



# Weekly news email

13<sup>th</sup> July 2023

## News headlines

**Global** - Nations where 3.3bn live spend more on debt than health, schools. Almost half of humanity lives in countries that spend more servicing interest on debt than health or education, UN says.

**Global** - World Population Day: What will the world look like in 2050? Over the past year, the world population officially hit eight billion, and India surpassed China to become the world's most populous country.

**Europe** - EU passes nature restoration law in knife-edge vote. MEPs back law to place recovery measures on 20% of EU's land and sea by 2030 by dozen votes.

**Europe** - Cerberus heatwave: Hot weather sweeps across southern Europe. A heatwave is sweeping across parts of southern Europe and north-west Africa, with potential record-breaking temperatures in the coming days.

**Belgium** - Belgian Cooperation takes a new step to guarantee a living wage and living income. Belgium has signed the Joint Declaration on Living Wage and Living Income, joining Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

**Colombia** - Deforestation in Colombia dropped by 29 percent. Deforestation in the Amazon has dropped in both Brazil and Colombia as elected leaders pledge to prioritise environment.

**France** - 'French people are angry': communities react after protests. Residents give their thoughts on what happened in France after a police officer fatally shot Nahel M on 27 June.

**Kenya** - Kenyan police tear-gas protesters in latest row over tax hikes. The demonstrations, the second in a week, held after legislation raising taxes in highly indebted Kenya signed into law by President Ruto last month.

**The Netherlands** - Mark Rutte: Dutch coalition government collapses in migration row

**Sri Lanka** - Sri Lanka's fishermen face double whammy of climate and economy. New tensions are stirring Sri Lanka's traditional fishing practices as the country continues to go through its worst economic crisis.

**Sudan/Egypt** - The war in Sudan is a problem for Egypt. Egypt is keen to protect itself as Sudan's military strongmen wage war.

**Thailand** - Democracy on the line in Thailand as parliament to vote on new PM. Two months after Move Forward's election gains, Thais will find out whether party's leader can become PM.

**Tunisia** - Crisis as Black Africans Expelled to Libya Border. Allow Aid Access; Take People to Safety

**UK – trafficking** My trafficker is behind bars, but if the UK's new migration bill passes, my story would have ended very differently.

**UK – migration bill** UK ministers planning on 'trafficking' people to Rwanda, says bishop. Rose Hudson-Wilkin, bishop of Dover, calls for compassionate treatment of those seeking asylum in UK. Yes, the Tories' migration bill is bad – but the lack of Commons scrutiny is more disturbing still

**UK – modern slavery** Nearly two thirds of modern slavery claims by Albanians rejected after Government crackdown. New policy that requires victims to show 'objective' proof of trafficking leads to significant rise in case rejections.

**UK – modern slavery** Peterborough gang master who abused Cambridgeshire migrant workers jailed

**UK – asylum seekers** Asylum seeker from Sudan rejected by Home Office using pre-war information. The incident has led to concerns about the accuracy of Home Office asylum decision-making.

**UK – exploitation** UK care operators accused of 'shocking abuse' of migrant workers. Unison says some workers given substandard accommodation and 80-hour weeks and forced to repay recruitment fees.

**UK – inequality** Rise in vulnerable women dying early in north-east England, report finds. Charity identifies 'triple shock' of Covid, austerity and cost of living as premature deaths increase.

**UK – people smuggling** People smuggler jailed for 12 years over Essex lorry deaths. Marius Mihai Draghici was 'essential cog' in operation that caused deaths of 39 people.

**UK – seasonal worker scheme** A 'be British' mandate won't make up for seasonal workers picking our fruit. Bringing back "pick for Britain" won't solve the problems of seasonal workers who come to the UK and find a substandard job market ripe for exploitation.

**UK – strikes** 'I am not a robot': Why Amazon UK workers are striking on Prime Day. Hundreds join action at online retailer's Coventry site in standoff over pay, conditions and union rights

## Human rights and ethical trade news

**Open Society Foundations** - Human rights groups raise concern as George Soros' OSF plans to lay off 40% of its staff globally

**Business & Human Rights Resource Centre** - [Kenya: Security guards at Del Monte pineapple farm supplying UK supermarkets accused of assaults, killings & rapes of supposed trespasser.](#)

**Human Rights at Sea** - [Human Rights at Sea. Social Responsibility and Working Towards a Fair and Sustainable Seafood Industry: An Interview with Zacari Edwards, International Pole & Line Foundation.](#) Overfishing has become a global issue that threatens marine ecosystems globally. But what about the people catching the fish?

