



LettUs
GROW

Annual Impact Report

2020



Welcome to LettUs Grow's first Annual Impact Report

If you're familiar with who we are and what we do, then you will probably already know that **impact** is something that I, along with the rest of the LettUs Grow team, feel passionately about. Positive impact on a global scale is one of the key reasons for LettUs Grow's existence. Our impact is about more than just developing exceptional products that empower growers to be more sustainable, it encompasses how we treat each other, our planet and our communities. I am honoured and very lucky to work day-in-day-out alongside people who share this passion for the future of our planet and the sustainability of our food systems.

The year 2020 will be one to remember for all of us. We have seen how Covid-19 has brought the importance of our food networks (along with many other aspects of our lives!) into clearer focus and food security is now a regular part of the public discourse. As a company, we have continued to grow through the pandemic, bringing on 12 permanent staff and 3 placements, to push the boundaries of growing fresh produce and challenge our existing food systems.

Alongside everything we achieved in 2020, we also set ourselves the ambitious goal of becoming a certified B Corporation (B Corp). For those that don't know about B Corp, please do read on to the next section, but in essence it is a way of doing business that treats triple-bottom line thinking seriously and holds businesses to account on social and environmental performance, transparency, and legal accountability. We have structured this report to reflect the main B Corp pillars as this represents where we are on our journey to define our own sustainability frameworks and processes.

With everything else going on in 2020, we didn't quite hit our ambitious B Corp target, but it's an ongoing process and we have made great strides forward. It is not an overnight process, especially for a fast-growing company and I say this to hopefully help others to understand that the road to certification can take time. There is no question in my mind that it is time well spent and I am proud to say that we're on track for certification in 2021.

This report will be the first of many. It will not be perfect or entirely comprehensive yet, but we hope that it generates discussion, thought or inspiration. Our aim is to be transparent about where we are so that we can measure what matters and create real, effective change in our business and beyond.

I would like to thank you - our customers, team members, partners and supporters - for joining us and championing us on what will be an exciting ride to build food systems fit for the future, that have a net positive impact on our planet!



LettUs Grow Annual Impact Report 2020



Charlie Guy

CEO and Co-founder

“ We have seen how Covid-19 has brought the importance of our food networks into clearer focus and food security is now a regular part of the public discourse. As a company, we have continued to grow through the pandemic to push the boundaries of growing fresh produce and challenge our existing food systems. ”

Our year in review



February

The team moved into a new advanced research centre at Avon Valley.



April

The first system test of Avon Valley farm. Charlie joins the UKUAT Advisory Board.



June

Avon Valley farm is built and commissioned amidst the pandemic. The literature review 'Getting to the Roots of Aeroponic Indoor Farming' was published in New Phytologist.



August

Indoor growing apprenticeship with Pershore College launched.



October

New DROP & GROW product line launched.



December

Multiple DROP & GROW orders secured for 2021 delivery...

January

Announced pre-seed investment of £2.35m to bring first products to market.



March

Worldwide lockdown due to the Coronavirus.

May

By May, five new staff have joined the team, including two c-suite hires.



July

LettUs Grow's new logo and brand pack revealed.



September

A custom installation delivered to a key client.

November

LettUs Grow turns five years old!





SECTION ONE

Governance

An introduction to B Corp

B Corporations are businesses that balance profit and purpose. LettUs Grow firmly believes in delivering value to each of our “4 Ps” – People, Plants, Planet, Profit – and the principle of using business as a force for good in the world.

Since inception, LettUs Grow’s founders, Jack, Ben and Charlie, ensured that triple-bottom line thinking, and the principles behind B Corp, were written into our founding documents. This ensures that the company considers all stakeholders in our decision-making and how we operate.

LettUs Grow aims to become a Certified B Corporation in 2021, proving the highest

verified standards of social and environmental performance and we are confident that we will hit this goal.

This is just the start of the journey for us as we aim to be leaders in providing ethical and environmental solutions to the global horticulture industry. We will be working hard through 2021 to continue to implement new policies and improve how we do things.





SECTION TWO

Workers

Job growth

- ✔ In 2020, we hired 15 people across engineering, operations, marketing and growing. This figure includes apprentices, placements and interns. At the end of 2020 we had 28 permanent staff.

Compensation and benefits

- ✔ In 2020, we became certified as a Real Living Wage employer.
- ✔ We introduced a new fair pay structure that is reviewed annually against market rates.
- ✔ We have an employee share option scheme.
- ✔ We offer 25 days holiday (pro rata, plus bank holidays), 20 days sick leave per year, compassionate/mental health days, as well as flexible and remote working options.
- ✔ We added new employee benefits including a Blinkist subscription and a cycle to work scheme.

Employment practice

- ✔ In 2020, we formalised our previously unofficial policy of treating apprentices, placements and interns the same as permanent staff, with fair pay and autonomy of their own projects.

