**Chimay: a socially and environmentally conscious company**

*Do you know the 3 rules required to obtain the Trappist products label?*

* *The product must be produced within a Trappist abbey.*
* *It must be made under the supervision of monks.*
* *The majority of profit must be devoted to social causes.*

As regards the third rule, since they were founded in 1862 and 1876 respectively, the Chimay brewery and Chimay cheese dairy have allocated the majority of their profit to social projects. The Chimay region has received a considerable amount of backing, as well as projects on the international scene. Today, this aid is donated via the *Chimay Wartoise* Foundation (founded in 1996) and the *Solidarité Cistercienne* non-profit-making association (founded in 1989)*.*

In employment terms, Bières de Chimay SA and Chimay Fromages SC total more than 160 direct jobs. As regards the Chimay Group (Bière de Chimay, Chimay Fromage, Discobeer, the Auberge de Poteaupré hotel, the Chimay Wartoise Foundation, Scourmont Abbey, Solidarité Cisterienne, etc.), it brings together more than 250 people. Additionally, the group’s business also generates many indirect jobs in the region.

Chimay also works with almost 250 farmers from the region (via the Coferme Cooperative) to collect milk locally (from within a radius of no more than 30 km from the cheese dairy) which is used to make all the Chimay cheeses.

Beyond these significant human considerations, Chimay also invests in respecting the planet and its resources. Since 1850, when they arrived at the Mont du Secours, the monks in Chimay have worked diligently to preserve the natural resources at their disposal. Today, the company continues to promote this approach through many actions (a water treatment plant, protected zones around the abbey, wind turbine projects, photovoltaic panels, etc.).

Following the Earth Summit in Rio and the Kyoto Protocol, in 2002, the Walloon Region ratified the branch agreement. The FEVIA, Belgium’s food industry federation, then challenged its members to prove their energy efficiency and reduce their consumption of fossil fuel energy. Bières de Chimay, in keeping with its values, undertook a ten year plan to reduce, by 2012, its greenhouse gas index by 10.5% and to improve its energy efficiency by 9.4%.

During this period, many investments were made to meet this challenge: buildings were insulated, photovoltaic panels were installed, a wood pellet fired boiler was purchased, energy recuperation measures were implemented, a water treatment plant was installed, etc. In particular, the entire abbey and its hotel services (100 people) are heated thanks to recovery of heat energy produced by the brewing process.

In 2012, when it was time to take stock, the results were beyond expectations. The greenhouse gas index had been reduced by 44.3% and the energy efficiency index had increased by 34.6%. Chimay was one of the top of the class in Wallonia.

In 2013, the company committed to a second branch agreement for 2020, with a 21% increase for its EEI (energy efficiency index) and a drop of 30% for its GGI (greenhouse gas index) in comparison to 2005.

Although there are still 2 years left, the results are once again more than promising.

To achieve such goals, the company backs up its ambitions with the necessary means.

Each year, the brewery invests between 3 and 5 million euros in its equipment and buildings, in a constant quest to improve its energy efficiency.

In 2019, Bières de Chimay inaugurated its new bottling line in a brand new 4,000 m² hall with 1,200 photovoltaic panels on the roof.

Plans to install a wind turbine are also underway for 2020. It will allow the company to achieve autonomy to the tune of 70% in the production and use of its electricity.

The cheese dairy is not to be outdone with an annual investment budget of between € 300,000 and € 500,000. The cheese dairy production site is in the process of being fully renovated and this work will be completed by 2022.

Nothing goes to waste, everything can be transformed: in its own way, Chimay contributes to the circular economy.

Spent grains

Spent grains are a by-product of beer production and are sold locally (at a fair price) to the region’s farmers to feed their cows.  
Thanks to these spent grains and the quality of the region’s pastures, these cows produce excellent quality milk that is used to make Chimay cheeses.

Water

The water used to make Chimay beers is drawn from three wells located within the premises of Scourmont Abbey. The waste water is treated in the abbey’s own water treatment plant. Once treated, this water is released into the Wartoise River.