

EU CODE OF CONDUCT ON RESPONSIBLE FOOD BUSINESS AND MARKETING PRACTICES

AIJN – European Fruit Juice Association Annual Report

April 2023

General information

Name in full + acronym	European Fruit Juice Association (AIJN)
Contact person with contact details	Marton Gellert marton.gellert@aijn.eu
N° in the transparency register	410052929385-59
Date of signature of the Code	14 June 2022
Step of the food chain represented (ex: primary production, production, processing, trade, retail, ...)	Full & Associated Membership: fruit juices & nectars production Observer Membership: raw material supply, fruit juices & nectars production, packaging
Who do you represent? (e.g. number of members, companies, SMEs)	Full Membership: 18 national associations Associated Membership: 1 national association Observer Membership: 16 individual accompanies and/or non-EU national associations

[AIJN – European Fruit Juice Association](#) is the voice of the European fruit juice value chain – from fruit processors to packers of consumer products – since 1962. Committed to building a sustainable and healthy global food system, AIJN supports the European Commission in creating a favourable policy environment that lays down an institutional foundation for responsible fruit juice production and consumption.

Tackling the challenges of greatest concern to European consumers and communities requires legislative as well as voluntary actions from businesses. In this spirit, the fruit juice industry has taken decisive steps towards providing healthy and environmentally friendly products to consumers. AIJN is, therefore, proud to sign the [EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices](#) as a milestone in the transition towards responsible business and marketing practices. Building on the association’s sustainability work from the past years and aware of its role in the industry, AIJN pledges to:

- ◆ **Endorse** the aspirational objectives of the Code (if applicable);
- ◆ **Promote and disseminate** the Code within its membership;
- ◆ **Encourage** its members to align their business and marketing practices to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code;
- ◆ **Provide**, on an annual basis, **a report of its activities** in support of the Code;

- ◆ **Continue to engage in dialogue** with other food chain actors and EU and international policy-makers to forge new relationships, exchange good practices and learn from each other.

AIJN is glad to support its members in their contribution to:

- ◆ **Healthy, balanced and sustainable diets for all European consumers**, aligned with aspiration objective #1. The fruit juice industry is contributing to this objective by continuously encouraging increased fruit and vegetable consumption, promoting sustainably-produced food products and improving sustainable food consumption patterns through engaging in product reformulation (reduced sugar content) practices wherever possible or desirable.
- ◆ **Preventing and reducing food loss and waste**, aligned with aspirational objective #2. AIJN and the EU fruit juice industry are committed to raising awareness of food loss and promoting material efficiency, both within internal operations and across the fruit juice value chain.
- ◆ **A climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050**, aligned with aspirational objective #3. AIJN is currently in the process of developing its industry-wide Net-Zero Roadmap, the first sector-wide initiative of its kind for the fruit juice industry. Following a science-based approach, AIJN is committed to help its membership reduce net emissions from their operations and meet the EU GHG reduction targets by 2030 and 2050.

Internal promotion/dissemination of the Code's objectives:

Projects & Working Groups

1. **AIJN Code of Practice & the Sugar/Calorie-Reduced Fruit Juice Working Group**

The [AIJN Code of Practice for the Evaluation of Fruit and Vegetable Juices](#) is the set of voluntary industry guidelines accepted and used by the fruit juice processors and traders within the EU and around the world. They have become a reference and are also used by national food inspections, by industry controlling bodies and is also acknowledged by the EU Commission. In addition to the Reference Guidelines, the AIJN CoP contains several guidance documents which respond to the evolving needs of both consumers and the industry. The data they gather on the provenance of raw materials, and levels of heavy data ensures that the industry is aware of changes around the world and that they maintain best practices.

Actions undertaken:

In light of the [Fruit Juice Directive](#)'s ongoing revision, AIJN leads the industry's pioneering work on establishing criteria for officially launching sugar/calorie-reduced fruit juices on the European market. In this manner, AIJN committed to identifying a harmonised definition for these products while conducting assessments to ensure that they are safe, nutritious environmentally friendly and especially resemble a fruit juice as much as possible. AIJN created a special task force to ensure that experts from the AIJN membership and beyond gather crucial scientific information and maintain continuous research.

2. The Net-Zero Roadmap & the Roadmap Expert Group & the Sustainability Committee

AIJN is currently in the process of coordinating and building a Net-Zero Roadmap, the first sector-wide initiative of its kind for the fruit juice industry. Following a science-based approach, AIJN is committed to meeting the [EU Climate Law](#)'s objectives and identifying ways to calculate the emissions of the whole European industry, to then support in reducing net emissions from its members' operations by 2030 and 2050, respectively.

Actions undertaken:

AIJN contracted a third-party vendor to conduct the fruit juices and nectars industry's first full-scale GHG emissions foot printing study, which will serve as a basis to identify hotspots in the value chain and then elaborate concrete actions to reduce emissions across the supply chain. The foot printing exercise is scheduled to conclude by the end of 2023. As the leader of the project, AIJN established the Roadmap Expert Group within the larger AIJN Sustainability Committee to create a collaborative space for company experts that only focuses on GHG emissions, the Roadmap's elaboration and future actions.

In parallel, the usual activities of the AIJN Sustainability Committee have included the discussion and dissemination of the Code's objectives to its members. By informing its membership on various EU projects, proposals and opportunities, members are kept-up-to-date of what is upcoming and of solutions to be implemented. It also serves as a place of awareness raising and discussion of possible cooperative actions.

AIJN also launched the [AIJN EU sustainability legislation database](#) that informs members and the wider industry of current and upcoming EU legislation that ultimately aim to deliver on the EU's ambition to reach climate neutrality. AIJN continued to update and maintain this 'information hub' since its launch in August 2022 to keep the industry informed of legislative developments and opportunities for action.