Work environment

- ✔ In 2020, we took steps to make our work environment a more inclusive and supportive space, including introducing gender neutral toilets and adding extra collaborative working spaces in our office move.
- ✔ We increased the frequency of our company round table from fortnightly to weekly to keep everyone in the know.
- ✔ The Organized Fun Brigade (OFB) planned seven social events, both online and off, to keep the team connected, laughing and engaged.
- ✔ We platformed four lighting talks, employee-led discussions around hobbies and life experiences, to offer an open and honest view into each other's lives.

Some key examples of our plans for 2021 are:

- ✔ We will implement more training opportunities and personal development plans for all employees.
- ✔ We will scale the team by hiring caring, open and honest employees in line with our company values.
- ✔ We will increase our pension contribution.

Sustainable Development Goals:





SECTION THREE

Community

Suppliers

In 2020, we began the process of a sustainability audit of our company. This includes everything from assessing our carbon footprint to an audit of our supply chains. We are working with external companies to assist us in this process, ensuring that everything we do and every company we work with is dedicated to sustainability.

Local

We strongly believe in supporting our local community. We do this by backing local organisations from retailers and creatives, to charity organisations.

- ✔ During the spring Covid-19 lockdown, we began donating fresh produce to food redistribution charities including the Matthew Tree Project.
- ✔ We collectively donated to local charities.
- ✔ We engaged with local schools and organisations to provide positive STEM role models.
- ✔ We aim to use local independent suppliers where possible.

Diversity

We strongly believe in the value of having a diverse, open and inclusive workforce. This desire for equality and fairness is embedded into our hiring processes and working

environment. To learn more about our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, read our 2020 report here. Highlights from the report are:

- ✔ We promoted our opportunities on job boards that advertise to women, the BAME community, refugees, asylum seekers and the LGBTQ community.
- ✔ In 2020, all our job descriptions went through a gender decoder to ensure we are using gender neutral language.
- ✔ We updated our social media policy to make sure all recruitment posts had image descriptions so that visually impaired applicants can read our advertisements.
- ✔ We became signatories of the Tech Talent Charter (TTC). TTC is a pledge for businesses to promote and support diversity in the tech industry.
- ✔ We became members of My G Work, a business networking group and online jobs board for the LGBTQ community.
- ✔ We encouraged and empowered a number of staff members to become STEM advocates.

“ When a storm destroyed the polytunnel from local farming charity, Incredible Edible, LettUs Grow collected and matched donations from staff to help support their crowdfunding campaign, with a total donation of over £400. ”

“ In 2020, we joined Babbasa in their City of Change campaign to provide employment opportunities to young people from underrepresented communities. With our pledge, we will be hiring two Babbasa placements in 2021. ”

Our plans for 2021 include improving our hiring processes to ensure we are reaching diverse audiences and nurturing an inclusive environment for employees to thrive in.

Some key examples are:

- ✔ We will provide unconscious bias training for all employees, not just for those with recruitment responsibilities.
- ✔ In 2021, we will hire two Babbasa placements, starting with a Marketing Analyst.
- ✔ We will expand our advertising channels to reach an even wider applicant pool.
- ✔ We will assess and improve on our network of suppliers, ensuring they benefit their communities.

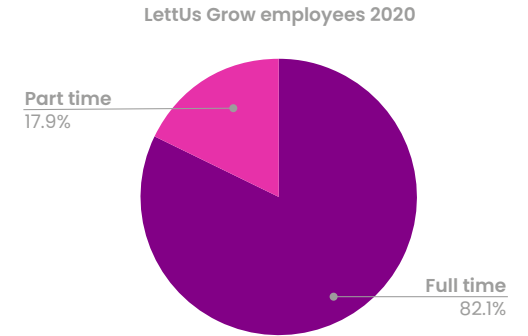
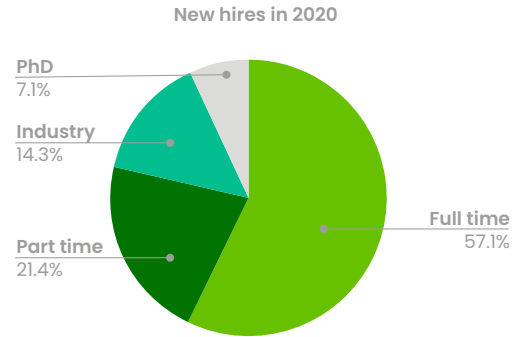
Sustainable Development Goals:



Diversity report: A year in review

Employees

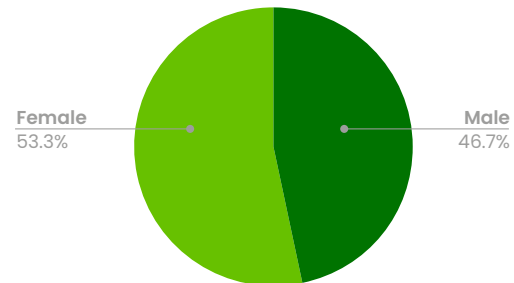
In 2020 we hired 12 employees, welcomed two industry placements and one PhD placement. At the end of 2020 our official headcount was 28 employees including placements and apprentices.



