



2012

FAIR LABOR ASSOCIATION INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL MONITORING AGRICULTURAL REPORT

COMPANY: Syngenta India Limited
COUNTRY: India
PROVINCE: East Godavari Dist., Andhra Pradesh
MONITOR: Glocal Research Services
AUDIT DATE: March 5 – 8, 2013
PRODUCTS: Corn Seeds
NUMBER OF WORKERS: 64
NUMBER OF WORKERS INTERVIEWED: 38
NUMBER OF FARMS VISITED: 30
TOTAL AREA COVERED IN AUDIT: 72.5 Acres
PROCESSES: Detasseling, Pesticide Application

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: The prevailing daily wages are varied for different operations. The minimum daily wage rates for agricultural operations prescribed by the Andhra Pradesh government for Zone II, under which the present survey area falls, are as follows: 1) ploughing: Rs 128; 2) threshing: Rs 138; 3) sowing, transplanting, harvesting, and weeding: Rs 127; 4) digging, staking, and pruning: Rs 119; 5) pesticide spraying: Rs 186; and 6) loading and unloading operations: Rs 138.

For certain work that is carried out mostly by women, like sowing, weeding, detasseling, and harvesting, workers are paid Rs 120 – 130, which is less than the legal minimum wage. For operations carried out mostly by men, like ploughing; fertilizer and pesticide application; and loading and unloading, workers are paid Rs 175 – 250, which is above the legal minimum wage. The daily working hours for all activities above are almost the same (about 6 hours, which is in line with the local law).

Plan of Action:

1. During preseason meetings, growers and family laborers will be educated about the company’s workplace standards. Growers are to ensure to bring at least 1 non-family worker representative to the preseason meeting.
2. The code of conduct (COC) will be communicated through pamphlets; posters; snake and ladder games; and wall paintings in all villages.
3. The field team will be educated by the CSR Team and will communicate codes to workers during their regular farm visits.
4. We will explore using more women mobilizers who will be engaged, meet workers on their farm, and communicate the message.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

**Plan
Complete
Date:**

Code Awareness:

Other (Company Internal Grievance Policy and Procedures)

Noncompliance

Explanation: Growers and workers are not aware of the company's policy on worker grievances. The company has recently developed a policy on worker grievances and a related feedback mechanism. At present, they are not functioning effectively, because workers have very little awareness of them. The company is planning to take some special measures in the coming seasons to create awareness among workers about the company's policy on worker grievances.

Plan of Action:

1. Syngenta has developed a grievance policy for growers and workers.
2. The grievance policy is communicated to all workers and growers during various channels and campaigns in preseason and midseason meetings.
3. Syngenta has developed various informational, educational, and communication (IEC) materials, such as pamphlets, posters, and wall paintings to communicate the grievance telephone number.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

**Plan Complete
Date:**

Child Labor: Child Labor

CL.2 Growers shall not employ children younger than 15 (or 14 where the law of the country of production allows) or younger than the age for completing compulsory education in the country of production, where such age is higher than 15.

Uncorroborated Evidence of Noncompliance

Explanation: Children less than 15 years were not found working on the farms during the audit visit. However, the use of children, particularly familial children, during sowing, weeding, and harvesting activities cannot be ruled out. 3 out of 30 interviewed growers admitted that, sometimes, laborers bring their children to work (for sowing and weeding operations) and that they are not in a position to strictly say no to them, for if they say no, their parents will stop coming for work as well. The audit team also met 2 children studying in the 9th class at the local school in [Village name] who reported that they worked on Syngenta farmers' fields during sowing periods for about a week.

Plan of Action:

1. Syngenta distributes the COC in the local language during grower preseason meetings for all growers.
2. Disseminated COC in local languages in key places, like school compounds, walls of Panchayat office, and some visible places in the form of wall paintings.
3. All of the above operations are now core and standard operating procedures; Syngenta follows them across all crops and regions.
4. Special care has been taken on holidays (weekends and other holidays), when children come along with their parents.
5. We have instructed growers and are strictly monitoring that familial children are also not entertained in the field.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete

Plan Complete Date:



Child Labor: Proof of Age Documentation

CL.3 Company will assist the grower in maintaining proof of age documentation for all young workers on the farm and it is recommended to maintain proof of age documentation for all workers on the farm, including long term and casual workers.

