



[2014-
2015]

FAIR LABOR ASSOCIATION INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL MONITORING AGRICULTURAL REPORT

COMPANY: Syngenta Inc.

COUNTRY: Romania

PROVINCE: Galati County

MONITOR: Simona Apostol & Eduard Nedelciu

AUDIT DATE: 30 June – 3 July, 2014

PRODUCTS: Corn

NUMBER OF GROWERS/WORKERS: 3 / 16

NUMBER OF GROWERS/WORKERS INTERVIEWED: 3 / 9

NUMBER OF FARMS VISITED: 3

TOTAL AREA COVERED IN AUDIT: 193 ha

PROCESSES: Cross-pollination/Detasseling

To view more about the FLA's work with Syngenta, please visit the FLA website [here](#).



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Code Awareness:

GEN 2: Ensure that all Company growers as well as Seed Organizers inform their workers about the workplace standards orally and through the posting of standards in a prominent place (in the local languages spoken by workers) and undertake other efforts to educate workers about the standards on a regular basis.

Noncompliance

Explanation Not all of the growers are aware of Syngenta's association with the FLA. Last year in 2013, Syngenta made sustained efforts towards raising awareness on its Code of Conduct (COC) among growers and workers. However, during the previous 12 months there has been little verbal communication on the COC towards growers/workers and little effort to further educate them. Assessors saw no written communication (no promotional and informative materials) other than the one that remained on some farms from the previous year 2013. Interviewed workers are not aware of COC and its meaning.

Sources: Interview with company, seed organizers, growers and workers; farm visits; records review

Plan of Action: Syngenta will ensure to have enough campaign materials for the distribution to farms in 2015.

Besides the informative materials posted at the farm level, a very important tool to raise awareness on COC will be seasonal students, who are hired and trained by Syngenta, arriving earlier at the farms than last year. These seasonal students will be in charge of the internal monitoring sheets documenting all visits and cover all farms during the season. In addition, the students will communicate the goal of Syngenta's program to all workers.

Deadline Date: August 2015

Code Awareness:

GEN 3: Develop a secure communication channel, in a manner appropriate to the culture and situation, to enable company employees, supervisors and employees of Seed organizers to report to the Company on noncompliance with the workplace standards, with security that they shall not be punished or prejudiced for doing so.

Noncompliance

Explanation The grievance telephone number, which is directed to Syngenta Romania office, proved to be an ineffective communication channel. Unlike last year in 2013, assessors are not able to observe the grievance numbers anywhere on the farms and fields. Furthermore, Syngenta does not train the administrative staff members, who are answering the grievance phone calls on how to manage complaints and grievances. In addition, there is no automatic answering machine on a 24 hours-a-day basis.

Interviews with workers confirmed that they do not sufficiently know about grievance policies and available channels. Moreover, there is no non-retaliation policy available on farms and not communicated to workers.

Source: Interviews with company, seed organizer, growers and workers; farm visits; records review

Plan of Action: The grievance phone number posted on all campaign materials and distributed at all farm level proved not to be the best solution in the Romania context. None of the workers ever used it. The hotline will remain functional and will continue being communicated at farm level. However, another more informal grievance system will be implemented to allow workers share their grievances in a manner that is more appropriate to the culture. Temporary students hired by Syngenta will be the direct contact between workers and Syngenta at farm level. These temporary students will spend most of their time in the field with the workers during the peak season. Hence, in the case of any complaints and grievances, workers will be able to conveniently directly address these issues to hired temporary students, knowing that those students are Syngenta employees and assure that Syngenta’s rules and procedures are respected. Furthermore, they will also ensure that workers can submit grievances and complaints without fear of retaliation, jeopardizing their job.

Deadline Date: May 2015

Harassment or Abuse: Discipline/Fair and Non-discriminatory Application

H&A.2: Growers shall apply disciplinary rules, procedures and practices developed by the company in a fair and non-discriminatory manner to all workers.

Noncompliance

Explanation There is no disciplinary procedure available at the farm level. The system is based on a paternalistic approach with farm owners making disciplinary decisions. The disciplinary system does not have clear rules and procedures known to the field supervisors and workers. In addition, there is no appeal process in place.

