

The UK Modern Slavery Act 2015

Transparency in Supply Chains Clause Statement 2021/22

The statement covers the activities of Branston Ltd and Branston Holdings Ltd in the UK up to 31 July 2022.

Introduction

Branston Ltd and Capsicum Holdings Ltd are aware of Modern Slavery risks and associated practices such as forced labour, debt bondage and human trafficking. We recognise the need to put practice in place to combat these risks. We will work collaboratively with our supply chain partners to improve awareness, training and communication to mitigate the risks of Modern Slavery in our business.

We continue to take a risk-based approach which will focus on continuous improvement.

Structure and supply chains

Branston is a farmer-controlled business established in 1968. The company supplies major UK retail, wholesale and food manufacturing businesses with fresh potatoes, sweet potatoes and a range of prepared produce.

Branston's packing activities are all based in the UK and a majority of the products come from UK farms. We do source from other countries to ensure year round supply. The countries sourced from during 2020/21 were: USA, Italy, Israel, Spain, South Africa, France and Holland.

This statement includes the progress the company has made in the last financial year (21/22) and plans for the next year.

Branston supports and works closely with Stronger Together and has policies in place to drive compliance with the Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI) Base code of Labour Practice. The company is an AB Member of the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (SEDEX).

It remains the responsibility of the HR Director to put in place effective measures to ensure compliance with The UK Modern Slavery Act 2015.

We identify the protection of human rights as a core principle of how we operate and do not accept any forms of Modern Slavery or knowingly work with any businesses that do not sign up to these principles.

Relevant Policies

To support our activities to minimise the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking within the business the following policies have been developed and are adhered to:

- Ethical Trade & Worker Welfare Policy
- Equal Opportunities & Worker Welfare Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy (reviewed and updated in 2018)
- Recruitment Policy
- Code of Practice for Labour Providers

Training and awareness

We recognise that characteristics of modern slavery crimes are hidden and we understand that staff need to be trained to identify potential abuse. Our induction includes how to spot the signs and report modern slavery. Key personnel in the Human Resources, Procurement and Technical teams have attended Stronger Together Workshops with more planned for the forthcoming year. An internal online training module is being delivered at one of our sites before being rolled out to the wider business.

We are pleased to report that the plans for the last financial year were actioned resulting in the following steps being taken:

- Additional internal Stronger Together training included in induction programme for Branston and agency new starters
- Introduction of a new Whistleblower line 'See Hear Speak Up' which has been widely communicated and prominently displayed across sites
- Trialled the launch of a Flick on-line training programme on Modern Slavery with a view to rolling out to the wider business
- Members of the Central HR team attended Stronger Together and ethical risk assessment training
- Attended Modern Slavery Intelligence Network Event
- We have continued to screen our potato supply chain through our risk assessment process
- Progress made against the action plan on the Stronger Together Reporting Tool
- Employer Progress Reporting Tool (PRT) for suppliers in UK consumer goods sector questionnaire updated
- As a labour user we are active members of the Association of Labour Providers

Measuring effectiveness

All labour providers were audited twice in the financial year 2021/22. These audits included worker interviews.

We encourage our employees, customers and suppliers to report any concerns related to ethical issues within our business. A monthly report is published on the status of any complaints received through the whistleblowing line, See Hear Speak up. All complaints were responded to although it was noted that the no complaints were received in the previous 12 months.

All sites host regular employee representative 'How we do business' forums, throughout the year, giving workers a voice. A separate agenda item on Modern Slavery awareness has been added.

All raw material suppliers were subject to a desktop ethical risk assessment audit conducted by a member of the Agronomy team. A total of 128 audits were conducted in the year.

Plans for the next year:

- We will monitor supply chains using the new Sedex Radar tool
- Additional plans for checks for improved reporting on B Member Sedex SAQs
- Progress the action plan Stronger Together Progress Reporting Tool
- Plan to introduce unannounced site audits of Labour Providers
- Join Modern Slavery Intelligence Network when eligible
- Host Stronger together training event to Operations and Technical Management teams at all sites
- Promote Stronger Together within the grower base with a communication to coincide with Anti-Slavery week 17 – 23 October 2022

We will work alongside the relevant agencies to actively investigate any suspected instances of modern slavery or human trafficking.

Our Modern Slavery statement will be uploaded to the government Modern Slavery registry

We have made progress in the last financial year but understand that there is more work to be done in this area and we will continue to play our full part to help ensure that the practice is eradicated completely.

This statement is made pursuant to Section 54 (1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our transparency in supply chains clause statement for the financial year ending 31 July 2022. It has been approved by the Main Board who will review and update it annually.



Jim Windle
Managing Director
13 January 2023