho City, WestFood Hau Giang Joint Stock Company (Chau Thanh commune) is among the enterprises actively pursuing this vision. The company's Net Zero journey begins at the very source: building a green agricultural supply chain from the fields outward.

A CERTIFIED RAW MATERIAL ZONE, THE FOUNDATION OF NET ZERO

In agricultural production, the majority of emissions do not originate at the factory but in the cultivation process itself, fertilizer use, pesticide application, water management, transportation, and post-harvest by-product handling. Addressing emissions effectively, therefore, requires starting at the plantations.

With a clear understanding of this reality, WestFood Hau Giang has spent years building an integrated production linkage chain with farmers from the ground up. Central to this effort is the development of MD2 pineapple cultivation zones, a variety prized by international markets for its vibrant color, sweetness, and suitability for export to Europe, the United States, Canada, the Middle East, and multiple Asian markets.



Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet, Chairwoman of the Board and CEO of WestFood Hau Giang

In 2017, the company imported MD2 pineapple varieties from Costa Rica into Vietnam, and invited Costa Rican experts to provide technical guidance on cultivation, care, and the establishment of farming practices suited to the Mekong Delta. By 2018, WestFood had begun transferring the variety to farmers for commercial production. To date, the company has developed an MD2 pineapple raw material zone covering approximately 150 hectares across several localities in Can Tho City, including Phuong Binh and Long Hung communes, as well as surrounding areas.

With Costa Rica and the Philippines, the world's two largest pineapple exporters, facing increasing pressure from climate change, WestFood sees a significant opportunity for Vietnam to expand its footprint in this market.

Tran Ba Son, Director of WestFood Hau Giang's MD2 Pineapple Raw Material Zone, noted that global pineapple export turnover exceeds 28 billion USD annually, while Vietnam's share remains comparatively modest, indicating vast room for market expansion, provided companies can build internationally certified raw material zones.

According to Son, however, scale alone is not the deciding factor; production standards are. WestFood therefore deploys a close-knit collaborative model with farmers from the outset. The company

supplies seedlings, provides material inputs, and assigns resident engineers to guide farmers directly in the field throughout the entire production process. Each engineer is responsible for approximately 30 to 40 farming households, accompanying them from land preparation and planting through to the conclusion of contracts.



> In this supply chain, farmers are not alone, the company walks alongside them.
>
> Tran Ba Son
> Director of WestFood Hau Giang's MD2 Pineapple Raw Material Zone

He noted that many heavily acid-sulfate soil areas of Can Tho City, once nearly unworkable and suitable only for grass or low-yield sugarcane, have been transformed through the shift to MD2 pineapple, with many farming families seeing a marked improvement in their livelihoods.

Average pineapple yield now stands at approximately 80 tonnes per hectare, nearly double that of the traditional Queen pineapple variety. After deducting costs, net profit for farmers ranges from 80 to 160 million VND (around 3,100 to 6,300 USD) per hectare.

WestFood has set a target to develop at least 1,200 hectares of MD2 pineapple by 2030, with 50 percent of that area meeting GlobalGAP certification standards and progressively advancing toward carbon-emission reduction benchmarks.

Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet, Chairwoman of the Board and CEO of WestFood Hau Giang, highlighted the surging global demand for organic products, citing a recent market research report forecasting

that organic product revenue will reach 282 billion USD globally in 2026, potentially rising 2.6-fold to approximately 774 billion USD by 2035. This trajectory reflects increasingly stringent international expectations for environmental responsibility and production transparency, challenges that simultaneously represent opportunities for businesses willing to transform and elevate their sustainable production capabilities.

"Net Zero is not simply about expanding cultivation areas; it is the process of building a green agricultural supply chain from the very roots," the company stated.

In parallel, WestFood is also scaling up raw material zones for lotus seeds, mangoes, papaya, and other tropical fruits.

In Long Hung commune, Can Tho City, farmer Nguyen Quoc Trung from My Khanh B hamlet began partnering with WestFood in 2025, converting nearly five hectares of inefficient melaleuca land to MD2 pineapple and papaya cultivation.

