



Vestey Foods

Vestey Foods UK Limited (VFUK)



Communication on Progress

14 June 2016

Company Profile

Vestey Foods Group comprises 7 food companies worldwide specialising in the import, storage and distribution of a wide variety of foodstuffs from global suppliers into the various local market places in which we operate. We specialise in trading beef, pork, lamb, wine, poultry, game, fish, seafood, and convenience and ambient products into some 80 countries and we serve in excess of 1500 customers.

The Group combines longstanding traditions within the 119-year old Vestey family business with a customer-focused approach of our management teams in every area in which we operate. We have well-established relationships with key suppliers and operate to strict quality control standards to ensure that product is delivered to customers the world over, on time and correctly documented to full food safety requirements. With an extensive range of frozen, chilled and ambient goods, we manage procurement, quality assurance and multi-temperature distribution to detailed specifications for both products and services.

We are a leading supplier of emergency feeding solutions to Government and Non-Governmental Organisations, and the Emergency, Humanitarian and Retail sectors. We supply feeding solutions to a number of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services in the United Kingdom and products to Non-Governmental Organisations that operate in disaster relief areas globally; more recently in Nepal in support of the Earthquake recovery support programme. We have supplied emergency feeding solutions to Embassies and Consulates through the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office and are an official supplier to the United Kingdom Department for International Development. We have also provided bespoke Emergency Feeding Solutions to the European Union Monitoring Missions.

Further details can be found at www.vesteyfoods.com.

Statement of Support

VFUK became a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) in 2009. We continue to exercise and disseminate our core values across the global market-place, and strive to imbue them, and the values of the Global Compact, into the commercial DNA of our colleagues, suppliers and customers. There continues to be interest, acceptance and support from all stakeholders in what we are trying to achieve, and the manner in which we are going about it. All that we strive to achieve both individually and as a company, is underpinned by our core values, and there is little doubt that they have improved what we do and how we do it.

We aim to show continual improvement, not only in our performance, but also in our management of our Quality Management System (QMS) and our environmental and health and safety processes. In the last year we have achieved ISO 22000 accreditation for our ambient foods business, enrolled in and achieved SEDEX accreditation (a supplier ethical data exchange) and secured the British Retail Consortium Global Standard in our Food Service business. We have also re-accredited our 'STS code of practice and technical standard for food processors and suppliers to the public sector' certification. Our priority in 2016 is to re-accredit our ISO 9001 and 14001 certification, and to create a policy statement and underpinning processes that evidence our compliance to the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

The Global Compact and our membership of the United Kingdom UNGC Network have helped us to achieve year on year business management improvements to our operating procedures. It has also resulted in a more focussed approach to managing our suppliers and resources, which in turn has helped us to deliver better and more efficient food supply solutions across our business.

Original signed

Bill Cooper
Director of Government Services
VFUK

The Ten Principles

Human Rights

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

The Vestey Group is family owned and has a history of food supply dating back to 1897. We are a leading supplier of food commercially within the United Kingdom and overseas, and to Government and Non-Governmental Organisations, and the Emergency, Humanitarian and Retail sectors. We are very aware of our wider social and economic obligations, and we conduct our operations in a way which promotes Corporate Social Responsibility in terms of interaction with our workforce, customers and suppliers.

We ensure that information relating to suppliers' business activities and actions are obtained by providing Supplier Approval Questionnaires (SAQ). The SAQ questions our suppliers on their compliance of the Ten Principles of the United Nations' Global Compact; a link to the Global Compact website is provided so that suppliers can verify compliance against the principles. All responses to the SAQ are reviewed by ourselves and based on the risk assessment; we also conduct site audits of suppliers.

We monitor the media for any alerts and reports that highlight companies or organisations who may be in breach of the UNGC Principles.

Labour

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour; and

Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

We are committed to upholding freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. We are committed to the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory and child labour, and are an equal opportunities employer and respect individuals, regardless of ethnic origin, age or gender. Currently we do not employ any personnel under the age of 18, and we are aware of, and comply with, the Council Directive 94/33/EC covering the protection of young people at work.

All employees are encouraged to respect the company core values; developed as a guide to how we conduct ourselves day to day, interact with stakeholders, implement decisions, reflect on performance and development needs, and assess or give feedback to others. The four core values are: Honesty and Integrity; being a Reliable Partner, Teamwork and Individual Responsibility; and, Adapting to Change. Research demonstrates that having a strong culture and shared values will enhance our reputation and help us to attract and retain talented individuals who exhibit high levels of employee satisfaction and motivation. Value implementation is encouraged and monitored using surveys, communication bulletins and personal feedback.

