



Starbucks Response to Allegations of Human Rights Abuses in Kenyan Tea Estates

Friday, March 10, 2023

We are deeply concerned about the distressing claims of labor and human rights violations at Finlay Estates in Kenya. We take seriously our commitment to responsible sourcing and transparency within our supply chain.

We actively work with suppliers to enhance the agricultural industry and support the livelihoods of communities engaged in coffee and tea production. Our recent investments in Kenya are focused on empowering women and girls in these communities. [The Starbucks Foundation](#) provided a grant to Global Water Challenge, which aims to improve the health and economic conditions of 5,760 women in coffee and tea communities through increased access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), along with entrepreneurship training, financial literacy and income-generating activities. Furthermore, since 2019 Starbucks has invested nearly \$150,000 in projects that target gender equality, health and safety and uplifting youth directly to Finlay Estates in Kenya.

Kenyan Supply Chain and Response to Allegations:

As soon as we became aware of the allegations in the report, we took immediate action to suspend purchasing from the estate in question. Since our suspension, the Rainforest Alliance [announced](#) it is conducting an investigative audit into the two Rainforest Alliance-certified estates named in the documentary. Starbucks will review the findings of the audit to determine its path forward. We know our actions are meaningful to the agricultural communities we source from and as such we will continue working with organizations like the Rainforest Alliance and Ethical Tea Partnership to work directly with the James Finlay leadership and country manager to understand the immediate actions they are taking, address issues and evolve labor practices.

Supplier Requirements and Starbucks Code of Conduct

Our tea suppliers are required to acknowledge Starbucks [Supplier Code of Conduct](#), [Standards of Business Conduct](#) as well as [Starbucks Global Human Rights Statement](#). As outlined in our [Global Human Rights statement](#), we have a zero-tolerance policy for human rights abuses in our supply chain and retail operations. From the human rights policy specifically:

"We respect the human rights of individuals and communities impacted by our operations and products, and we commit to respect the principles of the: [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#); [UN Global Compact](#); [OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises](#); [International Bill of Rights](#); [ILO Core Labor Standards](#); [Women's Empowerment Principles](#); [Children's Rights and Business Principles](#), and [Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment](#). [...] We extend the expectations detailed in this statement to our suppliers throughout our supply chain."

Starbucks requires all tea suppliers to hold a current Rainforest Alliance Certificate. In FY21, 99.1% of tea sourced by the company was verified responsibly sourced from Rainforest Alliance Certified gardens (as disclosed in our FY21 [Global Environment & Social Impact Report](#)). Our FY22 report is scheduled to publish in Spring 2023.



However, continued failure to comply, or failure to work with Starbucks or a third party to correct non-compliance with our policies, are grounds for cancellation of open orders, discontinued use of non-complying production sites, or termination of our business relationship.

Grievance Reporting

Starbucks requires all tea suppliers to hold a current Rainforest Alliance Certificate. Rainforest Alliance's [2020 Certification Program](#) includes an [Assess-and Address](#) approach and grievance mechanism for tackling human rights issues.