



Consumers' Reasons for Purchasing Sustainable Products Shifts from the Personal to Environmental Responsibility, Finds New Hartman Group Report

Ten years on and consumers still have difficulty identifying sustainable companies is a major finding in Hartman's "Sustainability 2019: Beyond Business as Usual" report.

Bellevue, WA — For decades, the average consumer has been contemplating the maze of headlines, claims, jargon, certifications and corporate and public interest platforms that make up the complex world of sustainability. In 2009, when [The Hartman Group](#) published its *Sustainability: The Rise of Consumer Responsibility* report, America's consumers were reeling from the weight of a catastrophic economic recession. Some of the only bright lights in the otherwise gloomy economic realities of the time lie in those topics that intersect with sustainability (two examples common to both consumers and industry alike, being "saving energy" and another, "hope for a better world").

Our new report, [Sustainability 2019: Beyond Business as Usual](#), uncovers that sustainability as a cultural value and defining concern for consumers has not lost any of its vitality in the intervening years.

"Sustainability is shorthand for a complete moral system of cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes related to a sense of responsibility for the greater good," said Laurie Demeritt, CEO of The Hartman Group, a leading consumer research and consulting firm. "

The report finds that today's consumers are confronted by real and immediate sustainability challenges. Crises no longer seem far away in time or space — even abstract problems like climate change and the permanence of plastic waste have become pressing and present for consumers across segments, and they want progress and solutions.

"While the stakes are getting higher, eroding trust in government and corporations has left consumers hungry for leadership," said Demeritt. "The moral, even spiritual overtones evident in consumers' relationship to sustainability stem not just from a search for hope and resilience but also a sense that collective action and even sacrifice is necessary for progress."

In this tense national mood, consumers appear to be more willing to prioritize the greater good in their purchasing than in the past. In a major shift, 51 percent of consumers now report the environment as their major reason for purchasing sustainable or socially responsible products compared to 32 percent of consumers just two years ago.

About the Sustainability 2019 Report

[Sustainability 2019: Beyond Business as Usual](#) illuminates how the sustainability mindset and marketplace have changed over the years from the consumer perspective. New consumer energy and movement around the climate, the environment, plastics, and economic issues are helping to re-shape sustainability as a cultural value and purchasing consideration.

About The Hartman Group

Since 1989, The Hartman Group has been translating consumer behavior and food culture into strategic growth opportunities for our clients. We are 100 percent focused on the food and beverage marketplace and our clients' interests. We deliver smart, strategic, and tactical advice, engaging collaborative experiences, and comprehensive research and analysis that lead to positive outcomes for our clients. For more information, visit www.hartman-group.com

Press contact:

Blaine Becker, Sr. Director of Marketing
O: 425.452.0818 E: blaine@hartman-group.com