Noncompliance

Explanation: None of the farms visited maintained any age proof verification documents for young workers.

Plan of Action:

1. During awareness meetings, growers will be educated and motivated on the requirement of maintaining records on the farms.
2. Copies of birth certificates, school certificates, ration cards, medical certificates, local government birth records, etc., are accepted as age proof documentation; a copy of any one of these records can be kept on the farms.
3. The company is planning to distribute documentation kits to all growers. The kits will include the age verification procedure and will be maintained by growers. The company has prepared documentation kits and they are ready to be distributed to growers. The documentation kits include: the seed production policy; a social compliance contract; Health & Safety Aspects; local laws related to the agricultural sector; minimum wages applicable for the region; a list of records to be maintained on the farms; emergency number contact; and labor attendance sheets.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

Child Labor: Other Means of Age Verification

CL.4 In those cases where proof of age documentation is not readily available or is unreliable, growers will take precautions to ensure that all workers are at least the minimum working age, including medical or religious records, school records or other means considered reliable in the local context.

Noncompliance

Explanation: For age verification, school and medical records are considered reliable, but none of the farms maintained any of these records.

Plan of Action:

1. During awareness meetings, growers will be educated and motivated on the requirement of maintaining records on the farms.
2. Copies of birth certificates, school certificates, ration cards, medical certificates, local government birth records, etc., are accepted as age proof documentation; a copy of any one of these records can be kept on the farms.
3. The company is planning to distribute documentation kits to all growers. The kits will include the age verification procedure and will be maintained by growers.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:



Child Labor: Education of Young Workers

CL.8 The grower shall ensure that when young workers are employed, their education is not jeopardized.

Noncompliance

Explanation: None of the young workers interviewed were presently attending school.

Plan of Action: 1. During preseason meetings, growers will be educated about young workers' education.

2. Syngenta will create awareness among young workers to continue their education.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

Harassment and 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: Growers and workers are not aware of the company's grievance policy and procedure. The company has yet to educate them on this aspect.

Plan of Action:

1. Syngenta has developed a grievance policy for growers and workers.
2. It will be communicated to growers and workers during preseason meetings and separate code awareness meetings with workers.
3. Various IEC materials, such as pamphlets, posters, and wall paintings, along with mechanisms like communicating through women mobilizers and field supervisors during farm visits, will be used to address this issue.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

Non-Discrimination: General Compliance Non-Discrimination

D.1 Growers shall comply with all local laws, regulations, and procedures concerning non-discrimination.

Noncompliance

Explanation: The procedures and regulations concerning the non-discrimination of workers in wage payments and work allocation, as per local law are not completely followed.

Plan of Action: In the long run, we are planning to address this social issue during local stakeholder consultations and will then formulate a strategy.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

Non-Discrimination: Employment Decisions

D.2 All employment decisions shall be made solely on the basis of a person's qualifications, in terms of education, training, experience, demonstrated skills and/or abilities, as they relate to the inherent requirements of a particular job.

Noncompliance

Explanation: Gender discrimination in wage and work allocation was widely prevalent on all farms visited. It is to be noted that the division of labor along gender lines and differential wages for male and female workers are common practices in this region and were observed in all crops.

Plan of Action: In the long run, we are planning to address this social issue during local stakeholder consultations and will then formulate a strategy.

Deadline Date: December 2013

**Action
Taken:**

**Plan
Complete:**

**Plan
Complete
Date:**

Non-Discrimination: Sex-Based Wage Discrimination

D.3 There shall be no differences in remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value. Remuneration (wages, compensation) includes the basic minimum or prevailing industry wage and any additional payments to be made directly or indirectly, whether in cash or in kind, by the grower to the worker and arising out of the workers' employment. Such additional payments include wage differentials or increments based on seniority or marital status, cost of living allowances, housing or residential allowances, family allowances, benefits in-kind such as the allotment and cleaning of work clothes or provision of fire wood, spices, raw material for food, equipment, and other benefits.

