



FEFAC

FEFAC SOY SOURCING GUIDELINES FACTSHEETS

GENERAL

Besides feed safety, feed quality, market access and innovation, sustainability is an important item on FEFAC's agenda. Regarding sustainability, soy is the commodity that currently deserves the most attention. FEFAC developed a Roadmap on Responsible Soy. Since 2014, a coalition of 9 FEFAC member associations have joined forces to implement the actions from this roadmap. This resulted in the development of the FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines and an online benchmark tool.

Guidelines and benchmark platform

The FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines consist of social and environmental criteria and recommendations for good agricultural practices for soy cultivation. The Guidelines are not a new standard, therefore farmers will not be 'FEFAC certified'. The Guidelines are used to evaluate existing and newly developed sustainable soy schemes. If all essential and at least 5 desired criteria of the Guidelines are included in a certain scheme and the verification requirements are met - a scheme is regarded to be compliant with the Guidelines. To transparently verify whether a responsible soy programme meets the Soy Sourcing Guidelines, FEFAC launched together with the International Trade Center (ITC)¹ an online benchmark platform. The Guidelines are essentially a professional recommendation which is subject to voluntary uptake. They should therefore not be confused with a newly developed standard. FEFAC does not intend to determine which responsible soy scheme market operators should engage with. With its Guidelines however, the European Compound Feed Industry makes its baseline criteria clear.

FEFAC's ambition

With its Soy Sourcing Guidelines FEFAC wants to:

- to give suppliers and farmer organisations an incentive to develop their own approach for responsible soy cultivation together with their farm base
- bring more clarity to the market about existing and newly developed responsible soy schemes
- stimulate a mainstream market transition to responsibly produced soy
- start a process of continuous improvement (stepwise approach).
- involve farmer organisations as much as possible.

You can find the FEFAC Soy Sourcing Guidelines on www.standardsmap.org/fefac or at the FEFAC website: www.fefac.org. The guidelines are available in several languages. Check the outcomes of the consultation round on www.fefac.org

¹ The International Trade Center, ITC, is an agency of UN and WTO.



PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA

The FEFAC Sourcing Guidelines list a number of social and environmental issues that must be addressed by responsible soy schemes. The Guidelines cover six principles: legal compliance, responsible working conditions, environmental responsibility, good agricultural practices, land rights and community relations.

Each principle is subdivided into a number of concrete criteria. A distinction is made between essential and desired criteria. The 37 essential criteria are fundamental, according to FEFAC, and always need to be included in responsible soy schemes. Examples are the prevention of illegal deforestation, forced labour, misuse of agrochemicals and violation of land rights. The 22 desired criteria are important as well, but not all of them have to be present in responsible soy schemes to be compliant with the Guidelines. In the initial phase 5 desired criteria -free of choice- need to be included. This approach allows for some flexibility for standard and programme owners and makes continuous improvement possible.

Legal compliance

In the Guidelines legal compliance including adequate verification is the starting point.

Responsible working conditions

The Guidelines cover all human rights and social criteria which can be found in the main ILO-Conventions and advanced sustainability schemes for agro commodities. The Guidelines include: no child labour, no forced labour, no discrimination, equal remuneration, voluntary overwork, fair wages, healthy and safe work, freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Environmental responsibility

The Guidelines include the following environmental topics: responsible soy expansion, biodiversity protection, proper waste management and fossil fuel use. Prevention of illegal deforestation is considered key. The same holds for biodiversity protection. For waste the focus is on adequate disposal, prevention and recycling. The fossil fuel requirements are derived from the desire to limit greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. FEFAC decided not to add complex GHG calculations to the guidelines.

Good agricultural practices

The Guidelines include requirements for the protection of the quality and quantity of water, the quality of soils, the prevention of erosion and safe and adequate application of agrochemicals.

Land rights and community relations

In the Guidelines specific requirements exist for communication with local communities. An adequate compliant mechanism needs to be in place. Respecting land rights is considered of major importance.



VERIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

FEFAC has not only listed a number of social and environmental items that have to be addressed in soy programmes or schemes, but also a number of verification requirements to ensure that these criteria are indeed met in practice. The term verification instead of certification is used because FEFAC acknowledges different approaches to ensure whether farmer practices are in line with certain requirements. Certification is one of the possibilities.