**Uganda** - [Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Law: a call for UK intervention.](#) On the 26th of May, the President of Uganda signed the Anti-Homosexuality Law. The law, among other human rights violations, criminalises homosexuality with death penalty and life in prison.

**Microfinance/Coffee** - [How access to finance became coffee producers' biggest obstacle](#)

**Modern Slavery Statement** - [Pro-Force Publishes 2022 Modern Slavery Statement](#)

**Fairtrade** - [Five Reasons Why Fairtrade Remains the #1 Ethical Consumer Choice.](#) Research in 12 countries by GlobeScan for Fairtrade suggests rising food prices haven't deterred the majority of shoppers from paying a bit more for a Fairtrade product.

## Sustainability/climate

**Climate change** - [What makes South Asia so vulnerable to climate change?](#) Extreme weather events in the world's most populous and one of the poorest sub regions susceptible to food insecurity, displacement and diseases.

**Just Transition** – [Transition plan approach recommendations](#) from the Transition Plan Taskforce.

## Resources and reports

**Report - Debt, Migration and Exploitation:** The Seasonal Worker Visa and the Degradation of Working Conditions in UK Horticulture' has been written in collaboration with the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, New Economics Foundation, Focus on Labour Exploitation, Sustain and a farmer solidarity network of former migrant seasonal workers.

**Business & Human Rights Journal** – article [Downstream Human Rights Due Diligence: Informing Debate Through Insights from Business](#)

**Global Coffee Report** - [Global Coffee Report is the coffee industry's most respected business publication.](#) providing updates on developments and trends from around the world.

**Report 'Soy No More: Breaking away from soy in UK pig and poultry farming'** has been launched by Sustain, The Landworkers Alliance, Pasture for Life, Feedback Global and Hodmedod. The over production of soy in the Global South is a key driver of deforestation –

and almost 90% of the soy that the UK imports goes to animal feed – mainly for feeding chickens in intensive units and pigs on large-scale holdings.

**Report: Eradicating Gender-Based Violence And Harassment At Work** - [The Solidarity Center report](#) highlights the support of unions and civil society organizations in ending gender-based violence (GBVH) at work and showcases key outcomes, including a landmark agreement to address GBVH in Lesotho garment factories.

## Podcasts/video

**Film** - [New film highlights 'slavery' on UK fruit farms](#). The investigation exposed the exploitation of Caribbean migrant workers

**Film - Migrants in Malaysia:** [Hundreds of victims of a recruitment agency scam are stranded in Malaysia](#). Many from Bangladesh and Nepal took out big bank loans or spent their life savings - only to find they had been duped by the false promises of a job.

**Film Taking Stock: Tackling labour exploitation in UK Warehousing video.** [Watch Stronger Together's latest awareness film, Taking Stock](#). This fictional film is based on real life case studies and addresses exploitation and forced labour in UK warehousing.

## Events and webinars

**Oxfam webinar** - Tuesday 18 July. Want to learn more about actions your business can take to tackle gender inequality in the shrimp supply chain? Want to discover approaches and good practice to help understand and respond to gender issues in shrimp value chains? Join us on Tuesday to hear key learnings from developing and piloting the Gender Transformative Tracker for the shrimp sector from the companies who took part - Tesco, Hilton Foods, Amanda Seafood, and Khang An - about their experiences participating in this pilot. [Register here](#).

### **Seasonal Workers 2023 - Grower update and discussion**

All growers who use seasonal workers are invited to an update and open discussion on their 2023 season experiences, including any ongoing or new challenges and where further guidance would be helpful.

This will take place on 27th July at 11am for one hour. To register, [click here](#). The agenda is as follows:

- Update on seasonal workers' supply, government and other stakeholders' positions, [Grower Seasonal Workers' Toolkit & Checklist](#) – David Camp, ALP Chair
- Update on Seasonal Workers' Scheme Taskforce and Workstream activities – Hannah Newcomb, Taskforce Secretariat Lead/Stronger Together Co-CEO
- 2023 Growers' Experience – this season's challenges and further support that would be helpful - Open discussion facilitated by Louise Nicholls, FNET Technical Lead