



Modern Slavery Statement

Updated 24/01/25

R S Cockerill (York) Ltd are a family owned packing and processing potato business, supplying some of the major retailers and food processors. We pride ourselves on a culture and values that treats all employees equally with dignity and respect, and seeks to provide a safe, secure and respectable working environment.

Modern slavery is an unacceptable issue in the UK, and R S Cockerill (York) Ltd are committed to developing and adopting a proactive approach to tackling its avoidance, detection and correct management of any incidences. This encompasses rogue individuals working within the business, forced labour, human trafficking, payment for work-finding services and work related exploitation, such as forced use of accommodation.

We recognise that the current challenges of maintaining a consistent and regular workforce, under the economic conditions we are experiencing, increase the opportunity for exploitation. We have made all best endeavours to provide our workforce with sufficient Personal Protective Equipment, hygiene resources and whistleblowing measures to make this as safer place to work as possible.

Coverage

The Directors of R S Cockerill (York) Ltd have overall responsibility for its implementation and operation, but there is an onus on all stakeholders to report any suspicious activity or concerns that they may have observed. This policy covers all sites owned and run by R S Cockerill (York) Ltd, and applies to all permanent, temporary and agency employees.

Recent actions

Our initial Modern Slavery Statement was written in March 2016, but in the last 3 years we have undertaken the following:

- Our Senior Management Team and some of our Directors participated in a Mental Health First Aid Course on 3rd March 2021 to improve our awareness of such conditions, and allow us to make informed decisions on supporting our staff.
- One of our Production Mangers participated in: "ONLINE Advanced Tackling Modern slavery in UK Businesses" on 14th January 2025.
- The business undertook a SMETA (Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit) audit on the 18th May 2021, which was received very positively.
- One of our Production Managers is regularly participating in a local Modern Slavery Partnership Programme, working with local agencies to understand and identify any issues in our locality.
- We continue to work in conjunction with our two agency labour providers to instigate systems to monitor and identity any settled status issues on a daily basis. We meet on a regular basis to review and update on Health & Safety, any worker welfare issues and to gain valuable feedback to maintain our position as a preferred employer.
- Ongoing review of policy and procedures around hidden labour exploitation.

Policy Commitments

R S Cockerill (York) Ltd have an ongoing commitment to:

- Have a responsibility to be transparent, and to regularly review our practices and procedures. Require labour providers and other organisations to adopt policies and procedures consistent with the above.
- Insistence that all labour providers support a transparent and honest system, open to audit and scrutiny.
- Ensure that labour sourcing, recruitment and worker placement processes are under the control of trusted and competent staff members, and that all staff responsible for directly recruiting workers are aware of the issues around third party labour exploitation, and can identify indicators as to its practice.
- Not using either any individual or organisation to source and supply workers without confirmation that they have not been charged a work finding fee.
- Adopt a proactive approach to reporting suspicions of hidden worker exploitation to the GLAA (Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority) and Police, and are fully aware of what action to take, should something be detected.
- One of our Production Managers have been appointed 'Modern Slavery Champion'.
- We have identified 'trusted interpreters', and have an action plan if there is still a language barrier.
- Adequately communicate information on Hidden Labour exploitation to staff through notices and training.
- Positively encourage and support employees and agency workers to report such exploitation which may be occurring within their communities, anonymously if necessary so as to raise potential concerns without fear of reprisal.
- Consideration given to the terms of the Modern Slavery Act in building and maintaining a sustainable business in the long term.
- Working with our suppliers and customers in developing and maintaining their own hidden labour exploitation policies and protocols.

Rufus Pilgrim
Managing Director - R S Cockerill (York) Ltd

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rufus Pilgrim', written in a cursive style.

Date: 24th January 2025