

EU CODE OF CONDUCT ON RESPONSIBLE FOOD BUSINESS AND MARKETING PRACTICES

*A common aspirational path
towards achieving sustainable food systems*

- Annual Report – Check list for EU associations -

When signing the code, one of the commitments of EU associations is to provide “*on an annual basis, a report of their activities in support of this Code, which will be published on an open dedicated website*”.

In order to help EU associations to provide their annual report of activities, this document aims at providing a check list to guide associations.

- **General information**

Name in full + acronym	Freshfel Europe – the European fresh produce association + Freshfel
Contact person with contact details	Egle Baecke (e.baecke@freshfel.org) Philippe Binard (ph.binard@freshfel.org)
N° in the transparency register*	1637225479-02
Date of signature of the Code	30 June 2021
Step of the food chain represented (ex: primary production, production, processing, trade, retail, ...)	The entire supply chain, primary production to retail.
Who do you represent? (e.g. number of members, companies, SMEs)	124 members, excluding members’ satellite and subsidiary entities.

* if available

European Associations pledge to:

- ***endorse the aspirational objectives set out in this Code (where applicable)***

Yes. Freshfel Europe confirms to endorse the aspirational objectives set out in this Code (where applicable).

- ***promote and disseminate this Code with(in) their constituency/ies;***

Freshfel Europe has promoted and disseminated the activities which are covered under the Code to the Association's membership over the period 2023-2024, including via:

- Freshfel Europe Board meetings;
- Freshfel Europe weekly newsletter on a regular basis;
- Individual information exchange with members on various topics related to the objectives of the EU Code of Conduct.
- Freshfel Europe meetings with members throughout the year.

- ***encourage their members to align their sustainability actions and/or business practices to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code and invite them, on a voluntary basis, to adhere to this Code, as appropriate;***

Freshfel Europe encouraged its members to align their sustainability actions and/or business practices to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code.

Over the year Freshfel Europe organized a number of webinars and engaged in work covered by aspirational targets of the EU Code of Conduct:

- *Reducing the environmental footprint of food consumption by 2030* → Freshfel Europe's environmental footprint initiative (more details below).
- *Increased F&V consumption patterns in the EU* → advocacy regarding consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables, raising awareness on consumption through annual Consumption monitor and webinars to meet objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy.
- *Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste* → advocacy regarding the lowering of food waste through the legislation on food additives, plant protection products and packaging.
- *Sustainable value creation in the European food supply chain through partnership* → part of informal agri-food partnerships, exchanging and organising webinars on sustainability together with other signatories of the Code.
- *Sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all* → advocacy regarding the three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental and social.
- *A climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050* → Freshfel Europe's sector Double Materiality Assessment (DMA) under the CSRD (more details below).

- ***explore the possibility of developing sector-specific tools and resources in support of this Code;***

Freshfel Europe have in the last year continued its work on a shadow-Product Environmental Footprint Methodology (PEFCR) for fresh produce and started a new project on a sector DMA under the CSRD.

The PEFCR project was launched along with a group of leading members supportive of the Code, in March 2022. The Initiative aims to develop an objective and standardized methodology and digital tool for the fresh fruit and vegetable sector based on product environmental footprint methodology, that is broadly accepted by industry, other stakeholders, institutions and consumers. The Initiative will facilitate the fresh produce sector's contribution to Aspirational objective 1 to reduce the environmental footprint of food consumption by 2030, and aspirational objective 3 to achieve a climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050.

The DMA was launched in early 2024 and was finalized in July 2024. The project was supported by a number of leading members, as well as subsidiary members and a few non-members of Freshfel Europe. The aim of the project was to pool knowledge and resources, and to harmonise ESG assessment and analysis in the sector. The project brought together a dedicated group of sustainability experts from the industry who will continue the work on joint accountability and assessment on sustainability. This includes for instance the EU Taxonomy and CSDDD. This project contributes to Aspirational objectives 1 and 3-7.

- ***continue to engage in dialogue with other food chain/systems actors and EU and international policy-makers to forge (new) relationships, exchange good practices and discuss challenges encountered, learn from each other (studies, projects) and create better mutual understanding, and identify opportunities for collaboration and potential partnership.***

Where possible Freshfel Europe seeks dialogue and engagement with other stakeholders within the agri-food sector as well as with decision-makers to support the work of the Code. For example, within Freshfel Europe's Environmental Footprint Initiative, the Association is exploring collaboration with other associations and organizations which have synergies with the fresh produce sector. The objective of this collaboration is to seek more effective and efficient environmental footprint calculation throughout the fresh produce supply chain as well as that of other agri-food sectors. This includes other signatories of the Code to foster work towards aspirational objective 1 and 3.

Freshfel Europe is also actively taking part in cross-value chain partnerships in and outside Europe. One example is a close cooperation with private standard setting bodies for sustainable agricultural practices where Freshfel Europe aims to provide a strong voice for aligning voluntary and mandatory sustainability reporting requirements. This aligns with Aspirational objective 6 of the Code.

On numerous occasions, Freshfel Europe raised concerns to policy makers about their policy incoherence in addressing the Green Deal challenges in the most sustainable way. The

policy setting of the Farm to Fork strategy were too often one-sided and not looking at the overall implications of proposals which ultimately leads to more food waste and food loss in the supply chain.

One example where this became particularly clear was the proposal to reduce the use of certain plant protection products without any alternative solutions or tools in place to safeguard production and efficiently address the emerging risks brought on by climate change. The narrow policies of post-harvest treatments and food additives also have severe implications for the sector waste management of perishable products.

Similarly, the Commission proposal on packaging and packaging waste is likely to generate more unnecessary waste both of food and of packaging material, while reducing the quality of the products. The latter will have an additional negative impact on consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, going against the goals of the Farm to Fork strategy and hindering the shift to more sustainable diets. The complex and unnecessary rules on origin labelling for IV Gamma products are another example creating new operational challenges that would lead to undesired food waste.

Therefore, it is our hope that we can work with the European Commission in the future to get their support in reaching the objectives of this Code of Conduct.