Trung noted that WestFood covers initial production costs for farmers, to be deducted gradually after harvest. After approximately 18 months of pineapple cultivation, he expects to net around 80 million VND (3,100 USD)

Beyond pineapple, papaya cultivation is also yielding clear results. Numerous farming households in Long Hung commune have shifted from unstable crops to partnered production with WestFood, following safe agricultural practices using biological fertilizers and bio-pesticides to meet export requirements.

Van Cong Sach, from Tan Hoa B hamlet in Long Hung commune, previously grew jackfruit and apples, crops demanding intensive labor but offering unreliable market outlets. After observing neighbors achieve success through WestFood partnerships, he transitioned to growing more than 700 papaya trees across approximately 7,000 square meters. What reassures him most is that the entire production process is guided and closely monitored by

company engineers, and that every fertilizer or pesticide requires company approval before use.

Similarly, Vo Van Mit from Tan Hoa A hamlet previously worked paddy fields and grew eucalyptus along canal banks. Following encouragement from local authorities to partner with WestFood, he cleared his eucalyptus and rehabilitated his land to plant 1,200 papaya trees. After roughly eight months, the orchard began producing fruit on a continuous weekly basis.



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> Working with the company demands real discipline, you can't just spray whatever you like. Partnering with WestFood means sleeping soundly, without worrying about prices.
>
> — Vo Van Mit

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: REDUCING EMISSIONS FROM FIELD TO FACTORY

Among the most critical elements of WestFood's Net Zero journey is the application of science and technology throughout the entire production chain.

The CEO noted that the company has invested in a modern new factory at the Song Hau Industrial Zone, Phase 1, in Chau Thanh commune, Can Tho City, equipped with highly automated machinery

and equipment designed to conserve energy and minimize environmental emissions. The facility includes rapid Individual Quick Freezing (IQF) systems, a three-tier automated conveyor belt network, automated fruit peeling and cutting machines, automated canned and cup-packaged fruit production lines, and cold and cool storage with a total capacity of 3,000 tonnes. The plant's total output capacity reaches 30,000 tonnes of finished product per year.

WestFood's core product range includes a wide variety of canned fruits, IQF-frozen products, packaged goods, soft-dried fruits, fruit juices, and fresh fruit, with key varieties including mango, MD2 pineapple, lotus seeds, baby corn, corn kernels, papaya, and dragon fruit.









In agricultural processing, electricity consumption is a major operational challenge due to the constant requirements of freezing, cold storage, and continuous processing. Investment in modern production lines therefore not only boosts productivity but also significantly reduces power consumption. The WestFood processing complex also contributes to forming a closed agricultural supply chain, providing a stable market outlet for raw material zones across Can Tho City and neighboring provinces, regarded as an important

foundation for the company's transition to a more sustainable production model.
In addition, the company has deployed a rooftop solar power project to leverage renewable energy. Notably, technological innovation is not confined to the factory, since early 2026, WestFood has begun using unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) to apply fertilizers and nutrients to pineapple crops in the field.
Son explained that the nature of pineapple cultivation makes direct granular fertilizer application impractical, as it can cause root rot. Previously, farmers had to dissolve fertilizer and apply it manually using pressure pumps, a labor-intensive, weather-dependent process. Drone application increases precision, reduces agricultural input waste, and limits unnecessary fertilizer and chemical use, all critical factors in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

WestFood has also invested in an approximately three-hectare nursery to ensure a self-sufficient supply of disease-free seedlings and maintain consistent input quality across the entire raw material zone. Controlling seed quality from the outset helps reduce pest and disease outbreaks, thereby decreasing reliance on chemical pesticides throughout the production cycle.
The integration of science and technology is also reshaping farmers' mindsets about production. Rather than relying primarily on experience, farmers are increasingly producing in accordance with technical protocols, traceability requirements, and international standards.



WHEN BY-PRODUCTS ARE NO LONGER WASTE

Among the most distinctive elements of WestFood's Net Zero strategy is a circular economy approach. In conventional agricultural production models, by-products are typically discarded or managed in ways that generate pollution. At WestFood, however, what was once regarded as waste is now viewed as raw material for an entirely new value chain.