Noncompliance

Explanation: Gender discrimination in wage and work allocation was widely prevalent on all farms visited. It is to be noted that the division of labor along gender lines and differential wages for male and female workers are common practices in this region and were observed in all crops.

**Plan of
Action:** In the long run, we are planning to address this social issue during local stakeholder consultations and will then formulate a strategy.

**Deadline
Date:** December 2013

**Action
Taken:**

**Plan
Complete:**

**Plan
Complete
Date:**



Health and Safety: General Compliance Health and Safety

H&S.1 Growers shall comply with all local laws, regulations, and procedures concerning health and safety. In any case where local laws and the Workplace Code of Conduct are contradictory, the higher standards will apply. The grower will possess all legally required permits.

Noncompliance

Explanation: Local law stipulates that employers provide training, personal protective equipment (PPE), and health checkups to workers who are employed and handle chemical pesticides. This was not followed.

- Plan of Action:**
1. The company has been educating growers on health and safety during grower meetings.
 2. Exclusive field safety training is planned for growers and workers. Syngenta’s sales team will support organizing these trainings.
 3. The team has received training on first aid management by specialists.
 4. Company has already supplied first aid kits and anti-venom kits to all locations.
 5. Company has developed various IEC materials to educate growers and workers and also planned more wall paintings at all villages.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

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.

Noncompliance

Explanation: The policy does not clearly specify comprehensive health and safety management systems. Discussions with management indicate that they are in the process of reviewing the existing health and safety management system.

Plan of Action: 1. A comprehensive health and safety management policy has been developed and it is covered in the seed production procedure, which has been distributed to all growers.

2. Educate growers and workers about this policy.

3. Distribute the related Do's and Don'ts IEC materials to them.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

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 (inhalation or contact with solvent vapors, dust, etc.) to health and safety hazards.

Noncompliance

Explanation: Only workers involved in detasseling received safety shoes and goggles. Workers involved in pesticide spraying have not yet received PPE. Management is implementing the distribution of PPE in a phased manner, first focusing on detasseling workers. The company has plans to distribute PPE to workers involved in pesticide spraying in the coming seasons.

Plan of Action: Syngenta has educated growers and workers to use local methods of safety equipment: wearing a shirt with full-length sleeves, using towels to cover their faces, etc.

Actions:

1. The company will also provide PPE to all growers in the coming year.
2. It is planned to provide PPE to protect feet and heads from the sun.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

Health and Safety: Chemical Management and Training

H&S.8 All chemicals and hazardous substances, farm produce, and raw materials should be properly labeled and stored. The grower shall not use any banned (either by national or international laws) pesticides fertilizers, or any other agro chemicals in the farm. The grower shall ensure safe disposal of waste chemicals or empty containers of chemicals or packing materials. The grower/organizer/company will provide the necessary training to the worker with regard to handling of agro chemicals (pesticides, fertilizers, and other hazardous substances), their application and the use of personal protective equipment.

Noncompliance

Explanation: None of the interviewed workers have received any training on health and safety from the company.

Plan of Action:

1. Company will organize exclusive trainings on chemical management with the support of the sales team.
2. The field team will educate growers/workers on the proper use of chemicals.
3. Pamphlets are prepared and will be distributed to all workers.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

Health and Safety: Machinery Maintenance and Worker Training

H&S.11 All production machinery, equipment, and tools shall be regularly maintained and properly guarded. Workers shall receive training in the proper use and safe operation of machinery, equipment, and tools they use.

Noncompliance

Explanation: Workers have not received any training on the proper use and safe operation of the machinery and equipment they use.

Plan of Action: 1. The company will organize exclusive trainings for workers on: a) health and safety and b) machinery maintenance and chemical management.

