

Oil Palm: Production, Consumption.. Consequences?

In recent decades palm oil has become an increasingly popular commodity. It is easy to grow and can be cultivated in a space efficient manner, keeping the price relatively low. It has become the second most consumed vegetable product on the planet and is an ingredient in about 20% of packaged food. Though palm oil is economically convenient, the mass production of this crop has major biological and ecological consequences. The rapid growth of the palm oil market contributes to rapid deforestation rates, particularly in Indonesia where most palm oil is produced. This replacement of forest with plantation agriculture threatens many species endemic to Indonesia and releases greenhouse gasses. The production of palm oil also has social costs. Reduced land availability for smallholders results in fewer options for local livelihoods.

Between 1990 and 2000 plantation area increased by **600%**

This land use change accounted for the majority of Indonesia's GHG emissions.

It is easy to consume palm oil unknowingly if it is not labeled plainly. It often hides in ingredients lists under such names as:

Hydrated Palm Glycerides

Sodium Palm Kernelate

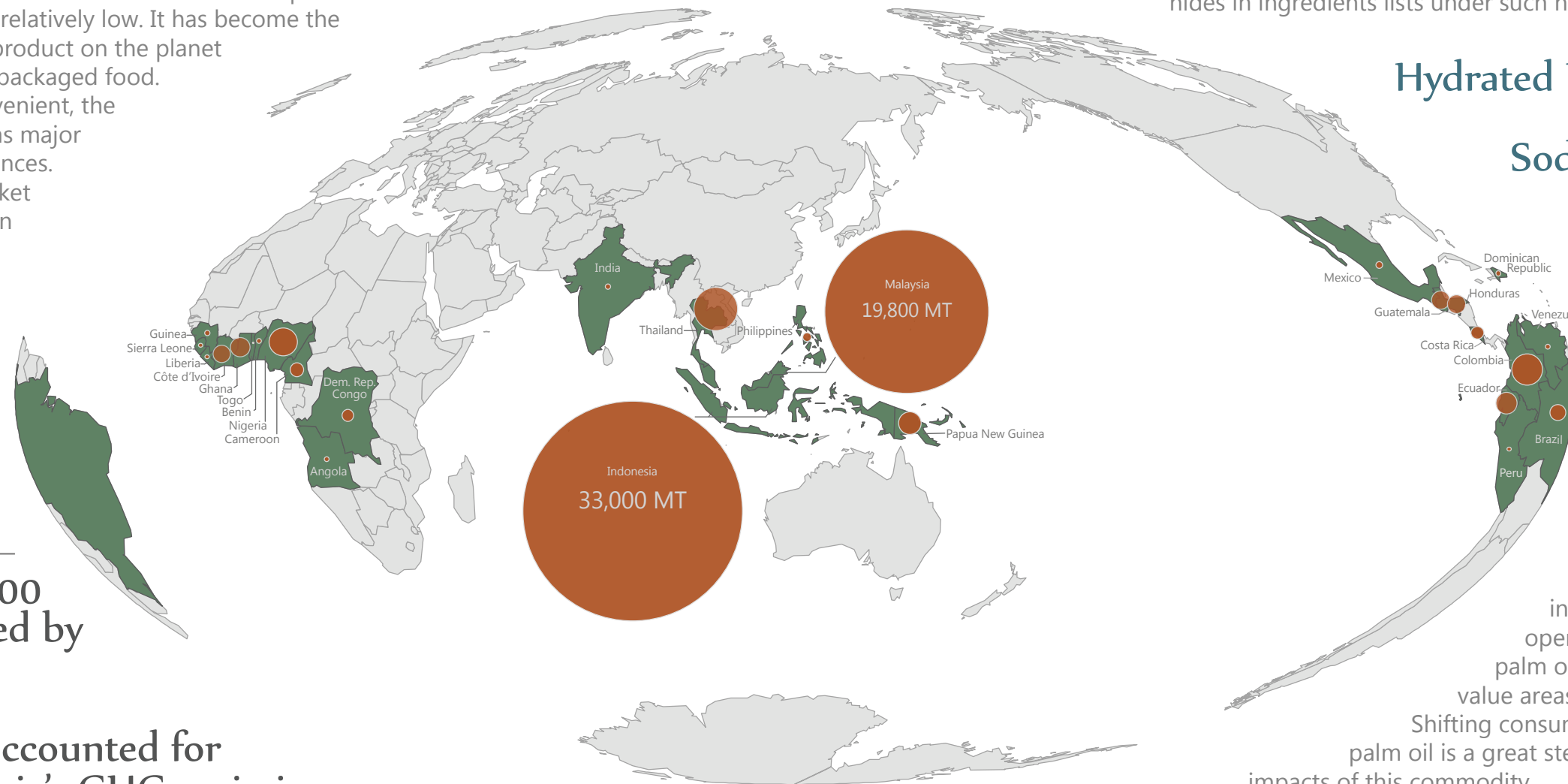
Sodium Lauryl Sulfate

Stearic Acid

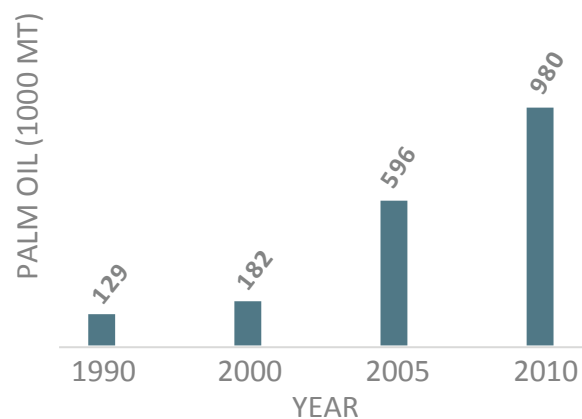
Palmolein

When buying products with these ingredients look for a Responsibly Sourced Palm Oil label. The sustainable palm oil initiative supports more transparent operating processes in the production of palm oil, reduced impact in high ecological value areas, and more positive social impact.

Shifting consumption to responsibly produced palm oil is a great step towards reducing the negative impacts of this commodity.

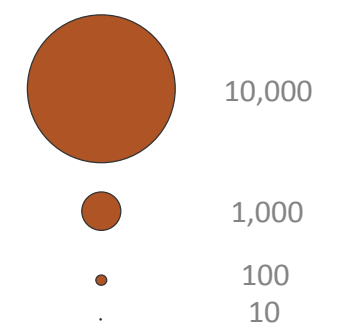


U.S. Palm Oil Imports



Lipstick	Detergent	Instant Noodles	Margarine	Pizza Dough	Shampoo
Palm oil is used in lipstick because it holds color and is virtually tasteless .	Refined palm oil can be used as soaps, washing powder, and other cleaning products.	Up to 20% of the weight of the whole package, palm oil is used to precook instant noodles.	Palm oil is used in margarine because it is solid at room temperature and free of trans fats.	Fresh and frozen pizza dough contains palm oil to prevent sticking and enhance texture.	Palm oil is used as a conditioning agent to help restore natural hair oils.

Oil Palm Production (MT)



Projection: Hammers Aitoff World, Central Merid: 120° Sources: Natural Earth, Index Mundi, Indonesian Forest Information and data, World Wildlife Fund the Noun Project: Amy Lee, Zech Nelson, Pham Thi Dieu Linh, Tom Glass Jr., Guilherme Simoes, Arthur Shlain, Carlson et al (2012). Cartographer: Amelia Rossa, created 12-16-2015