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Guidance Document No. 11

Social Responsibility Certification under the FairTSA Fair Trade Standard

1. Objective

The objective of this guidance document is to clarify FairTSA’s policy regarding the Social Responsibility Certification under the FairTSA Standard Version 3.2.

2. General Considerations

Social Responsibility certification was included out of necessity into FairTSA’s range of standards, as several of our dedicated clients had requested such an “intermediary” certification. We made this decision especially taking into account clients who have a wide range of products and cannot reasonably buy all their products as Fair Trade certified, but are required by their customers – typically supermarket chains – to producer proof of Social Responsibility certification.

3. Conditions for Certification

Social Responsibility Certification requires that all requirements regarding child labor, general fair labor practices, contracts for all workers, regular payment of at least the minimum wage, and occupational health and safety policies as required in Stand Version 3.2 are being kept by the operation to be certified. It does not require the payment of any premiums for fair pricing and community projects. It also does not require long-term relationships. A list of the main certification criteria is listed in section 5 of this document.


4. Use of Social Responsibility Certificate and Logo Use

The Social Responsibility certificate may accompany certified products, but the FairTSA logo must not be exhibited on the packaging of any products for shipping or on consumer-ready packaging.

5. Main Certification Criteria

The criteria listed below are based on the FairTSA Fair Trade Standard Version 3.2. and related Guidance Documents, which in turn are based on the

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applicable conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO). In contrast to many Social Responsibility Programs we always request that importers or major exporters contribute to the cost of the certification. We also request that for all food and cosmetics products the whole chain of production in the country of origin be inspected and certified.

5.1 All Work Must be Voluntary

- 5.1.1** Each and every form of forced or bonded labor is prohibited, as is work carried out by inmates.
- 5.1.2** There is no obligation for workers to submit original passports, identification cards, drivers' licenses or any other form of identification to the employer.
- 5.1.3** Workers are free to terminate work after giving reasonable notice.
- 5.1.4** Forced or mandatory employment of spouses to limit mobility is prohibited.


5.2 Freedom of Assembly and Collective Bargaining

- 5.2.1** All workers are entitled to join or establish Trade Unions.
- 5.2.2** If there are no established Trade Unions workers have the right to organize themselves, meet for at least one hour per month (paid) and establish a worker committee to negotiate with management.
- 5.2.3** Any discrimination because of membership in a Trade Union or engagement in a worker committee is prohibited.
- 5.2.4** Minutes of the meetings of Trade Unions or worker committees must be accessible for inspection.

5.3 Appropriate Wages

- 5.3.1** Workers must be paid at least the legal minimum wage or the prevalent wage for a certain industry. If the latter is higher, the prevalent industry wage must be paid.
- 5.3.2** FairTSA retains the right to set a higher minimum wage if after careful consideration it is determined that the legal minimum wage does not cover basic necessities.
- 5.3.3** All workers including migrant, seasonal and contract workers must be covered under a work contract, which must cover the employment conditions in intelligible language.

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5.3.4 The “Equal pay for equal work”- principle must be employed, regardless of gender, tribal association, or other differentiating factors.

5.3.5 Wage deduction as a form of disciplinary measure is prohibited.

5.4 Work Time

5.4.1 All work times must comply with legal regulations, labor agreements or published in-house rules.

5.4.2 Normal working time should not exceed 48 hours and six days per week.

5.4.3 Work time conditions must be part of the work contract.

5.4.4 During harvest and other peak time 70 hours per week are admissible, if this does not violate legal regulations or existing labor agreements. Work times of up to 70 hours must not exceed six weeks per year. This exemption does not apply for adolescents under 18 years old.

5.5 No Discrimination

5.5.1 Any discrimination because of race, gender, caste, nationality, sexual orientation, or any other differentiating factors is prohibited.

5.5.2 Any form of degrading or inhumane treatment and any form of sexual harassment or any other form of harassment is strictly prohibited.

5.6 Prohibition of Child Labor

5.6.1 Any form of child labor in processing facilities or other production facilities is prohibited.

5.6.2 Adolescents under 18 years of age must be employed under age-appropriate conditions and must not work in dangerous work situations.


5.6.3 Adolescents may work on their parents or close relatives’ farms once they are 14 years old, depending on legal regulations. This work must not prevent available schooling opportunities.

5.7 Occupational Health and Safety

5.7.1 Work conditions must be as safe as possible with regard to the task at hand.

5.7.2 Operations with more than 10 regular workers must appoint a work safety representative.

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5.7.3 Workers operating hazardous equipment must undergo an annual training program. New hires must undergo workplace safety trainings before they are allowed to operate hazardous equipment.

5.7.4 Dangerous work zones must have appropriate signage.

5.7.5 Sanitary installations must be kept clean and easily accessible. Potable water must be provided for all workers at no charge.

5.7.6 Fire prevention measure must be installed, and fire extinguishers must be easily accessible and prominently visible.

5.8 Full-time Work Whenever Possible

5.8.1 Full-time work or part-time work is preferable from seasonal or contract work.

5.8.2 Contract and seasonal work must not be used to circumvent legal requirements.

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