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Eng. Saleh Al Shanfari
Group CEO
Oman Food Investment Holding Company

We should redesign our food and energy into a circular system.

Today, most agriculture in Oman is run in linear fashion. We have started to make efforts to be responsible investors by implementing efficiencies and technologies. One example is in dairy production, which now has a circular system that uses a biogas reactor, the first of its kind in Oman. People are not aware that we can convert carbon into food - capture carbon and store and inject it into greenhouses to speed up the production and growth of fruits and vegetables. Our next focus should be on more renewable energy-based food production and better utilization of our plentiful saline water.

Food security intact

Oman ranks second in food security in the Arab world and 32 globally. We have a resilient food reserve system. We are developing projects that are financially sustainable and that can substitute imports. The dairy sector should be self-sufficient by 2025. We are one of the largest fish producers in the world. Our consumption is around 150,000 tons but we are producing half a million tons and should hit one million tons in the next five years. We do need to address shortages in rice, grains and some other products and are looking to invest in opportunities beyond our borders and beyond the region. We are also working very closely with farmers associations across the world, such as in Argentina and Australia to ensure that we secure any needs through contract farming, and all in a financially sustainable manner which does not depend on subsidies.

Setting standards in public engagement

We look at inclusiveness as a major driver. Most of our projects are in rural areas which have very fragile communities that need attention. We provide employment, training, and fully engage the community as partners in what we do through financial, technical, and environmental benefits. Ultimately, they are the customer, and they have to trust in what we do. ■

*Paraphrased comments**

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