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Nestlé Purina PetCare: Transforming Pet Food with Sustainable Protein Solutions

Henry Parkerⁱ stared at the notes scattered across his desk on the 20th floor of Nestlé Purina PetCare's headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri. It was October 2024, and as the newly appointed vice president for product development, he had a mind filled with ideas from a recent meeting with Nestlé's executive leadership. The meeting had made the agenda clear: align all subsidiaries with Nestlé's commitment to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. For Purina, this meant exploring ways to reduce its reliance on traditional meat-based proteins, which were widely recognized as significant contributors to deforestation, water scarcity, and carbon emissions.¹

The COVID-19 pandemic had caused a surge in pet ownership, driving greater demand for pet food, and straining conventional supply chains and traditional sourcing methods.² Parker was thinking about how Purina could accommodate this growing demand while still upholding Nestlé's ambitious sustainability targets.

As he reflected on the complexity of the situation, Parker was well aware that Purina was a legacy brand with over 90 years of history, trusted by many millions of pet owners worldwide. He understood that any changes to the company's product formulations or supply chain had to be implemented carefully to preserve consumer trust.

While the move toward more sustainable protein sources presented hurdles in sourcing, pricing, and consumer acceptance, Parker believed there were viable pathways forward—particularly through alternative protein sources, strategic partnerships, and ongoing innovation.

Logistical considerations also came to mind. He would have to collaborate with the supply chain and legal teams to figure out if sourcing alternative proteins at the volume Purina required meant overhauling existing supply chains, vetting new suppliers for ethical and sustainable practices, and navigating a complex

ⁱ Henry Parker is a fictional character.

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