External promotion/dissemination of the Code's objectives:

Events

1. Empowering consumers to make healthy food choices

As part of the EU's Farm to Fork Strategy, the European Commission is currently working on the establishment of a harmonised mandatory front-of-pack nutrition labelling system. This is designed to help consumers make informed, sustainable and health-conscious food choices across Member States. The upcoming proposal should be easy to interpret and, based on dietary guidelines, ensure that consumers are well informed about the nutritional benefits of food and drink products.

Actions undertaken:

To highlight the importance of a balanced approach in assessing the nutritional benefits of beverages and food products, AIJN organized *Empowering consumers to make healthy food choices*, a hybrid policy debate between policymakers, industry stakeholders, scientists and consumer organisations to discuss how this future proposal can contribute to improving European consumers' dietary patterns. Event description and full recording available [here](#).

2. The PPWR Deep Dive series

AIJN and the EU fruit juices & nectars industry is committed to building a fully circular economy and a well-functioning circular waste management system. To raise awareness of the complexity of such systems and engage stakeholders during Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation's revision, AIJN established the PPWR Deep Dive webinar series.

Actions undertaken:

AIJN organized 2 informational webinars to discuss the European Commission's Proposal and its potential implications for industry. Speakers included European Commission officials, European association executives, Member State-level association executives, sustainability directors and industry stakeholders. AIJN received more than 200 registrations for the webinars in total, engaging a wide variety of stakeholders ranging from EU policymakers to national authorities to food supply chain actors. Themes included the impact of the Proposal on the industry and its value chain, and a deep dive into DRS & EPRS schemes to assess the responsibility of industry. A next webinar is foreseen on reuse.

3. Juice Summit 2022

The [Juice Summit](#) is the fruit and vegetable juice industry's leading, annual global conference since 2013. The primary objective of the conference is to provide a forum for knowledge sharing, showcase innovative ideas and discuss the fruit juices & nectars sector's most pressing issues, including addressing climate change and sustainability.

Actions undertaken:

The 2022 edition, held on 12-13 October, hosted a panel discussion that brought together European policymakers and industry representatives from different parts of the value chain (raw material suppliers, producers, bottlers) to discuss the importance of sector-wide collaboration in effectively tackling sustainability challenges and reducing emissions. Furthermore, the conference showcased three approaches and case studies for building a sector-wide sustainability roadmap and how to achieve concrete actions

4. The JEDD Talks Series

AIJN, together with the [Sustainable Juice Platform](#), the [Sustainable Juice Covenant](#), [IDH](#) and [IFU](#), established the JEDD Talks webinar series to promote sector-wide knowledge and case studies sharing, cooperation in achieving climate goals and fostering collective action across the fruit juice value chain.

Actions undertaken:

The series' first edition, *Nature Works: The Case for Promoting Biodiversity* was held at the end of March 2023. Land use change and pesticide use associated with modern agriculture are major drivers of biodiversity loss. Given the increasing awareness of natural enemies and pollinators to safeguard food production, the event discussed what role industrial actors can play in reversing biodiversity decline across the fruit juice supply chain. The inaugural webinar was attended by more than 140 participants and hosted presentations from 4 influential juice industry players from across the globe to represent European but also international perspectives.

Partnerships

1. Fruit Juice Science Centre

The [Fruit Juice Science Centre](#) is a science information body funded by donations from a wide range of orange producers, juice manufacturers and packaging companies based in Europe and Brazil. The FJSC's mission is to provide evidence-based information to consumers, journalists and health professionals on the role of 100% fruit juice in diets and health.

Actions undertaken:

As the FJSC's host, AIJN distributed (and continues to distribute) the FJSC's science-based messages to policymakers, consumers and industry through digital channels. According to recent market data, the majority of European citizens do not eat the recommended amount fruits & vegetables on a daily basis. A normal portion of fruit juice complements the recommended 5-a-day intake, and the Fruit Juice Science Centre's mission is to raise awareness of this and support European citizens in making informed and healthy food choices.

2. Sustainable Juice Platform

The [Sustainable Juice Platform](#) is a vision-driven Platform offering a space for collaboration and continuous improvement where all sector and supply chain stakeholders from the fruit juice industry are included. The Platform enables stakeholders to work together to find solutions to common CSR-related opportunities, challenges and concerns. The Sustainable Juice Platform's overall objective is: to support, guide and inspire fruit juice stakeholders to integrate CSR throughout the supply chain.

Social, environmental and ethical elements of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the fruit juice industry range from the farm and production level, through processing of fruit to juices, their bottling and packing, over to their delivery to the final consumer.

Actions undertaken:

As the SJP's host, AIJN organized the platform's General Assembly in November 2022 to bring together sustainability professionals from across the fruit juice value chain together. AIJN also established the SJP's project workflow and coordinated the development of its new website. AIJN is also in charge of the monthly newsletter, ensuring their members stay informed of latest developments and of new projects in the sustainability arena.

Cooperation with other partners of the food chain

1. Agri-Food Chain Sustainability Roundtable

The Agri-Food Chain Sustainability Roundtable is an informal gathering of 6 European associations linked to different supply chain actors in the fruit industry, dedicated to sharing information on sustainability.

Actions undertaken:

On top of regular meetings to discuss EU regulatory developments in the sustainability arena, the Agri-Food Chain Sustainability Roundtable organised *Sustainability Labelling in Retail*, an informational webinar in April 2023 to discuss and better understand how retailers are currently - or in the future - plan to use sustainability labelling for agri-food products. Speakers included sustainability managers and directors from three major international retailers and the event hosted more than 180 participants.