Source: Interviews, observation, records review

Plan of Action: This is a very sensitive issue since it is difficult to interfere with the growers' internal rules. However, growers signed an addendum with all FLA rules and procedures. In addition, Syngenta will train field supervisors in order to assure that all disciplinary procedures are respected. Prior to this step, Syngenta will develop a documented disciplinary procedure in agreement with all growers. Developed disciplinary procedures in combination with the Health & Safety training, will be communicated to workers before the beginning of their work.

Deadline Date: May 2015

Harassment or Abuse: Discipline/Training

H&A.4: Grower/Organizer/Company will provide training on appropriate disciplinary practices to persons who supervise the workers.

Noncompliance

Explanation Although there are no disciplinary issues observed at visited farms, it could not be verified that field supervisors are trained on disciplinary procedures and practices. In addition, there are no documentations on training and records of disciplinary actions available.

Source: Records review, interviews with the company, seed organizer, growers, farm visits

Plan of Action: Syngenta will adequately train field supervisors in order to assure that all disciplinary procedures are respected. Prior to this step, Syngenta will develop documented disciplinary procedures in agreement with all growers. Developed document on disciplinary procedures in combination with the Health & Safety training will be communicated to workers before the beginning of the work.

Deadline Date: May 2015

Harassment or Abuse: Grievance Procedure

H&A.12: Company shall have in place grievance procedures that allow first an attempt to settle grievances directly between the worker and the grower but, where this is inappropriate or has failed, it is possible for the worker to have the grievance considered at one or more steps, depending on the nature of the grievance and the structure and size of the enterprise. Company shall ensure that workers know the grievance procedures and applicable rules.

Noncompliance

Explanation There are no documented and clear grievance procedures in place to settle grievances between workers and growers. In addition, Syngenta implemented a hotline grievance number, which proved to be ineffective. Workers are not aware of the hotline and there is no information on grievance mechanisms available on all farms.

Source: Records review, interviews with the company, seed organizer, growers; farm visits

Plan of Action: The grievance phone number posted on all campaign materials and distributed at all farm level proved not to be the best solution in the Romania context. None of the workers ever used it. The hotline will remain functional and will continue being communicated at farm level. However, another more information grievance system will be implemented to allow workers share their grievances in a manner that is more appropriate to the culture. Temporary students hired by Syngenta will be the direct contact between workers and Syngenta at farm level. These temporary students will spend most of their time in the field with the workers during the peak season. Hence, in the case of any complaints and grievances, workers will be able to conveniently directly address these issues to hired temporary students, knowing that those students are Syngenta employees and assure that Syngenta's rules and procedures are respected. Furthermore, they will also ensure that workers can submit grievances and complaints without fear of retaliation, jeopardizing their job.

Deadline Date: May 2015

Health and Safety: Document Maintenance/Worker Accessibility and Awareness

H&S.2: All documents required to be available to workers and growers by applicable laws (such as health and safety policies, MSDS, etc.) shall be made available in the prescribed manner and in the local language or language(s) spoken by the workers if different from the local language. If the workers are illiterate, the company shall make an effort to provide pictorials that the workers can easily understand.

Noncompliance

Explanation Syngenta does not take effective measures to increase workers' awareness regarding Health & Safety. General workers are not aware of Health & Safety regulations and documents are not easily accessible and kept for workers on farms. However, permanent workers are periodically trained on Health & Safety procedures.

Source: Records review, interviews with the company, seed organizers, growers, farm visits

Plan of Action: Since summer 2014, the new local regulation requires a daily confirmation from seasonal workers that they are trained and aware of Health & Safety regulations at the farm level. Syngenta documents the workers' confirmation daily on the seasonal register form, which is an official legally approved law. Furthermore, Syngenta will post clear Health & Safety messages at visible places with pictures for better understanding and useful for potential illiterate persons. In addition, all basic Health & Safety rules and procedures, together with disciplinary procedures will be daily communicated by supervisors to workers before the beginning of their work. During the peak season, temporary seasonal students will be responsible to complete internal monitoring forms and track that all Health & Safety requirements are respected, which has been done every season since 2011.

