

**Adopted at
ESA GA 2015**

ESA embraces sustainability

ESA members believe that sustainability is one of the main challenges for the food industry in the years ahead.

Secured supply is only feasible if spice production offers a financially attractive and sustainable livelihood for farmers. Therefore ESA subscribes to principles of the Sustainable Agricultural Network (SAN) on matters as environmental integrity, social wellbeing and economic resilience.

Many of the spices and herbs imported into Europe are produced in less economically developed countries by smallholder farmers who for a large part of the livelihoods depend on the income from their crops. As a result of global market forces smallholder farmers have increasingly moved to other more valuable sources of income. In addition many young farmers are leaving agriculture and migrate to urban areas for jobs in non-agricultural sectors. This has caused smallholder farmers to focus on high intensive crops. Not only does this affect the scarcity of spices and herbs it also negatively affects the environment – high intensive monoculture farm systems cause serious land degradation, pollution and erosion issues – and the communities that suffer from health problems due to the use of chemicals in such systems.

Responsible use of fertilizers and pesticides and systems on traceability are basic to producing spices and herbs that are food safe and that can be used as raw material for the products produced by the industry members of ESA to create long term competitiveness. ESA supports and promotes implementation of Good Agricultural Practices upstream the supply chain.

ESA will support initiatives taken by its members and other stakeholders to improve farmers' livelihoods in compliance with responsible sourcing principals that secure the future supply of spices and herbs.