

Dentons Global Smart Cities & Connected Communities Think Tank

Grow | Protect | Operate | Finance

Smart And Sustainable Agriculture

October 12, 2023

11:30 am - 1:00 pm ET



Moderator: Linda Willard, Counsel, US Energy practice, Washington DC



Opening remarks: Aragon St-Charles, Global ESG Officer, London



Lisa Mather
Vice President, General Counsel at Mars Wrigley

Panelist

Lisa Mather is Vice President, General Counsel at Mars Wrigley. As the world's leading manufacturer of chocolate, chewing gum, mints and other snacking products, Mars Wrigley has operations in approximately 70 countries and distributes its iconic brands including M&Ms®, Snickers®, Twix®, Skittles®, Extra® and KIND® in more than 180 countries. Lisa joined Mars in April 2022 and works with all functions across the business to help deliver sustainable business growth, bring new innovations to market and advance the company's mission of inspiring moments of everyday happiness, and to becoming sustainable within a generation.

Prior to that Lisa served as VP, Legal & Business Affairs and Chief International Counsel at PayPal. Before joining PayPal in 2017, Lisa served as Vice President, Division General Counsel, Asia Pacific at Colgate-Palmolive Company. Earlier in her 9 year career at Colgate, she also held various general counsel and specialist counsel positions in Australia, Europe, the United States and Asia. Lisa began her legal career as a corporate lawyer specializing in mergers and acquisitions, practicing with major global law firms in both Asia and Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Science and an Honors degree in Law from Macquarie University, a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the University of Technology, Sydney, and a MBA (Executive) from the Australian Graduate School of Management.



Jill Kutzbach Sanchez
Director, Sustainability at
John Deere

Panelist

Jill Sanchez is Director, Sustainability for Deere & Company, a position she has held since March 2022. She is responsible for leading the company's sustainability strategy and execution, communicating the company's ESG strategy and outcomes, and overseeing Deere's sustainability reporting.

Sanchez joined Deere & Company in 2011 as Senior Tax Attorney in the Tax Department. Starting in 2016 she served as Senior Tax Counsel, International Tax Planning, where she was responsible for delivering tax optimization through global restructuring and supply chain initiatives. Her most recent previous role was as Manager, Sustainability & Investor Relations, where she was responsible for developing Deere's sustainability reporting strategy and developing the sustainability aspects of the Leap Ambitions.

Prior to joining Deere, Jill worked in private practice at Latham & Watkins in Washington, DC. and Fredrikson & Byron in Minneapolis, MN, where she spent her time on tax matters related to private equity fund structuring and corporate M&A, as well as tax controversy matters at both the Federal and State levels.

A native of Farmersburg, Iowa, Jill graduated in 2004 from the University of Iowa College of Business with a BBA in Accounting. She attended law school at the University of Iowa, earning her JD in 2007. Jill is also a Certified Public Accountant.



Vartan Saravia
General Counsel (Americas
& Pacific) and Corporate
Secretary at HM.CLAUSE

Panelist

Vartan Saravia is General Counsel for the Americas-Pacific region and Corporate Secretary at HM.Clause, a business unit of French Group Limagrain. With a unique governance model where a coop of French farmers own and control the Group and its multiple business units, Limagrain has become one the largest global seed companies, and a major agri-food player in Europe, with subsidiaries in fifty countries and over 10,000 employees across all five continents.

After learning the legal profession's ropes in business litigation practice in the LA area, Vartan joined HM.Clause in 2015 as Associate General Counsel and was promoted to his current role in 2019. He is responsible for the legal function and supports the corporate and commercial objectives and strategic decision-making for HM.Clause and other Limagrain entities within the region. He is a member of the company's Executive Committee and chairs the Steering Committee on Business Ethics and Antibribery.

Vartan obtained his degree in History at the National University in his native Uruguay, after which he relocated to the U.S. and earned his BA in Political Science at Montclair State University, and his JD from Southwestern Law School.

A world traveler at heart, he embraces the company's "Global Reach, Local Touch" motto and enjoys the close connection he builds with his internal clients and external stakeholders, particularly when he gets do it in person along rows of tomatoes, watermelons, and sweet corn.



Walt Duflock
Senior Vice President,
Innovation at Western
Growers
Panelist

Walt Duflock is the Vice President of Innovation at Western Growers focused on helping AgTech startups scale faster and work with growers better. WG Innovation is focused on helping to solve some of agriculture's biggest challenges related to labor, water, and food safety. The WG Innovation team is leading global initiatives around harvest (Global Harvest Automation Initiative) and educating the next generation of ag workers (Next Gen Ag Worker Initiative) that will be part engineer, biologist, agronomist, computer scientist, and entomologist and will help all the needed innovation get implemented successfully into specialty crop farming operations.

Walt is also a 5th-generation family farmer from Monterey County that operates cattle, specialty crops, and wine grapes. Walt has over 25 years of experience in Silicon Valley startups, including eBay, MerchantCircle (acquired by Reply), and APTARE (acquired by Veritas). Prior to Western Growers, Walt helped SVG-THRIVE build the top AgriFoodTech Accelerator.