

INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

FOR THE PRODUCTION OF CUT-FLOWERS

Preamble

The following code aims to guarantee that flowers have been produced under socially and environmentally sustainable conditions.

The code provides a concise statement of minimum labour, human rights and environmental standards for the international cut-flower industry. Companies should pledge to require their suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors to observe these standards. The code is concise in order to display it in workplaces and in order to avoid any confusion between these basic principles and the application of principles.

An independent body, established to provide independent verification of compliance with the code and to assist companies to implement the code, will provide an auditable checklist of practices and conditions that are consistent with the standards set forth in the code.

The company pledges to observe the core ILO standards, the universal human rights standards and basic environmental standards, which are the base for this code. The company pledges to make observance of the code a condition of any agreement that it makes with contractors and suppliers and to require them to extend this obligation to their sub-contractors. The company accepts that the implementation of the code is subject to independent verification.

The code establishes only minimum standards that must not be used as a ceiling or to discourage collective bargaining. The company shall comply with all national laws and legal regulations. When national law and these criteria address the same issue, that provision which is most stringent applies.

The text of the code, which is intended to be posted where workers can see it, shall also include a means by which workers can report failure to comply with the code in a confidential manner.

Code of Conduct

1. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

The rights of all workers to form and join trade unions and to bargain collectively shall be recognised (ILO Conventions 87 and 98). Workers representatives shall not be subject of discrimination and shall have access to all workplaces necessary to enable them to carry out their representation functions. (ILO Convention 135)

2. EQUALITY OF TREATMENT

Workers shall have access to jobs and training on equal terms, irrespective of gender, age, ethnic origin, colour, marital status, sexual orientation, political opinion, religion or social origin (ILO Conventions 100 and 111). Physical harassment or psychological oppression, particularly of women workers, must not be tolerated.

3. LIVING WAGES

Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week shall meet at least legal or industry minimum standards and always be sufficient to meet basic needs of workers and their families and to provide some discretionary income. Pay should be in cash, direct to the workers, promptly and in full. Information to wages shall be available to workers in an understandable and detailed form.

4. WORKING HOURS

Hours of work shall comply with applicable law and industry standards. In any event, workers shall not on a regular basis be required to work in excess of 48 hours per week and shall be provided with at least one day off every week. Overtime shall be voluntary, shall not exceed 12 hours per week, shall not be demanded on a regular basis and shall always be compensated at a premium rate.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY

A safe and hygienic working environment shall be provided. Companies shall provide free and appropriate protective clothing and equipment, and comply with internationally recognised health and safety standards. (ILO Convention 170) Workers and their organisations must be consulted, trained and allowed to investigate safety issues. There should be regular monitoring of workers' health and safety. Companies shall supply drinking water, provide clean toilets and offer showers and washing facilities. Where housing is provided, it should comply at least with the minimum standards for size, ventilation, cooking facilities, water supply and sanitary facilities. (ILO Convention 110, Articles 85-88)

6. PESTICIDES AND CHEMICALS

Every company should assess the risks of the chemicals used and apply measures to prevent any damage to the health of their workers. Companies shall record and reduce pesticide and fertilizer use by adequate techniques and methods. No banned, highly toxic (WHO I) or carcinogenic pesticide and chemical should be used. Safety instructions and re-entry intervals must be strictly observed and monitored. Spraying, handling and storing pesticides and chemicals should be done by specially trained people with suitable equipment. Stores, apparatus and equipment must be clean, safe, handy and conforming to international standards.

7. SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT

Work which is by its nature not seasonal or temporary shall be done by workers on permanent contracts. Provisions for non-permanent and seasonal workers, including freedom of association, should be not less favourable than for permanent workers. Every worker shall get a copy of their contract.

8. PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Companies should make every effort to protect the environment and the residential areas, avoid pollution and implement sustainable use of natural resources (water, soil, air, etc.).

9. CHILD LABOUR IS NOT USED

There shall be no use of child labour. There shall be no workers under the age of 15 years or under the compulsory school-leaving age, whichever is higher. Children under 18 shall not work in hazardous conditions. (ILO Convention 138) Adequate transitional economic assistance and appropriate educational opportunities shall be provided to any replaced child workers.

10. NO FORCED LABOUR

There shall be no forced labour, included bonded or involuntary prison labour (ILO Conventions 29 and 105). Nor shall workers be required to lodge "deposits" or their identity papers with their employer.

Section of Implementation

1. To overview the implementation of the Code of Conduct an independent body, accepted by all parties involved (for example trade unions, NGOs, employers), shall be formed.
2. This body will set the terms for an independent process of verification of compliance with the Code of Conduct.

3. The companies shall report regularly about the progress made in the implementation of the Code.

4. The independent body shall make provisions for workers, trade unions and other concerned groups to lodge complaints about violations of the Code, which if serious, have to be followed-up.

5. The Code shall be translated into local languages and prominently displayed in the place of work.

Language:

The English version of the text of this Code is the authoritative version.

August 1998

proposed by:

- ❖ IUF - International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations, Geneva
- ❖ Flower Campaign, Germany (Bread for the World, FIAN, terre des hommes)
- ❖ IG BAU - Trade Union for Construction, Agriculture and Environment, Germany
- ❖ FNV - Trade Union Confederation, Netherlands
- ❖ OLAA - Organisatie Latijns Amerika Activiteiten, Netherlands
- ❖ INZET, Netherlands
- ❖ Fair Trade Center, Sweden
- ❖ Flower Coordination, Switzerland
- ❖ Christian Aid, UK