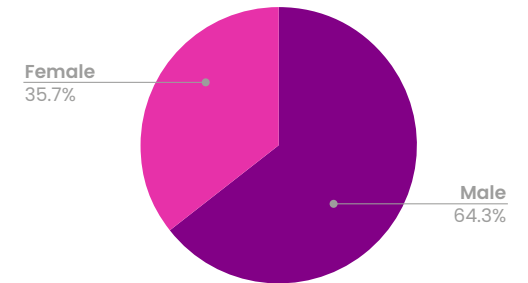
Gender

At LettUs Grow we recognise all genders, not just male and female. Here are the ways our employees choose to identify themselves.

Gender breakdown of new hires in 2020



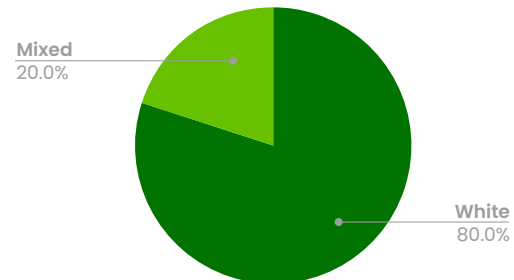
Gender breakdown of employees in 2020



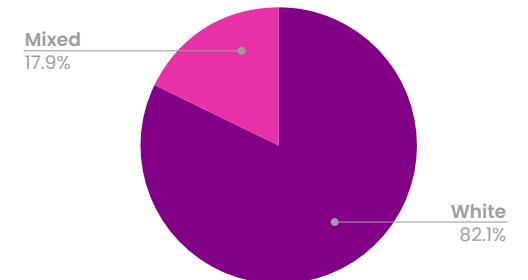
Racial identity

These metrics feed into our recruitment goals for years to come. We want to reach more diverse audiences and promote diversity in the technology and farming sectors.

Racial identity of new hires



Racial identity of employees 2020





SECTION FOUR

Environment

Building a sustainable business



- ✔ All of our energy is from 100% renewable sources like sun, wind and water.
- ✔ We have worked with Octopus Energy to create a dedicated 100% renewable energy Vertical Power Tariff which we can offer to our customers.
- ✔ In 2020, we introduced a cycle to work scheme, encouraging everyone to bike to work.
- ✔ In our 2020 brand pack, we made a marketing sustainability pledge to make sure all the suppliers and creatives we work with meet our standards.
- ✔ We committed to a greener office, using recycled materials, adding additional recycling facilities, and using green office products.
- ✔ In 2020, we developed a draft Sustainability Policy to be signed into our Company Handbook in 2021.

In 2020 we signed the UN Race to Zero recognised SME Climate Commitment to:

- ✔ Halve our greenhouse gas emissions before 2030.
- ✔ Achieve net zero emissions before 2050.
- ✔ Disclose our progress on a yearly basis.

We have big plans for 2021 and are working hard to make sure that sustainability is at the heart of all business operations. We are working through the B Corp process and are putting a number of systems and initiatives in place. We will be running a company wide workshop to work through the issues that are important to us and to move towards a more sustainable LettUs Grow.

Some key examples are:

- ✔ We will assess and improve our supply chain sustainability.
- ✔ We will improve on our Environmental Management System.
- ✔ We will run a company wide workshop to work through sustainability issues.
- ✔ In 2021, we will sign our new Sustainability Policy into our Company Handbook.

Sustainable Development Goals:





SECTION FIVE

Customers

At LettUs Grow our success is our customers' success and our impact is the sum of our customers' impact. We are driven to continue to understand and improve the impact of our products and aim to be world-leaders in ethical and sustainable controlled environment agriculture.

Here's a look at what we did in 2020 to achieve this aim:

- ✔ In 2020, we worked with Dr Ximena Schmidt and Brunel University to understand and build on previous life cycle assessment tools to understand the impact of our products.
- ✔ We undertook a sustainability audit of our supply chains with an external researcher.
- ✔ We implemented new channels of communication and feedback for LettUs Grow customers.
- ✔ We implemented new data collection techniques to understand and model the impact of our newly launched DROP & GROW container farms.

Our plans for 2021 include seeking to better understand the impact of our new products and working with customers to maximize positive impacts.

Some key examples are:

- ✔ We will work with customers to continue to deliver socially and environmentally impactful projects around the UK.
- ✔ We will continue to improve our understanding of the impact of our newly launched DROP & GROW container farms in different environments and geographies through improved product life cycle assessments.
- ✔ We will seek to understand the impact of LettUs Grow's technology in greenhouse environments.
- ✔ We will continue to embed circular design principles into our products.
- ✔ We will develop new models to help understand the impact of any new products.

Sustainable Development Goals:





Thank you for reading our first Annual Impact Report

To stay up to date with our progress over 2021 on sustainability matters and beyond, make sure you [sign-up to our mailing list](#).



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