

RINGTONS

A FAMILY BUSINESS SINCE 1907

Our Sourcing Philosophy

The founder of the business in 1907, Samuel Smith, always did his best 'to do the right thing', with particular focus on his customers, his staff and the quality of the Ringtons products. All of us at Ringtons today maintain this belief in 'doing the right thing'. We also have another fundamental belief from our founder 'actions speak louder than words'.

As a family business well over 100 years old now moving into the 5th generation, we would like to share with you our sourcing philosophy. We take great pride in the products we offer our customers. The passion, dedication, knowledge, skill and hard work of our suppliers is what allows us to make the quality of Ringtons tea that we do. We also recognise that we have a moral duty to work with our suppliers in a responsible way.

What do we do?

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 Code¹ 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.

Knowing Our Supply Chain

We're proud to source many of our teas from producers that we have strong and long-term relationships with, having worked closely with them for many years, often decades. We keep in touch with our suppliers and visit them regularly to listen and see conditions first hand, to help understand and overcome challenges faced. At Ringtons we recognise that sharing our tea suppliers' information is important for greater confidence and transparency, both for our customers and the suppliers themselves. This openness allows greater collaboration and helps us to build more sustainable supply chains. It also helps us to collectively tackle systemic issues that can occur across global supply chains with other stakeholders. Our supply base is published on our website².

Assessing Risk

From knowing where we source our tea from, we can also understand associated risks. As Sedex³ members, we utilise tools such as Sedex Radar to assess the inherent risks of sourcing from different countries and regions. We also use other information sources to inform our risk assessment, such as human rights impact assessments, and intel from certification bodies and NGOs. Through mapping risk, we can then mitigate.

Policy & Governance

We are currently reviewing industry guidance on responsible business practices, such as the United Nation's Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights⁴, and the Ethical Tea Partnership's Responsible Purchasing

¹ ETI Base Code: <https://www.ethicaltrade.org/eti-base-code>

² Ringtons Pride in Our Supply Base: <https://www.ringtons.co.uk/pride-in-our-supply-base-i248>

³ Sedex: <https://www.sedex.com/>

⁴ United Nation's Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/guidingprinciplesbusinesshr_en.pdf



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Practices⁵ guidance. From this review, we are identifying areas in which we can strengthen our policy and governance frameworks. One of the benefits of having strong policy and governance is that it ensures that all stakeholders at Ringtons understand the importance of doing business responsibly – from Board level to daily operations.

Partnerships & Industry Collaboration

Sustainable Development Goal 17 is “partnerships for the goals”⁶. This demonstrates the importance of working collaboratively. We work in partnership with charities, not-for-profit organisations and industry stakeholders to improve the lives of workers, farmers and communities both near and far.

We are active members of the Ethical Tea Partnership⁷. 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.

In some instances, we purchase tea from producers that do not hold Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance certification. This is typically when the producer is a micro producer – sometimes an individual tea maker – and the costs of certification do not make business sense for these producers. In these instances, we ensure that these producers understand the principles laid out in our Human Rights & Ethical Trading Policy and the ETI Base Code. We also use our risk mapping tool to identify inherent risks, based on region and industry, and will take further action based on risk assessment.

Giving Back

Founded in 2013, the Ringtons Tea Growing Community Charitable Trust makes grants to organisations tackling issues that affect smallholder farmers and workers in the tea industry across the world. We are proud to have supported multiple industry programmes and projects via this fund. Funding does not exclusively support communities and workers directly in Ringtons’ supply chain; the fund exists to benefit all tea growing communities.

We recognise that there will always be areas in which we can improve our operations. Sourcing responsibly is no exception. We will continue to strive to do the right thing by our suppliers.



Simon M Smith
CEO – 4th Generation Family Member
Ringtons Limited
May 2023

⁵ Ethical Tea Partnership Responsible Purchasing Practices: <https://ethicalteapartnership.org/responsible-purchasing-practices/>

⁶ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

⁷ Ethical Tea Partnership: <https://ethicalteapartnership.org/>

