

Ethical Charter

When we – growers, packers, distributors, food service operators, marketers and retailers of fresh produce and flowers - join forces to serve the consumer everyone in the supply chain should benefit. These principles express what we as an industry care about - the wellness, respect and safety of the workers who help us bring the wide variety of fresh fruit, vegetables and flowers consumers enjoy.

These principles seek to provide a framework for coordinated, focused action across the industry. Aware that our industry can attract vulnerable workers, we expect adherence to the law. In addition, these principles are inspired by international expectations because we operate global supply chains. We believe that workers deserve to be treated with dignity, and we are committed to respecting workers' rights and protecting worker safety, while recognizing the cultural and legal differences found throughout the industry and the world. We support transparency in our supply chains, recognizing consumers' desire to understand how their food and flowers are produced.

Our Values

We believe that work in the fresh produce and floral industry should provide economic opportunity for all involved. Both employers, workers, their families and communities should benefit financially as a result.

We respect, value and encourage a positive relationship between the employer and the employee, and intend to support efforts that strengthen that relationship.

We operate in a spirit of cooperation, learning and transparency with our workers, trading partners and consumers. We share information about labor conditions, policies and practices as permitted by law for improving our workplaces and giving workers positive opportunities for success.

We seek to inspire continual learning and progress across the produce and floral supply chain, through education, an exchange of ideas and best practices, as well as by engaging workers and trading partners in validating implementation of these principles.

We believe in personal accountability throughout the supply chain from workers to consumers to deliver our shared vision of responsible labor practices; these values can only flourish as a result of our day-to-day behavior and actions, with each of us working within our individual area of responsibility and strengths.

Responsible labor practices are the right thing to do and our success as an industry depends on it.

Respect for Laws at Work

Occupational Safety & Health

We believe workers deserve a safe, hygienic and sanitary work environment at both work-related sites and/or employer-provided housing. We expect adherence to the occupational safety and health laws applicable to our industry. We have an obligation to identify, prioritize and mitigate occupational risks of injuries and illnesses on a continual basis. Our duty to foster a safe and healthy work environment includes implementing safeguards in relation to: industrial hygiene and sanitation; emergency prevention, preparedness and response; chemical safety; equipment & machine safety; ergonomics; heat stress; ventilation & lighting.

Working Hours

We expect employers to manage working hours in accordance with applicable laws, and to gain agreement in advance from workers for any mandatory overtime. We recognize that agricultural labor needs vary by season, crop and task, and workers are sometimes needed for longer than a standard workweek. We commit to a balance of overtime and rest that supports a safe and healthy working environment.

Wages & Benefits

Employees have a right to be paid for all hours they work. We commit to comply with all applicable legal requirements on wages, including overtime premiums, and to provide any leave and benefits required by law.

Respect for Professional Conduct

Communication & Worker Protections

We believe direct communication between workers and management is the most effective way of resolving workplace issues and concerns. We believe that all workers have both the right and responsibility to voice questions, report in good faith any improper or wrongful activity, or discuss opportunities with a supervisor or senior management. To do so, workers need a fair, transparent and accessible channel for communication and for resolving workplace complaints. We pledge to support channels that meaningfully protect workers from all forms of retaliation, and to ensure that the information they disclose can be used to advance any needed reforms.

Management Systems

We commit to integrating sound management systems, including policies, training, communication and feedback channels, in our operations to comply with applicable labor, employment, occupational health & safety laws governing our industry. We commit to accurate recording and maintenance of all relevant documents regarding business activities, and to accurately disclose (as permitted by law), information necessary to demonstrate compliance.

Responsible Purchasing Practices

We pledge to align our planning and purchasing practices with our commitment to responsible labor practices and workplaces where fruits, vegetables and flowers are grown. This includes trading partners across the supply chain, from growers through retail and foodservice companies.

Ethical Recruitment

We commit to ethical recruitment of workers, which protects against abusive hiring practices. We pledge to only work with labor contractors who share our commitment to the Ethical Charter, who comply with the law, and who seek to mitigate the risks of forced labor, child labor and human trafficking in their recruitment and employment practices.

Respect for Fundamental Principles & Rights at Work

Humane Treatment and Non-Harassment

We uphold the principle that every worker deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, and should not be subject to physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal harassment or abuse, coercion, or the threat of such treatment. We address the need to prevent sexual harassment with training, communication and disciplinary procedures that demonstrate it will not be tolerated.

Non-Discrimination

Equal opportunities for all workers are sincerely and thoroughly respected, including respect for all individuals and cultures. We expect a workplace free from illegal discrimination in any form, where employment decisions are based only on the requirements of the job, not on unrelated personal characteristics.

Protection of Children and Young Workers

We believe respecting and supporting children's well-being requires us to both prevent harm, and actively safeguard children's interests. We pledge to prevent children from work, or being at a work place, that hinders their education or damages their health and personal development. We commit to not hiring workers below the age of employment as established by applicable law in the jurisdiction of employment. If there is no legal minimum age for employment, employees must be at least fifteen (15) years old, unless operating in a less developed country where employment at the age of fourteen (14) is allowed. We recognize that young workers, who can legally work, also desire and deserve economic opportunities, and we offer age-appropriate work and appropriate supervision in such cases. We also commit to identifying and preventing harm to young workers, and protecting them from work that is prohibited or beyond their physical or psychological capacity.

Employment is Freely Chosen

We do not tolerate modern day slavery, such as forced labor, involuntary prison labor, bonded, debt bondage, indentured labor, or the trafficking of persons. All work must be conducted on a voluntary basis, and not under threat or menace of penalty.

Freedom of Association

We respect the right of workers to freedom of association, or to refrain from such activity, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.