

Extract from the Bio Suisse Standards

## **Social accountability**

Based on the Bio Suisse Standards, part I, chapter 4

### **1 General provisions**

Social responsibility is an integral requirement for certification according to Bio Suisse Standards. The following points are based on the international labour standards established by the International Labour Organization (ILO), and they must be implemented.

### **2 Work conditions**

All employees must have a written employment contract. The management of the operation must provide employees with the following information in a clearly, understandable form:

- a job description
- the salary
- the pay period and mode of payment
- permissible payroll deductions
- working time / free time
- overtime procedures
- procedures and benefits for holidays and leave due to illness / accident / maternity
- health and safety procedures
- recognition of the right to freedom of assembly and collective bargaining
- the period of notice and grounds for dismissal
- possibilities of appeal.

The wages provided must at the least be in compliance with local legislation or existing collective agreements and at levels that are customary in the sector. The maximum working hours shall be governed by regional or national laws for the sector. All employees are entitled to a minimum of one day (24 hours) of leave after working for six consecutive days. Overtime work must be voluntary. Employees must receive overtime pay or compensatory time off.

Operations are obliged not to use forced labour or any type of involuntary labour. If an employee has complied with the terms of notice, the operation may not retain wages, belongings or documents in order to force the employee to remain at the operation.

The same conditions apply to seasonal employees, who must also have employment contracts.

If a subcontractor is hired, the operator has the responsibility to ensure that the subcontractor's employees enjoy the same rights.

The general working conditions must be such that employees are treated with dignity and respect and their physical and mental health are protected. Disciplinary measures must not infringe upon human rights and must be fair and transparent.

Children (under 15 years of age) may not be employed by the operation. In order for children to experience agricultural work, they are exceptionally permitted to perform light and safe tasks under the supervision of adults on their family farm or on a neighbouring farm. Farm work must neither impede children's regular school attendance nor impair their physical, emotional or intellectual development.

### **3 Health and safety**

- The management must ensure that health and safety of the people on the operation are not compromised through their work.
- The management must provide relevant health and safety instructions and training and must supply proper protective equipment. The operator must guarantee access to drinking water, sanitation facilities and medical care. The operator must provide at least the minimum coverage for loss of earnings due to illness, maternity leave or accidents, as prescribed by law. Housing provided for employees must, at a minimum, correspond to standards customary in the region in terms of size, amenities (running water, heating, lighting and furnishings), hygiene (toilets), accessibility, and protection of privacy.

### **4 Equality**

- All employees shall enjoy equal rights, regardless of gender, religion, skin colour, nationality, ethnic origin, political leanings or sexual orientation or any other situation that could cause them to be subject to discrimination.
- All employees shall have equal access to training measures and services provided by the employer (e. g., payments in kind, transportation opportunities, etc.) and receive equal pay, in terms of wages or payments in kind, for equal work.

### **5 Labour law**

Employees shall have the opportunity to exercise their rights. They have the right to associate and to bargain collectively, and they may not be discriminated against or intimidated when exercising these rights. Employee representatives must be able to interact freely with the salaried employees.

### **6 Implementation**

Social responsibility standards shall be implemented on a risk basis. Depending on their level of risk, operations with employees must either furnish an external social certificate or social audit, or confirm by means of a self-declaration form that the Bio Suisse requirements have been met, in order to receive certification according to Bio Suisse Standards.

#### **6.1 Mandatory external social certification or auditing**

The obligation to introduce external social certification or auditing shall be fulfilled gradually and on a risk basis. The list of countries, products and Bio Suisse approved certification and audit programmes undergo regular review and revision.

**List of countries and products:**

Products	Country
Primary production (including packaging or processing on an affiliated production operation*) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fresh vegetables (except seedlings and products that will undergo further processing in the country of origin)</li> <li>• fresh fruit (including berries, citrus fruit and table grapes; excluding seedlings and products that will undergo further processing in the country of origin)</li> <li>• fresh herbs (except seedlings and products)</li> </ul>	France, Italy, Morocco, Peru, Portugal, Spain
Primary production (including packaging or processing on an affiliated production operation*) of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fresh bananas (except products that will undergo further processing in the country of origin)</li> </ul>	All countries of origin

\*Producer groups that have been certified by Global G.A.P. are subject to GRASP audits in compliance with GlobalG.A.P. regulations.

**List of approved responsibility certification and auditing programmes:**

Auditing / certification programme	Comments
GlobalG.A.P. GRASP	Only possible if already GlobalG.A.P. certified.
BSCI Primary Production	
SA8000	Only for plantations without extended supply chains.

**Exceptions:**

- Operations with less than five employees are exempted from this obligation, unless the employees can be represented through the group, as in case of GRASP for GlobalG.A.P.
- Option 2: Operations with an existing social certification according to the standards of Naturland, Evolavia or Valore Sociale need not to perform other social audits.
- For operations with no GlobalG.A.P. certification, or if a certification is not possible, an external social auditing / certification becomes obligatory as of 2016.

**6.2 Confirmation by means of a Bio Suisse “Social responsibility” self-declaration form**

Operations with employees which do not fall under the external social responsibility certification/auditing obligation (1.3.6.1) and which have 20 or more employees must fill out and sign a self-declaration form (checklist) supplied by Bio Suisse.

Operations which meet one of the following criteria and which possess a valid document (certificate / audit report):

- Naturland
- For Life (IMO)
- SA8000
- Soil Association Ethical Trade
- Fair for Life (IMO)
- Ecocert Fair Trade
- FLO CERT (for smallholders)
- Rapunzel "Hand in Hand"
- Union Fair Choice
- GlobalG.A.P. GRASP