2. The field team will educate growers/workers on the proper operation of machines.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:



Wages, Benefits and Overtime Compensation: General Compliance Wages, Benefits and Overtime Compensation

WBOT.1 Growers shall comply with all local laws, regulations, and procedures concerning the payment of wages and benefits, including overtime compensation. In any case where laws and the FLA Workplace Code of Conduct are contradictory, the standard that provides the greatest protection for workers shall apply. Where provisions are lacking, growers shall take measures to reasonably accommodate matters concerning the payments of wages and benefits, including overtime compensation.

Noncompliance

Explanation: The procedures and regulations concerning wages and benefits and overtime compensation as per local law are not followed. Growers and workers are not aware of the local legislation related to wages and benefits.

Plan of Action:

1. Syngenta will create awareness about minimum wages and overtime payments among growers and workers by wall paintings in all villages.
2. Syngenta will closely monitor wages with the documentation kits and by data collected during internal monitoring visits by field supervisors.
3. In the long run, we are planning to address this issue during local stakeholder consultations.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:

Wages, Benefits and Overtime Compensation: Minimum Wage

WBOT.2 Growers shall pay workers, the legal minimum wage or the prevailing regional wage, whichever is higher.

Noncompliance

Explanation: The prevailing daily wages are varied for different operations. The minimum daily wage rates for agricultural operations prescribed by the Andhra Pradesh government for Zone II, under which the present survey area falls, are as follows: 1) ploughing: Rs 128; 2) threshing: Rs 138; 3) sowing, transplanting, harvesting, and weeding: Rs 127; 4) digging, staking, and pruning: Rs 119; 5) pesticide spraying: Rs 186; and 6) loading and unloading operations: Rs 138.

For certain work that is carried out mostly by women, like sowing, weeding, detasseling, and harvesting, workers are paid Rs 120 – 130, which is less than the legal minimum wage. For operations carried out mostly by men, like ploughing; fertilizer and pesticide application; and loading and unloading, workers are paid Rs 175 – 250, which is above the legal minimum wage. The working hours for all activities above are almost the same (about 6 hours, which is in line with the local law).

Plan of Action:

1. Syngenta will create awareness about minimum wages and overtime payments among growers and workers by wall paintings in all villages.
2. In the long run, we are planning to address this issue during local stakeholder consultations.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:



Wages, Benefits and Overtime Compensation: Worker Wage Awareness

WBOT.6 Grower/Organizer/Company will make an effort to educate workers so that the terms of employment, wages, benefits and deductions shall be clearly understood and acceptable by the worker.

Noncompliance

Explanation: Workers are not aware of the legal wages and benefits. The company has not yet made any attempt to create awareness among workers about the Minimum Wages Act. Also, the local government has not made any serious effort to educate workers on the law. Workers are neither organized nor part of any trade union.

Plan of Action:

1. Syngenta will create awareness about minimum wages and overtime payments among growers and workers by wall paintings in all villages.
2. In the long run, we are planning to address this issue during local stakeholder consultations.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:



Wages, Benefits and Overtime Compensation: Record Maintenance

WBOT.7 Company shall make efforts to educate and assist the growers in maintaining records of wages provided to the worker in cash or in-kind or both, and such records shall be acknowledged by the worker.

Noncompliance

Explanation: Growers maintain no records. Growers are not used to maintaining any records.

Plan of Action: 1. Syngenta developed documentation kits, which will be maintained on farms and be helpful to closely monitor wage rates and working hours. A documentation kit, consisting of: a seed production policy document; a copy of the contract between growers and vendors; health and safety Do's and Don'ts; local agriculture labor laws on hours of work, overtime, and minimum wages; grievance procedure with telephone number; and attendance sheet/wage register for workers will be supplied to all growers to maintain records. Illiterate farmers will be supported by field supervisors, who will train their children and their literate workers to maintain the documentation kits. .

2. Syngenta will closely monitor wages with the documentation kits and data collected through internal monitoring visits by field staff.

Deadline Date: December 2013

Action Taken:

Plan Complete:

Plan Complete Date:
