



## **Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement**

### **Introduction**

Burgess Farms (including all of their divisions) is a family-owned business that supplies the UK with quality fresh vegetables, providing produce into major retailers, food service and food manufacturing customers. As of 31 December 2023, we employed just under 400 people and sourced our raw material from 8 countries.

We know that slavery, servitude, forced labour, compulsory labour and human trafficking is a significant issue given the increase in global migration. Burgess Farms has a zero-tolerance approach to any kind of modern slavery found within our own operations or our supply chain and work collaboratively with our supply chain partners to improve awareness, training and communication to mitigate the risks of modern slavery in our business.

### **Our policies**

Burgess Farms have in place policies that set out our ambition, processes, and resources to ensure our products are produced to acceptable standards worldwide. This will aid our employees to identify and report any concerns with modern slavery via the appropriate channels and allow a full investigation without putting any of our staff or those affected at risk.

#### Policies

- Ethical Trade Policy
- Human Rights Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Anti-bribery Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Code of Conduct

## **Risk management and Due Diligence processes**

We understand that our end-to-end produce supply chains are our biggest exposure to modern slavery and applying thorough auditing and compliance standards will help us mitigate the risks of modern slavery within our business. Our due diligence focuses on 4 sections within the supply chain:

- Our own packing sites  
We have embraced third party audits for over 11 years to the ETI Base Code using the SMETA standard. We also operate Site Employee Forums where nominated employees play an active role in the welfare and wellbeing of colleagues across the site as well as conducting an annual employee engagement survey to independently hear from our colleagues. We also offer an 'Employee Assistance Programme', a free 24-hour confidential help line for support and advice as well as assistance with healthcare costs for the employee and their children.
- Our use of agency labour  
We conduct audits of our agency providers to the requirements of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority and Ethical Trading Initiative. These audits involve in-depth interviews with employees and head office management to help identify any indicators of modern slavery. All agency labour used are licenced by the GLAA.
- Our suppliers' sites  
We require the fulfilment of ethical documentation for all sites. All suppliers to the sites are risk assessed and approved prior to commencement of supply. The SEDEX RADAR risk assessment system is utilised alongside our in-depth knowledge of our suppliers and their countries. Ethical audits are undertaken for all high-risk suppliers and conducted by trained social compliance auditors. Full visibility and transparency of our supply chains is ensured through end-to-end chain mapping using a bespoke supplier approval system.
- Our suppliers' use of agency labour  
We conduct risk assessments and active checks of all UK agency providers declared by our suppliers. All our suppliers are clear on the expectation that specific and detailed checks are completed into their agency provision.

## **Risk of Modern Slavery within our supply chain**

In terms of understanding our greatest risk, we have put considerable resources into addressing the use of agency labour in the UK as well as focusing overseas on our high-risk sources of supply.

We recognise that audits alone will not identify all instances of modern slavery but building relationships, capacity and trust with suppliers is much more critical when it comes to preventing and identifying the incidence of modern slavery.

## **Modern Slavery training and awareness**

Collaboration and stakeholder engagement are key areas for us in identifying and preventing modern slavery within our supply chain. We have also invested in team members to have a more detailed understanding of ethical standards to equip them with the knowledge and skills to perform detailed audits across our supply chain. Our Ethical and HR teams regularly attend industry events to be well-briefed on current best practice.

We actively promote the Stronger Together initiative and are proud to have become Stronger Together Business Partners to demonstrate our commitment to tackling hidden labour exploitation. In addition to this, all our production and agency teams have viewed the Stronger Together video on forced labour and the use of posters in relevant languages throughout the sites to reinforce the messages. We have also implemented the Stronger Together Progress Reporting Tool to measure our progress made in addressing modern slavery risks and to highlight the next steps in our journey.

### **Next steps to prevent Modern Slavery**

We believe that leadership makes all the difference in an effective response. At our production facilities and in our supply chains the senior management teams of each area are responsible for compliance in their respective departments and for their supplier relationships.

We will continue our focus to work closely with our colleagues and suppliers to identify and address modern slavery, with extra focus regarding onboarding and recruitment to prevent illegal work, discrimination, and exploitation. We will launch our own detailed internal training for all of our front-line supervisors to help understand modern slavery in the workplace, how to spot signs of modern slavery and what to do when found. We will also continue to implement new initiatives to identify and address the risks of slavery and human trafficking.

### **Assessment of effectiveness in preventing Modern Slavery**

To assess the effectiveness of the steps taken by Burgess Farms we will be monitoring the following key performance indicators:

- All produce suppliers are registered on SEDEX, and risk assessed using the Radar tool.
- Completion of our labour provider audits, ensuring all areas are compliant.
- Modern Slavery training has been completed to all front-line supervisors during the financial year.

This statement was approved by the Board of Burgess Farms

Signed

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W.A. Burgess', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William Burgess

Chairman