The verification requirements of the Guidelines are based on 5 leading principles: effectiveness, efficiency, impartiality, transparency and risk based. FEFAC always requires the involvement of an independent third party that is ISO-accredited by an official accreditation body. In the Guidelines a distinction is made between third party verification of all farmers and third party verification of the internal control system in case of self-assessment and/or second party verification. In the latter case, the third party also always has to check a sample of farmers. FEFAC developed a decision tree to determine which requirements are relevant for a specific verification system.

Third party verification of all farmers

A third party audits the farmers prior to granting proof of verification. The advantage of working with a third party is that this party has no interest in the outcome of the audit and makes sure all auditors are properly trained to ensure that audits are executed in a standardised and trustworthy manner. In the FEFAC Guidelines the schemes working in this manner are considered compliant.

Second party verification with 3rd party check

Several soy processing and/or trade companies in the supply chain have long term relationships with their farmer base and sometimes have their own farms. They can choose to have an internal control system in place verifying whether the farmers produce in accordance with certain predetermined good practices. This approach is accepted in the FEFAC Guidelines when an independent third party checks the robustness of this internal control system and audits a sample of farmers in the field.

First party verification (farmer self-assessment) with 3rd party check

More and more initiatives work with farmer self-assessments. This means farmers provide information about their own practices, learn where improvements are possible and make steps towards continuous improvement. Examples are SAI's FSA and Solidaridad's Rural Horizon. Self-assessments are only accepted in the FEFAC Guidelines if an independent third party checks the robustness of this system and audits a sample of farmers in the field.



BENCHMARK PROCESS

In order to assess which schemes for responsible soy cover all essential and at least 5 of the desired criteria from the FEFAC Guidelines and have a trustworthy verification system, an online benchmark platform was designed in close cooperation with ITC. The following schemes have been regarded by ITC as compliant with the FEFAC Guidelines: RTRS, ISCC, CEFETRA CRS, Bemefa, Cargill Triple S, SSAP USSEC, Agricultura Certificada, Femas, ADM Responsible Soy, AMAGGI Responsible Soy Standard (ARSS), Pro-S Bunge and Proterra². Check for latest update: www.standardsmap.org/fefac.

ITC has a benchmarking methodology that is widely accepted in the international arena. In September 2015 ITC launched together with FEFAC an online benchmarking platform for responsible soy schemes.

Pre-check

Before the formal benchmark starts, a scheme owner can make use of the self assessment tool to pre-check whether his scheme complies with the FEFAC Guidelines. After answering all questions a report is produced showing which items are covered and which items are not and how many of the essential and desired items from the Guidelines are met. Although this self-assessment gives a good indication of compliance with the Guidelines, it has no formal status.

Formal application for benchmark

Every scheme needs to formally apply for a benchmark. After the formal application, ITC provides more information about the benchmark process to the scheme owner and subsequently the latter receives log-in information for entering all information about its scheme in the Standards Map database. When all information is submitted to the database, ITC checks the accuracy of the data. ITC also asks the scheme owners to fill in a specific excel file about the verification requirements of the Guidelines. After all information has been entered correctly into the database, the real assessment starts. By applying for the formal benchmark, the scheme owner agrees to publication of his scheme on the public ITC Standards Map website (www.standardsmap.org).

Compliance assessment carried out by ITC

Based on the data entered in the database, ITC assesses whether a specific scheme: contains all essential criteria and at least five of the desired criteria of the FEFAC guidelines; the timing of the criteria corresponds with the one required in the Guidelines and all verification requirements are met. After this assessment ITC provides feedback to the scheme owner. The following outcomes are possible

- A scheme is compliant with the Guidelines and the scheme owner receives official confirmation of the positive result.
- ITC is unable to do the final compliance assessment because clarification about certain criteria is needed. Arguments and additional evidence need to be exchanged between the scheme owner and ITC (e.g. audit reports, protocols etc.).
- A scheme is not in compliance with the Guidelines. ITC reports back to the scheme owner on which criteria the scheme is not compliant yet. It is up to the scheme owner to make the necessary amendments in his scheme in order to become compliant.