

RINGTONS

A FAMILY BUSINESS SINCE 1907

Ringtons Limited response to Business Human Rights Resource Centre

We thank the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre for bringing these reports of alleged labour and human rights abuses to our attention. Please see below our response.

Can you confirm whether the named estates / companies remain part of your supply chain?

Please see detail in table below.

Producer	Estate	Ringtons' Comments
Report 1		
Horana Plantations	Stockholm Alton	Remain in Ringtons' supply chain
Kelani Valley	Pedro Lover's Leap Mahagastotte	Remain in Ringtons' supply chain
Maskeliya Plantations	Strathspey Brunswick Brownlow Laxapana	Remain in Ringtons' supply chain
Talakawelle Tea Estates	Somerset	No longer sourcing from – last purchase 2017
Hatton Plantations	Adisham Vellaioya Waltrim Henfold Dickoya	Remain in Ringtons' supply chain
Bogawantalawa Tea Estates	Campion Kotiyagala Bridwell Wanarajah Norwood	Remain in Ringtons' supply chain
Report 2		
	Nalani Tea Estate	No longer sourcing from – last purchase 2016
Report 3		
Horana Plantations	Alton	Remain in Ringtons' supply chain
Hatton Plantations	Vellaioya	Remain in Ringtons' supply chain

Were you previously aware of these allegations?

We were not aware of the allegations.

How does Ringtons plan to respond to each allegation (including any plans to investigate or remedy the issue)?

We have contacted all suppliers named in these allegations.

Report 1

All suppliers have confirmed that they complied with the Wage Board Ordinance Notification of the 5th March 2021, and paid the minimum daily wage of Rs 1,000 per day from this date.

Report 2

We are no longer sourcing from this producer/estate.



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Report 3

We have reviewed copies of our supplier's Freedom of Association Policies, Grievance Mechanisms, and sections of the Collective Bargaining Agreements regarding Disciplinary Action and Grievance Dispute Procedures.

How does Ringtons ensure that workers in its tea supply chain receive a fair wage?

Ringtons require all suppliers pay their employees the national legal standard as minimum. We are aware of a recent Living Wage Study (September 2022) conducted by a local NGO in Sri Lanka. The minimum daily wage of Rs 1,000 per day is below the calculated Living Wage in this study. Ringtons would like all workers in the tea industry to receive a Living Wage. However, we recognise that wage issues in supply chains are complex; they are caused by a multitude of factors and cannot be addressed by one stakeholder alone. We adopt responsible business practices through our long-term supplier relationships. We take heed of Responsible Purchasing guidance from the Ethical Trading Initiative and Ethical Tea Partnership and are appraising how we can improve. Collaborative industry action is vital in enabling living wages to be paid.

How does Ringtons ensure that freedom of association and collective bargaining rights are respected in its tea supply chain, and that workers are not penalised for union membership or participation in industrial action?

Suppliers of Ringtons are asked to commit to Ringtons Ethical Trade & Human Rights Policy, which includes: "Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected".

Considering the reports shared by BHRRC, we have reviewed our supplier's Freedom of Association policies and Collective Bargaining Agreements in force.

Is there any further information you would like us to know in relation to the allegation and Ringtons' response?

We thank the Business and Human Rights Resource Centre for bringing these reports of alleged labour and human rights abuses to our attention.

Ringtons are and always will be committed to sourcing our products ethically and sustainably. We work with partners across the world to monitor our supply chains to trace our products back to their source, to understand the challenges the industry faces and collaborate on projects across the globe.

When approving suppliers, we ensure suppliers are aware of and adhere to the ETI Base Code and other Ringtons' policies, including Ringtons' Human Rights & Ethical Trading Policy.

Respecting human rights is of great importance to Ringtons and our stakeholders. We work with industry stakeholders to improve the lives of workers, farmers, and communities. Through engagement with other stakeholders, Ringtons is part of an industry voice to enable collaboration, share experiences, identify root causes, and to influence strategic change in tea growing origins.

We are active members of the Ethical Tea Partnership. Together with other organisations, we aim to create a fairer, more sustainable tea industry for workers, farmers, and the environment. As members of the Ethical Tea Partnership, we commit to purchase tea from producers who are certified by Fairtrade and/or Rainforest Alliance. These third-party certification bodies set standards for producers to adhere to. These standards cover requirements on social, economic, and environmental criteria. We know that certification can be strengthened via cross-industry collaboration and working together to alleviate and remedy systemic issues in tea supply chains.