Nguyet shared that the company is currently developing a project to produce organic fertilizer from processing by-products such as fruit peels. These by-products are also being repurposed as animal feed, thereby reducing waste discharged into the environment.



More notably, WestFood is researching the use of Black Soldier Fly larvae to process pineapple peel by-products and convert them into organic fertilizer that returns to the raw material zone, meaning factory waste cycles back to the fields as nutrients for crops. This is precisely the kind of closed-loop circular model that many agricultural enterprises are now striving toward.

Beyond this, the company is also exploring the use of pineapple leaves to produce textile fibers, handicrafts, and interior decoration materials. Global demand for pineapple fiber is rising rapidly, driven by the trend toward eco-friendly materials. If successfully developed, nearly every part of the pineapple plant will yield economic value.

> We are building a circular economic loop in which virtually nothing from the pineapple goes to waste.
>
> Tran Ba Son



In an era where modern agriculture is evaluated not only on output volume but also on the capacity to optimize resources and minimize emissions, circular economy thinking enables enterprises to simultaneously address multiple challenges: reducing environmental pollution, lowering production costs, and generating new revenue streams from by-products. This is also a critical pathway for Vietnamese agriculture to advance toward its Net Zero ambitions.

NET ZERO: NOT JUST A TARGET, BUT A PATH THAT MUST BE TAKEN

CEO Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet observed that rapid shifts in international markets are compelling businesses to transform at an accelerating pace. Today's consumers are not only concerned with product quality, but they also want to know whether a product is environmentally friendly, how it was made, and whether the producer takes responsibility toward its community. This is precisely why WestFood has chosen sustainable development as a long-term corporate strategy.

The company is clear that Net Zero is not a communications slogan, it is a goal that must be realized through concrete action. From

investing in energy-efficient facilities and expanding renewable energy use, to building green raw material zones, reducing agricultural chemicals, and developing the circular economy, every initiative represents a link in that chain.



Looking ahead, the company's raw material zones will be guided not only toward meeting export certification requirements, but also toward green, circular farming models capable of supporting carbon credit mechanisms. Achieving this, WestFood believes, requires close coordination among businesses, farmers, regulatory authorities, and financial institutions providing production financing.

Nguyen Thi Giang, Deputy Director of Can Tho City's Department of Agriculture and Environment, stated that the city is fully capable of supplying raw materials to meet the company's demand, provided an appropriate development roadmap is established. Local authorities are coordinating reviews of areas suitable for conversion to MD2 pineapple and papaya cultivation to form concentrated raw material zones integrated with ecotourism and green agriculture development. However, raw material zone expansion must proceed incrementally, with community consent and assurance of stable market outlets.

Expansion without durable supply chain linkages carries significant market risk.
WestFood therefore focuses not only on production, but also on establishing rigorous supply contracts with clear legal validation to protect the interests of both the company and its farming partners, a means of building the trust necessary for long-term cooperation.

To date, WestFood products are available in more than 40 countries and territories, including the European Union, the United States, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, and China. In 2025, amid ongoing economic volatility, WestFood maintained stable operations with revenue growth exceeding 20 percent year-on-year, with export revenue reaching over 490 billion VND (19 million USD).
The company is also progressively developing its domestic market with processed products and fresh fruit tailored to Vietnamese consumer preferences, safe, convenient, and easy to prepare.
With the vision of becoming one of Vietnam's leading agricultural processing enterprises and serving as a brand ambassador for tropical produce on the world stage, WestFood is committed to enhancing the value of Vietnamese agricultural products and delivering the most effective solutions for consumers.






The Net Zero journey ahead is undeniably long, and the challenges considerable. Yet from what is already unfolding across its raw material zones, WestFood is not merely building an agricultural export enterprise, it is methodically shaping a green, circular, and low-emission agricultural model for the Mekong Delta.

In that model, value lies not only in the containers of fruit shipped to markets around the world, but in how those products are grown, more sustainably, more cleanly, and with a longer-term future in mind.