



BALSU SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2021

2021 Children Protection Program

During 2021 harvest (data is subject to revision);

- 1133 Seasonal Agricultural Workers (SAW) received Good Social Practices, Occupational Health and Safety and Covid-19 Hygiene trainings.
- 1409 SAW received personal protective equipments and hygiene kits.
- Social and health service demands of 8 worker groups were referred to public institutions.
- SAW groups signed agricultural working contracts with farmers in 14 different regions.
- 2633 children in 16 different townships through 1205 workshops received education in our safe spaces.



In cooperation with the Balsu-Young Lives Foundation, we reached the children of seasonal agricultural worker families in the provinces of Sakarya, Düzce, Ordu and Samsun within the scope of the In a Nutshell'2021 Children Protection Program.

As every year since 2014, this year, after meeting with families and identifying children working/at risk of working, 2633 children attended workshops in safe areas during the harvest period and trainings were provided for the physical and psychosocial development of children.



Independent Audits

A “3-year certification” was started in Rainforest Alliance Turkey Hazelnut Program this year. Balsu completed the “main inspection” in the 2021 harvest season, which was determined as the transition year of the program. Verification and renewal audits will be carried out in the coming years.

In line with the “continuous development and improvement” approach, the environmental, social and economic sustainability targets of the new standard will be ‘progressively’ transitioned.

The risks in the field are determined by the risk analyzes carried out in the hazelnut field and supply chain. According to the results of the analysis, an action plan is implemented on the risks identified in areas such as child labour, gender equality and environmental protection etc.



On the other hand, the FLA audits, which have been ongoing since 2014, focused on the children protection program carried out by Balsu in cooperation with the Young Lives Foundation this year.

Within the scope of improving working and living conditions of seasonal agricultural workers and preventing child labor in hazelnut supply chain, we aimed to contribute to the physical, psychological, social and academic development of children by considering their right to participate in education during the hazelnut harvest period. During the harvest, we ensured that the children of seasonal agricultural workers, who work in the field or have the potential to work, participate in our workshops in safe areas.

The FLA Independent Audit Evaluation report and action plan will be available for review at <http://fairlabor.org> by the end of this year.

Employment Agency meet with Labor Contractors

A meeting was held with Labor Contractors on 17.08.2021, hosted by Sakarya Employment Agency (İŞ-KUR) and organized by Balsu.

Sakarya İŞ-KUR Provincial Director, Balsu officials, Young Lives Foundation and about 10 labor contractors were present at the meeting, issues such as the accommodation conditions of the workers, wages, working hours, labor contractors certification, agricultural employment contract etc were discussed.



Actions that labor contractors should take before and after the hazelnut harvest in solving the relevant issues are discussed in detail, it is stated that "labor intermediary" cannot be done without the agricultural intermediary certificate and this document should be renewed in every three years. Also, at the end of each harvest period, labor contractors have the responsibility to submit a report to İŞ-KUR, including the living and working conditions of the workers.

Product of 2021

Climate change, which has become the pandemic of the agricultural sector, has caused the hazelnut harvest to start 10 to 15 days late this year. According to the realized climate data, the product of 2021 hazelnut crop;

- Could not meet the required cooling requirement between November and February

- Locally affected by early spring frosts in March and April

- Undeveloped - empty hazelnuts were poured due to the high-flow rainfall in June and July

We can say that the yield of the product harvested so far in the Western Black Sea Region is in line with the farmer's expectation and yield estimation. In the coming months, the quality and caliber evaluation of the product will be possible.



In 2020, the number of seasonal agricultural workers arriving at the Western Black Sea region for the hazelnut harvest decreased by 15 percent compared to previous years. We recorded that this rate decreased even more in the 2021 hazelnut harvest period. In this context, while the Covid-19 pandemic is considered as the main reason, the delay in the harvest of the product compared to previous years, the opening of schools, the problems experienced by the workers in transportation and especially accommodation in the regions they come from are other reasons that affect the number of seasonal workers coming to the region.