

The UK Modern Slavery Act 2015

Transparency in Supply Chains Clause Statement 2019/20

The statement covers the activities of Branston Ltd and Branston Holdings Ltd in the UK up to 26 July 2020.

Introduction

Branston Ltd and Branston Holdings Ltd are aware of Modern Slavery risks and acknowledge their responsibility to manage these risks. We recognise that this presents a difficult challenge and we are committed to work collaboratively with our supply chain partners to ensure that steps are taken to mitigate the risks of Modern Slavery in our business.

In assessing and managing the risk of modern slavery we endeavour to achieve transparency in the business and with our suppliers. 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 2019/20 were: USA, Italy, Cyprus, Israel, Spain, Germany, France, Holland and Finland.

This statement includes the progress the company has made in the last financial year (19/20) and plans for the next year.

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 are committed to reducing the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking within our own business and our supply chains. We recognise that characteristics of modern slavery crimes are hidden and we understand that staff need to be trained to identify potential abuse. Key personnel in the Human Resources, Procurement and Technical teams have attended Stronger Together Workshops. Internal ethical training has been delivered across the wider business and site Technical teams have attended customer-specific training against ethical standards.

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

- The Branston ethical risk assessment rating document reviewed and updated
- Effectiveness of risk assessment audit was undertaken. Plans to include unannounced site audits of Labour Providers were put on hold due to the Covid-19 crisis
- Stronger Together letter was sent all contracted and overseas growers. Growers acknowledged receipt and understanding of their ethical responsibilities
- The decision tree on risk rating of suppliers of imported, producer group and non-producer group raw material was updated and communicated to the business
- A section on Modern Slavery was included in annual grower conferences
- Internal Stronger together and ethical risk assessment training was delivered to Procurement and Agronomy teams
- All site SAQ's have been updated against the new assessment standard which includes improved transparency in supply chain management and procedures to combat modern slavery

Measuring effectiveness

All labour providers were audited twice in the financial year 2019/20. Because of Covid-19 restrictions some of these audits in the second half of the year were conducted by telephone. These audits included worker interviews.

A monthly report is published on the status of any complaints received through the whistleblowing line. All complaints were responded to although it was noted that the no complaints received referred directly or indirectly to Modern Slavery.

All sites host regular employee representative 'How we do business' forums, throughout the year, giving workers a voice. Minutes of these meetings are circulated throughout the business.

All raw material suppliers were subject to a desktop ethical risk assessment audit conducted by a member of the Agronomy team. A total of 117 audits were conducted in the year.

Plans for the next year:

- Post Covid -19 restrictions we will introduce third party on farm audits to all growers who are rated 'amber' following the Branston Ethical Risk Assessment
- Additional training to be provided for all Agronomy and Farming employees using the GLAA Academy
- Checks to be put in place for reporting on B Member Sedex SAQs
- Temporary Labour Risk Assessment audit to be reviewed and updated
- Stronger together refresher training to be delivered to Operations and Technical Management teams
- Adopt the Branston audit process for sweet potato suppliers

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

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 26 July 2020. It has been approved by the Main Board who will review and update it annually.



James Truscott
Managing Director

13 October 2020