

# ESA Sustainability Code of Conduct

[October 2022]

The European Spice Association e.V. (ESA) is the umbrella organisation of the European spice industry. ESA brings together the expertise of this wide group of people to promote the use of pure, safe and wholesome herbs and spices that are true to name and provide the quality and safety that is expected by the consumer.

The ESA Sustainability Code of Conduct was developed by the ESA Board and adopted by majority vote at the ESA General Assembly 2022 in Bodrum, Turkey.

## Preamble

By this Code of Conduct, the European Spice Association clarifies and strengthens its commitment to contribute to the implementation of international conventions in the supply chain, in particular with respect to the protection of Human Rights and regulatory compliance. ESA members shall have an understanding for social and environmental risks related to its business and supply chain. Based on a risk assessment, appropriate policies and procedures shall be developed.

The Code defines the minimum requirements that the members of ESA shall respect and work in line with, in their operations and supply chains.

This code of conduct is materially based on the UN Declaration of Human Rights<sup>1</sup>, the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child<sup>2</sup>, the UN guiding principles of Business and Human Rights<sup>3</sup>, the UN Global Compact Principles<sup>4</sup>, The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises<sup>5</sup> and the core standards of the International Labor Organization (ILO)<sup>6</sup>.

## (1) Compliance with the law

All members shall as a minimum requirement comply with national and international legislation in the markets they operate.

## (2) Business ethics

All form of corruption, bribes, money laundering and frauds are prohibited.

### **(3) Child labour**

Child labour must not occur. Every child shall be protected from economic exploitation or from any work that may be harmful to the child's physical and mental health or have a negative impact on the child's development and education.

### **(4) Forced labour**

No form of forced labour or labour linked to any form of punishment is permitted. Documents related to employment shall be at the employee's disposal in a language understandable by the employee. In the work documents related to the employment the statutory severance when the employment ends shall be clear. The employee shall have the right to leave the workplace after completion of working hours and, if so wished, terminate the employment after a reasonable period of notice. No employees may be forced to deposit identification papers in the hands of his/her employer. Should a deposit of identification papers be demanded by national law shall these be at the employee's disposal at any time.

### **(5) Non-discrimination**

Any form of discrimination, on the ground of race, age, religion, caste, national origin, disability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, intimidation, oppression, or harassment is forbidden. Disciplinary measurements shall be fair, clear, and communicated to all employees in an understandable language.

### **(6) Freedom of association and Collective bargaining**

Employees shall have the right to organize themselves in the unions they wish and have the right to collectively negotiate wages and remuneration. Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted under law, the employer facilitates and does not hinder, the development of parallel means for independent and free association and bargaining.

### **(7) Working hours**

Working hours shall comply with national laws or collective agreements and it is strongly recommended that regular working hours do not exceed 48 hours per week. Overtime shall be voluntary and always be compensated at a premium rate and limited unless differently regulated by a collective agreement or by national law. Recommended maximum overtime is 12 hours per week. Proper provision must be made for workers' rest and sleep, with breaks, rests periods and holidays in compliance with national legislation.

## **(8) Wages**

Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards. In any event wages should always be enough to meet basic needs and to provide some discretionary income. Details and wage conditions shall be clear and communicated to all employees in a language he/she understands before the employment may start. A transparent and reliable system for records of working hours and wages shall be in place. Wages shall be timely paid. Deduction from wages as disciplinary measure shall not be permitted.

## **(9) Working conditions**

A safe work environment for all employees shall be provided. Responsibilities shall be defined and to prevent accidents and work-related injuries procedures shall be established. Employees shall as a minimum have access to clean potable water, adequate lighting, temperature, noise prevention, ventilation, and sanitation and if required to clean and safe facilities for food storage and cooking. Employers must provide essential items of appropriate protective clothing and safety equipment, free of charge to workers. Education and training concerning health and safety shall be carried out and documented on a regular basis. Accommodation, where provided, shall be clean, safe, and meet the basic needs of the workers.

## **(10) Environment**

As a minimum there must be a compliance with local and international legislation concerning environmental issues. There should be an actively work for reduction of use of resources, energy, and emissions into air, soil, and water. A safe handling, storage and disposal of hazardous chemicals shall be in place.

## **(11) Implementation**

ESA member companies are obliged to use their best efforts to ensure the implementation of the ESA Sustainability Code of Conduct in their business and supply chain and to verify compliance with the commitments, as well as to recommend their suppliers to implement these rules also with the next level suppliers.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/guidingprinciplesbusinesshr\\_en.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/guidingprinciplesbusinesshr_en.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/what-is-gc/mission/principles>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.oecd.org/daf/inv/mne/48004323.pdf>; 2011 Edition

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>