



Weekly News email

24th October 2024

Horizon scanning

Kenya - G4S guards accused of brutal attack at Del Monte's Kenyan pineapple farm. Previous guards on the Kenyan mega-farm were accused of killings. Now, security staff from new global contractor are accused of unprovoked violence

Peru - 'I've seen the dark, fat grease stuck to the leaves': oil and gas encroach on Peru's uncontacted peoples. The government is auctioning off plots of pristine Indigenous reserves for fossil fuel projects, with campaigners warning of a 'silent genocide'

Portugal - Portugal's Immigration Overhaul Hits South Asian Workers Hard. The possibility of a life-changing "raspberry passport" through agricultural work is fading for many South Asian workers, forcing already vulnerable people into even more precarious and often exploitative situations.

Tunisia - EU refuses to publish findings of Tunisia human rights inquiry. The European Commission is refusing to publish the findings of a human rights inquiry into Tunisia it conducted shortly before announcing a controversial migration deal with the increasingly authoritarian north African country.

UK - What are the National Minimum Wage, National Living Wage and Real Living Wage? Almost half a million workers will benefit as the Real Living Wage - an hourly rate amount voluntarily paid by some UK businesses - is going up by 5%.

UK - Employment Rights Bill: will new unfair dismissal rules help seasonal workers? The new bill may yet improve the outlook for seasonal workers, as is desperately needed. But it will do nothing to fix the root cause of the problem: a short-term visa which gives their employer outsized power to decide where they work, if they work, and even whether they stay in the country.

UK- Government provides certainty to horticulture and poultry businesses. The Government has underlined its commitment to the horticultural and poultry sectors by confirming measures to provide stability, including the allocation for the Seasonal Worker visa route for 2025. A package of measures to provide certainty and stability to farmers and growers in the UK's horticulture, poultry and sheep sectors has been announced by the government today (Monday 21 October).

UK - Seasonal worker scheme confirmed for 2025. The scheme will provide a total of 43,000 seasonal worker visas for horticulture and 2,000 for poultry next year (Grocer)

UK - [Labour backtracks on push for genocide ruling on China's treatment of Uyghurs](#). Labour has backtracked on plans to push for formal recognition of China's treatment of the Uyghurs as genocide in the run-up to David Lammy's trip to the country this weekend.

UK - [Farmer fined £16k after worker dies in fall](#). 16-Oct-2024 By William Dodds. A farmer has been cleared of manslaughter but fined after a worker was killed on his farm in Cheshire while attempting to repair the roof of a packing shed.

UK - [New workers' rights 'to cost firms £5bn a year'](#). Labour's plans to upgrade workers' rights will cost businesses up to £5bn a year to implement, according to the government's own analysis. The new measures would have a disproportionate impact on smaller businesses, responsible for employing 13 million workers, the impact assessment report found.

USA - [Safeway supplier Humberto Castaneda violated "numerous" labour requirements for H2-A seasonal farmworkers; Safeway owner is Albertsons](#). The US Department of Labor (DoL) has fined grower Humberto Castaneda Produce USD31,102 in back wages and USD18,154 in civil penalties having established numbers abuses of H2-A seasonal farmworkers employed at the farm. These included findings that the employer paid higher rates to workers with H2-A visas than to local workers, failed to provide tools, meals or kitchen facilities to workers, housed workers in "dilapidated trailers" and did not reimburse inbound and outbound transportation costs.

Human rights and ethical trade news

Agency Zero Hours Contracts Government Consultation. [The government is seeking views on the application of measures to tackle one-sided flexibility in zero hours contracts to agency workers as part of their initiative "Making Work Pay"](#) This consultation is being held on another website [use this link](#). This consultation closes at 11:59pm on 2 December 2024

Seasonal Worker Surveys & reviews – [these are published on the government website](#). Reports and surveys reviewing the performance of the seasonal workers pilot from 2019 to 2023.

Environment & sustainability

COP16: [What is biodiversity and how are we protecting it?](#) The United Nations biodiversity summit, known as COP16, comes amid growing concerns over plummeting populations of plants and animals, and damage to the habitats that sustain life on earth, from forests to rivers and oceans.

Sustainable Food - [How the EU provides the assurance to satisfy consumer demands for sustainable products](#). As demands for a sustainable food chain intensify, discover how the EU is leading in environmentally positive farming and production to ensure quality and traceability.

Consumer needs are evolving, with sustainability a significant factor in their purchasing decisions, despite many individuals encountering cost-of-living and time constraints.

CO2 Emissions Reduction - [Quality Street goes plastic-free this Christmas](#). 18-Oct-2024 By Gwen Ridler. Tubs of Quality Street will be ditching the plastic this Christmas in favour of an all paper tub in a move that has the potential to significantly cut CO2 emissions for the brand.

Global Water Crisis - [Global water crisis leaves half of world food production at risk in next 25 years](#). Half the world's population already faces water scarcity, and that number is set to rise as the climate

crisis worsens, according to a report from the Global Commission on the Economics of Water published on Thursday. Demand for fresh water will outstrip supply by 40% by the end of the decade, because the world's water systems are being put under "unprecedented stress", the report found.

Resources/Reports/Blogs/Films

Modern slavery policy in the UK: priorities for the UK Government- This is a Policy Report on Priorities which aims to inform the new UK Government's response to modern slavery. This Report, produced by the Policy Impact team at the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre, draws on analysis and research funded and produced by the Centre, wider evidence and data, and our experience of engaging with lived experience experts. Read the full report here.

Employment Rights Bill Fact Sheet UK Gov - This is a comprehensive bill which, once implemented, will represent the biggest upgrade in employment rights for a generation. It will raise the minimum floor of employment rights, giving the British public the prosperity, security, and dignity that everyone in Britain needs and deserves at work.

Centre for Social Justice - At what cost? Exploring the impact of forced labour in the UK. The Modern Slavery Policy Unit is a joint initiative led by an anti-slavery charity, Justice and Care and a leading think tank, the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ). The joint policy unit has a core mission: to keep modern slavery at the top of the British political agenda and ensure the UK fights the crime. This means a better understanding of the nature and scale of modern slavery, increased investment and a sophisticated national response proportionate to the level of threat

Events and webinars

WWF RFS v2.0 Risk Filter Suite Webinar - We are **just one week away** from the webinar where we will explore the changes introduced in our recently released version 2.0!

Since the 15th of October, the WWF Risk Filter Suite v2.0 has been available online, featuring several new datasets to continue providing the most accurate water and biodiversity risk estimates for our users. **Make sure to register here for our webinar on 30th October 2024 at 16:00pm CET** to understand what has been changed in the WWF Water Risk Filter and the WWF Biodiversity Risk Filter.

The Seasonal Worker Scheme Taskforce is marking 18 months of activity with a roundtable event. We are inviting growers, scheme operators, retailers, associations, government bodies and non-profits to come together to reflect on progress made across the Scheme and to identify future priorities towards our vision of a UK seasonal worker scheme and sustainable horticultural sector where all workers' rights are safeguarded.

Location: Gs Fresh, Barway, Cambridgeshire

Date: Tuesday 26 November

Time: 10:00-16:00

Registration: via this link. *To secure your place at this event, please complete all questions in the registration form.