We commission an independent research company to administer an annual staff survey, which includes a questionnaire that covers a number of tailored questions on induction, training, development, and communication, as well as many other aspects of staff duties. We encourage all staff to participate in the survey in order to tell us how they feel; it does not matter how long they have worked for us, or where they work, or what role they fill – all views are equally valid and appreciated. Staff confidentiality is completely protected.

All employment posts have formal job descriptions assigned and are advertised to the wider community during the recruitment process. After the interview stage, all applicants are offered formal contracts of employment with information on roles and responsibilities, hours of work and conditions of employment clearly stated. The company aims to provide employees with fair and competitive terms of employment, and attractive benefits to all employees after completion of a 26 weeks probationary period. Benefits include, but are not limited to: pension scheme, medical insurance and life assurance. It is our view that the promotion of flexible working arrangements increases staff motivation, performance and productivity, reduces stress and encourages staff retention by enabling employees to balance their work and personal issues.

We recognise that success depends upon a workforce that is motivated, skilled and highly trained and we are committed to providing the resources and facilities that support, learning, training and development as well as the needs of the business' strategic objectives. We have an equal opportunity employment recruitment policy, which provides a diverse and gender balanced workforce.

Our Data Protection Policy covers all current and potential employees, suppliers and customers, and is compliant with the Data Protection Act (1998). We collect store, process personal information in an appropriate and lawful manner. We ensure protection of workers' personal data with restricted access to the HR department and we are aware of and comply with EU directive 95/46/EC and 2002/58 covering the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy in the electronic communication sector.

Over half of our employees work a standard Monday to Friday (0800 to 1700) working week, with the remaining depot staff working traditional shift patterns. All are allowed unrestricted breaks with adequate provision for storage and preparation of meals and drinks. We place no restriction on taking annual leave, and sickness leave is provided when requested.

All employees benefit from a formal induction package on commencing their position, which clearly defines company policy, reporting procedures, confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations. All employees are encouraged to respect and adhere to our ethics policy and core values on commencement of their post, indeed core values are also covered at the interview stage and all staff are given their own copy of the Company Strategy and core values brochure.

During their employment, all employees participate in annual appraisals to agreed personal objectives. Employees are also encouraged to develop their professional skills through training to the mutual benefit of individuals and the company.

Some of our employees are members of Trade Unions and enrolment is purely on a voluntary basis. We strongly promote an environment that allows employees to represent themselves if an issue arises, via open management structure, yearly appraisals and a confidential helpline.

Environment

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

Principle 9: encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

We are ISO 14001:2004 'Environmental Management Standard' accredited and we have an environmental policy that is reviewed annually. The environmental policy is understood by all key personnel and communicated to all new staff when joining the company. All staff complete regular refresher training days and senior staff are updated on progress during annual Business Management Meetings.

We set environmental objectives and targets annually. Reviews occur at Business Management System Management Meetings against the information recorded in the Register of Environmental Aspects and Environmental Legislation. In setting these objectives and targets, we are mindful of:

- The Environmental Policy.
- Relative importance of the environmental aspects.
- Relevant legislation.
- View of any interested parties.
- The need to prevent pollution in general.

We continue to encourage the use of environmentally friendly technologies and are constantly reminding staff to be mindful of the need to use energy and fuel wisely for both sustainable and economic reasons. We believe that our membership of the ESOS will lead to further improvements in the way that we consume energy across the company.

The commercial, technical and product development teams work together with our suppliers to eliminate packaging waste and to reduce overall packaging consumption. We have seen some successes in the last 12 months in our ambient food department, in terms of reducing both product and outer packaging. Our packaging waste is monitored and analysed as part of our annual VALPAC return. We also strongly encourage staff to minimise office waste and adopt more sustainable office practices. Indeed, in the last 12 months we have consumed significantly less plastics in our company than in previous years.

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

As outlined in our new Ethics Policy, corruption in all forms is not acceptable. Critically, we commit to acting within the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and the United Kingdom Bribery Act of 2010. We operate a malpractice at work policy, which is displayed on all employee communication boards and covers all employees together with any individual undertaking work for the Group on a consultancy basis. In the last 12 months there have been no reports of misconduct.