Deadline Date: May 2015

Health and Safety: Health and Safety Management System

H&S.4: The health and safety policy shall contain the framework for a comprehensive health and safety management system within which growers' responsibilities and workers' rights and duties, various responsibilities of designated personnel, procedures that enable workers to raise health and safety concerns, and procedures for reporting death, injury, illness, and other health and safety issues (for instance, near-miss accidents) are clear and regularly tested and reviewed.

Uncorroborated Noncompliance

Explanation	<p>Although there is a Health & Safety management system at the farm level, daily workers are not aware of it. The implementation and control of Health & Safety regulations and procedures is not effective regarding daily workers. The review and control task is usually processed by authorized third party companies, which periodically conduct controls. The basic requirements are met but assessors cannot verify the effectiveness of all actions.</p> <p><u>Source:</u> Records review, interviews with the company, seed organizer, growers, farm visits</p>
Plan of Action:	<p>Since summer 2014, the new local regulation requires a daily confirmation from seasonal workers that they are trained and aware of Health & Safety regulations at the farm level. Syngenta documents the workers' confirmation daily on the seasonal register form, which is an official legally approved document. Furthermore, Syngenta will post clear Health & Safety messages at visible places with pictures for better understanding and useful for potential illiterate persons. In addition, all basic Health & Safety rules and procedures, together with disciplinary procedures will be daily communicated by supervisors to workers before the beginning of their work. During the peak season, temporary seasonal students will be responsible to complete internal monitoring forms and track that all Health & Safety requirements are respected, which has been done every season since 2011.</p>
Deadline Date:	<p>May 2015</p>

Health and Safety: Communication to Workers

H&S.5: The health and safety policy shall be communicated to all workers in the local language or language(s) spoken by workers if different from the local language.

Noncompliance

Explanation There was no effective communication regarding Health & Safety regulations and procedures to daily workers. Interviews revealed that permanent workers are periodically trained, but daily workers are not systematically trained regarding Health & Safety issues. Hence, there is no systematic approach on the communication of Health & Safety policies and procedures to all workers, including daily workers on issues like general Health & Safety risks, applicable ways to raise awareness, periodicity of communication, and responsibilities regarding Health & Safety.

Source: Records review, interviews with the company, seed organizer, growers, farm visits

Plan of Action: Since summer 2014, the new local regulation requires a daily confirmation from seasonal workers that they are trained and aware of Health & Safety regulations at the farm level. Syngenta documents the workers' confirmation daily on the seasonal register form, which is an official legally approved document. Furthermore, Syngenta will post clear Health & Safety messages at visible places with pictures for better understanding and useful for potential illiterate persons. In addition, all basic Health & Safety rules and procedures, together with disciplinary procedures will be daily communicated by supervisors to workers before the beginning of their work. During the peak season, temporary seasonal students will be responsible to complete internal monitoring forms and track that all Health & Safety requirements are respected, which has been done every season since 2011.

Deadline Date: May 2015

Health and Safety: Access to Safety Equipment and First Aid

H&S.6: Company should ensure that growers and workers have access to safety equipment and first aid.

Noncompliance

Explanation Workers could not access safety equipment and first aid kits at all visited farms.

Source: Records review, interviews with the company, seed organizer, growers, farm visits

Plan of Action: Syngenta will provide safety equipment and first aid kits, covering potential risks at the farm level during the peak season, in addition to safety kits which growers are obliged to provide by law. This action will serve as an example for each grower to provide the equipment at the field level during the following season. Furthermore, growers are obliged through signed contracts to have first kits available at every location, where workers do activities.

Deadline Date: May 2015

Health and Safety: Personal Protective Equipment

H&S.7: All necessary personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves, eye protection, respiratory protection, etc., should be made available to relevant workers to prevent unsafe exposure (such as inhalation or contact with solvent vapors, dust, etc.) to health and safety hazards.

Noncompliance

Explanation Personal protective equipment (PPE) is not available for daily workers. Last year in 2013, Syngenta provided some PPE through its campaign. However, Syngenta did not replicate this procedure this year.

Source: Records review, interviews with the company, seed organizer, growers, farm visits

Plan of Action: Syngenta will provide minimum PPE equipment for the seasonal workers, which are glasses, gloves and sun caps. All necessary PPE are planned in the budget for the year 2015.

Deadline Date: May 2015