



## Modern Slavery Statement 2024

**This statement sets out Veetee's actions to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to its business and to put in place steps that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business and its supply chains.**

### **Introduction**

Veetee is an ambient foods and rice company, a major supplier to retailers, wholesalers, and other food manufacturing businesses. As a company operating within the food and rice industry with many suppliers in the developing world, Veetee Rice recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking. The company is absolutely committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities, and to ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking.

### **Organisational Structure and Supply Chains**

Veetee is a global supplier of dry rice with the majority of customers based in the UK with some exports into Europe and the USA. Production occurs within the UK with packing materials sourced from UK and Europe, however, raw materials are supplied from across the globe, including countries within the European Union. The majority of raw material sourcing is from developing economies including India, Pakistan, Thailand, Uruguay and Cambodia which creates a challenging context in respect of the company's ability to influence matters relating to human rights. Nevertheless, Veetee remains committed to do all it can to eradicate any form of slavery or human trafficking from its business and supply chain.

Temporary labour requirements are met by approved and licensed UK based organisations. The organisation assesses whether activities or countries are high risk in relation to slavery or human trafficking through an analysis of the economic environment, regions and sources of labour. Audits are undertaken of suppliers, and they will be required to sign up to Veetee's supplier code of conduct.

### **Responsibility for Anti-Slavery Initiatives**

Responsibility for the organisation's anti-slavery initiatives is as follows:

- Overarching policy on slavery and human trafficking is the responsibility of the Managing Director
- Employment matters are the responsibility of the Head of HR
- Supply chain matters are the responsibility of the Senior Supply Chain and Procurement Managers.



- Policies are developed in collaboration with the various elements of the business that are impacted. A review of legislation is undertaken, along with guidance from the Gangmaster Labour Abuse Authority and Stronger Together organisations.

Responsibility for investigations and due diligence will depend on the source of the concern of slavery and human trafficking. Responsibility for a concern in respect of employees or workers supplied to the operation would be with the Head of HR. The Senior Supply Chain and Procurement Management would be responsible for concerns arising from the Supply Chain. Their role would be to ensure that a thorough investigation has taken place and, where concerns are substantiated, work with relevant parties to remove the practice from the business.

Training of employees has been undertaken with several managers attending the workshops provided by Stronger Together. Managers have also attended Ethical Trading Supplier Forums provided by customers. This has enabled our leadership teams to better understand and respond to any identified slavery and human trafficking risks. Ongoing training and communication campaigns increase the potential for any concerns relating to slavery or human trafficking been raised to the organisation, this is supported by the company's Whistle Blowing Policy.

Supplier audits have been undertaken in India, Pakistan, Cambodia and Thailand with the company's position being communicated to each supplier with Veetee's expectation of them to comply with the Supplier Code of Conduct.

#### **Due Diligence of Suppliers Undertaking**

Veetee undertakes due diligence when considering its procurement arrangements, and regularly reviews its existing suppliers. The company's due diligence and reviews include:

- Conducting supplier audits or assessments through the company's own employees, which have a greater degree of focus on slavery and human trafficking where general risks are identified
- Suppliers are required to sign up to the company's code of conduct
- Any UK agency supplier must be registered with the Gang-master Licensing Abuse Authority (GLAA)
- Participating in collaborative initiatives focused on human rights in general, and slavery and human trafficking in particular including Stronger Together

#### **Relevant Policies**

The organisation operates the following policies that describe its approach to the identification of modern slavery risks and steps to be taken to prevent slavery and human trafficking in its operations:



### **Ethical Policy**

Veetee is committed to ensuring that the working practices of the company support the welfare of its employees. In order to ensure the fair treatment of all staff, the company aims to meet or improve upon the standards set out in the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code, which it has signed up to. Veetee's approach to the base code is audited on a regular basis by third party organisation for Sedex on behalf of their customers.

### **Whistleblowing Policy**

Veetee encourages all its workers, customers and other business partners to report any concerns related to the direct activities, or the supply chains of, the organisation. This includes any circumstances that may give rise to an enhanced risk of slavery or human trafficking. The organisation's whistleblowing procedure is designed to make it easy for workers to make disclosures, without fear of retaliation.

### **Employee Code of Conduct**

The company's Employee Code of Conduct makes clear to employees the actions and behaviour expected of them when representing the organisation. The organisation strives to maintain the highest standards of employee conduct and ethical behaviour when operating abroad and managing its supply chain.

### **Supplier/Procurement Code of Conduct**

The organisation is committed to ensuring that its suppliers adhere to the highest standards of ethics. Suppliers are required to demonstrate that they provide safe working conditions where necessary, treat workers with dignity and respect, and act ethically and within the law in their use of labour. Veetee works with suppliers to ensure that they meet the standards of the code and improve their workers' working conditions. Agencies and suppliers are audited on a regular basis. New and existing suppliers will be sent a letter setting out the company's position on modern slavery, with reminders on an ongoing basis. We work to influence suppliers' practices and if gross violations were uncovered, the company would attempt to work with the supplier to correct it in the first instance. If it became apparent that the required improvement is not possible, then a review of the trading relationship would be undertaken.

### **Recruitment/Agency Workers Policy**

The organisation uses only specified, reputable employment agencies to source labour and only those registered with the Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority. We always verify the practices of any new agency before accepting their workers. Agencies are audited by Veetee personnel regularly. In the event of any risk being identified in respect of any worker, they would be spoken in accordance with the advice provided by 'Stronger Together' and further advice would immediately be sought from the Gangmaster and Labour Abuse Authority if it were deemed to be necessary.



### Awareness-raising Programme

In addition to training staff during their Induction, Veetee has raised awareness of modern slavery issues by distributing leaflets to employees and agency workers. Posters have been put up across Veetee's premises. The leaflets and posters explain to employees:

- The basic principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015
- How employers can identify and prevent slavery and human trafficking
- What employees can do to flag up potential slavery or human trafficking issues to the relevant parties within the organisation; and
- What external help is available, for example through the Modern Slavery Helpline.

This statement has been approved by the organisation's Managing Director, who will review and update it annually.

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rashi Varma".

Name

RASHI VARMA

Date

22nd JULY 2024