



-SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER-



COLEACP

- PREAMBLE -

As producers and exporters in the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific (ACP) horticultural industry, and importers in the EU, we are committed to running our operations in a sustainable way.

We understand sustainability as an on-going process towards the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of all those we touch with our operations: customers, consumers, workforce, suppliers, local communities and other stakeholders.

We acknowledge the role that our industry can play in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals and commit to do business in a way that helps promote these goals. We particularly recognise the role we can play in up-skilling workers and managers in the agricultural and horticultural sector, leading to better economic, social and environmental outcomes for our industry and the communities we work in. We also recognise the importance of our industry for food security, and of rural development as a driver for wider economic and social development.

We recognise that sustainability requires on-going commitment of us, as individual businesses, as well as working together with others. This Charter sets out our commitment to sustainability in 7 areas:

- 1. LAWS AND REGULATIONS**
- 2. CORPORATE PRACTICES**
- 3. BUSINESS PRACTICES**
- 4. LABOUR CONDITIONS**
- 5. ENVIRONMENT**
- 6. PRODUCT QUALITY**
- 7. GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES**

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1. COMPLYING WITH THE LAW

As a signatory to the Charter we obey the law and comply with relevant regulations in all our farming and business operations. In particular:

- ▶ We will keep ourselves informed of, and operate our business in accordance with, all relevant applicable laws and regulations.
- ▶ We will transact our business legally, paying taxes, industry levies and licence fees in accordance with the requirements of the law.
- ▶ We will conduct our business with integrity, avoiding conflicts of business interest and fraudulent practices.
- ▶ We will only utilise land and business premises that we have the uncontested right to use.

2. BEHAVING AS GOOD CORPORATE CITIZENS

As signatory to the Charter we act as responsible corporate citizens. In particular:

- ▶ We will be a responsible and constructive member of our local community, striving to contribute to its well-being and long-term economic and social development.
- ▶ We will put in place appropriate management and documentation systems for the matters covered by this Charter.
- ▶ We will be approachable for, and listen to, the concerns of members of the public, local people, and any other stakeholders.
- ▶ We will assist the local community in times of crisis.
- ▶ We will make every effort to reduce disturbance to neighbouring communities from our activities such as noise, traffic, and odour.



3. BEING GOOD BUSINESS PARTNERS

As signatories to the Charter we will be truthful, transparent and authentic in how we transact our business and strive to build strong business relationships, recognising that all our partners need to benefit from the business relationship. In particular:

- ▶ We will act with fairness, integrity and respect towards all of our business partners, including customers, workers, smallholder outgrowers, suppliers, shareholders and investors.
- ▶ We will apply best practice in all areas of management and strive to continuously increase the sustainability of our business.
- ▶ We will take seriously and respond to complaints and grievances from our business partners and other stakeholders.
- ▶ We will listen and respond to the needs and interests of smallholder outgrowers in our supply chain.
- ▶ We will provide written clear, fair and comprehensive contracts for our suppliers (including outgrowers) in a language and format that they can easily understand.
- ▶ We will honour contracts and commitments, pay on time and be fair, transparent and consistent about our terms and conditions, price setting, and any deductions or bonuses.
- ▶ We will provide our suppliers (or endeavour to help them obtain) the training and equipment they need to do their jobs in a way that is safe for themselves, others and the environment.
- ▶ We will respect, and act in the spirit of, free and fair competition.
- ▶ We will inform our customers, suppliers and smallholders of any issues arising which may affect their business, in an appropriate and timely manner.



4. ENSURING GOOD LABOUR CONDITIONS

As signatory to the Charter we safeguard fair and decent working conditions for workers and smallholder farmers in our supply chains. In particular:

- ▶ We will provide a safe and pleasant working environment, free from any form of abuse, harassment, discrimination or bullying.
- ▶ We will publically acknowledge, respect and safeguard our workers' basic rights as laid out in relevant ILO conventions¹.
- ▶ We will listen and respond to our workers' needs and interests.
- ▶ We will provide written clear, fair and comprehensive contracts for workers in a language and format that they can easily understand.
- ▶ We will honour contracts and commitments, pay on time and be fair, transparent and consistent about our terms and conditions, and any deductions or bonuses.
- ▶ We will ensure all workers receive the training and equipment they need to do their jobs in a way that is safe for themselves, others and the environment.
- ▶ We will communicate the above principles to our suppliers, contractors and smallholder outgrowers with an expectation that they will follow equivalent best practice, and that they actively address any discrepancies.

5. PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

As signatory to the Charter we run our operations in a way that minimises any adverse effects on the environment, and that protects natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services. In particular:

- ▶ We will systematically identify, document and monitor any negative environmental impacts resulting from our operations and take steps to remove, reduce or mitigate these impacts.
- ▶ We will engage with and support existing conservation initiatives around the business operation areas.
- ▶ We will protect designated areas of high conservation value.
- ▶ We will only start operations on green field development sites or land that has been newly converted to agriculture if there is documented and satisfactory evidence that all environmental and social impacts have been duly assessed and managed.
- ▶ We will use inputs and natural resources efficiently and in a way that avoids losses and waste.

1. Relevant ILO Conventions are: ILO Conventions 29 and 105 & Recommendation 35 (Forced and Bonded Labour); ILO Convention 87 (Freedom of Association); ILO Convention 98 (Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining); ILO Conventions 100 and 111 & Recommendations 90 and 111 (Equal Remuneration for male and female workers for work of equal value; Discrimination in employment and occupation); ILO Convention 138 & Recommendation 146 (Minimum Age); ILO Convention 182 & Recommendation 190 (Worst forms of Child Labour); ILO Convention 81 (Labour Inspection); ILO Convention 122 (Employment Policy). Although not core ILO conventions, other ILO standards are relevant: ILO Convention 155 & Recommendation 164 (Occupational Safety & Health); ILO Convention 190 & Recommendations (Safety and Health in Agriculture); ILO Convention 154 (Collective Bargaining); ILO Convention 131 (Minimum Wage Fixing); ILO Convention 183 (Maternity Protection).



- ▶ We will adopt sustainable production practices, in particular: by protecting and managing soil, water sources, water quality, and biodiversity; by the efficient use of energy; and by using the best available methods for management of hazardous and non-hazardous waste.
- ▶ We will adopt practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

6. ENSURING HIGH PRODUCT QUALITY

As signatory to the Charter we ensure that the products we grow or handle are safe to use, to consume, and to handle, and are of high and consistent quality. In particular:

- ▶ We will comply with all relevant and applicable food safety, hygiene, trade and phytosanitary regulations, both at the site of production and the site of sale.
- ▶ We will manage food safety and other aspects of product quality in a systematic way and in close coordination with our customers.
- ▶ We will ensure product traceability, at least one step up and down the supply chain.
- ▶ We will avoid post-harvest losses or wasting product at any stage of the supply chain.

7. USING GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE (PRODUCERS & EXPORTERS ONLY)

As signatory to the Charter we strive to farm sustainably by applying good agricultural practice and using best available knowledge and expertise to manage our crops. In particular:

- ▶ We will use best available knowledge and advice in variety selection, planting, soil management, irrigation management, nutrient management, pest management, and harvesting and post-harvest handling; and ensure that that knowledge and advice is extended to our suppliers (including smallholder outgrowers) and contractors.
- ▶ We will operate appropriate management systems for the use of inputs such as water, nutrients, pesticides, and energy with clearly assigned responsibilities and records.
- ▶ We will work towards Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for pests, diseases, weeds and invasive species.
- ▶ We will actively phase out the use of agrochemicals categorised as World Health Organisation Type 1A or 1B, or listed by the Stockholm or Rotterdam Conventions.
- ▶ We will select, store and handle agrochemicals, fuels and other dangerous substances responsibly and in a way that minimises the risk to human health and the environment.
- ▶ We will avoid the use of fire for waste disposal, land clearing or replanting, except where absolutely necessary.





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GROWING PEOPLE