

Sweet life

Tate & Lyle Sugars has a long history of making things taste better

by GORDON CRAIGIE

Henry Tate & Sons began producing sugar cubes in the East End of London in 1878 and, four years later and one mile away, Abram Lyle & Sons started to refine sugar into golden syrup—an inspired innovation from what was previously a waste product of the sugar cane refining process. When the two companies merged in 1921 to form Tate & Lyle, an iconic brand was born. In 2010, Tate & Lyle Sugars was acquired by American Sugar Refining (ASR Group), the world's largest sugar cane refining company.

In the UK, the company still operates from those two original locations. Henry Tate's Thames Refinery is the biggest cane sugar refinery in Europe, with an annual capacity of 1.2 million tonnes, while Abram Lyle's Plaistow Wharf plant produces more than a million tins of Lyle's Golden Syrup every month. Guinness World Records recognise Lyle's Golden Syrup as having the world's oldest unchanged brand packaging, and the company prides itself on its traditional roots.

ASR Group's president (Europe), Andrew Jones, tells the *Connection*: "We've been in the East London Docklands area for over 140 years and, for both the Tate & Lyle and Lyle's brands, that tradition and history is important to us, as is our attachment to the local community. Maintaining the quality of our products is always our major focus and achieving sustainability is absolutely at the forefront of what we do. We're quite an energy-intensive business so reducing



Tate & Lyle products are great for Eton mess cheesecakes and other baked goods.

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CO₂ is a major priority for us, as is having an ethical supply chain."

He adds, "We have a target to reach 100% sustainability in our raw sugar supplies within the next two years, and we're already around 60% to 70% of the way to achieving that." Tate & Lyle Sugars was an early supporter of the Fairtrade movement and is currently one of its major contributors, Jones says.

Other key areas of focus include supporting the local community. Lyle's Local Fund supports local not for profits and community groups in the London borough of Newham. Additionally, in line with customer and consumer priorities, they currently have 93% recycled packaging and are aiming for 100% by 2025. ■

Gordon Craigie is a feature writer and author based in Dundee, Scotland's sunniest city.



COMPANY INFO

Company

Tate & Lyle Sugars Limited

President (Europe)

Andrew Jones

Employees

850 across Europe, including 650 in the UK

Headquarters

London

Website

tateandlylesugars.com

Items carried at Costco

Golden syrup (Item 13568; warehouses only). A variety of sugars (various Item numbers; warehouses/ Costco.co.uk).

Quote about Costco

"The great thing about our relationship with Costco is that it's been long term, and both businesses have proven to be flexible and have high levels of integrity with each other. In today's world you can't really ask for much more than that."

—Andrew Jones, President (Europe)