

Field of Application

This Code of Conduct shall apply to all members of AIPG acting in the supply chain of tree gums/ natural exudate gums, i.e. as producers, processors, exporters, importers, distributors, other traders and brokers, whatever use is made of the gums.

AIPG members in producing and consuming countries involved in production, processing and trade of natural exudate gums, shall comply with this Code of Conduct, but are not released from their obligations under national or international regulations relevant to their fields of operation.

Definitions of Natural Exudate Gums /Tree Gums

In trade between the companies applying this AIPG Code of Conduct, natural exudate gums (principally but not exclusively: **Gum Arabic/Acacia gum, Gum Tragacanth and Gum Karaya**) shall be understood in the meaning of the definitions used in the "Regulation (EU) No 231/2012 laying down specifications for food additives listed in **Annexes II and III to Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008**", and shall comply with the purity criteria mention there in;

Gum Arabic / Acacia gum - Dried exudation obtained from the stems and branches of strains of Acacia senegal (L) Willdenow or closely related species of Acacia (family Leguminosae).

Tragacanth gum - Dried exudation obtained from the stems and branches of strains of Astragalus gummifer Labillardiere and other Asiatic species of Astragalus (family Leguminosae).

Karaya gum - Dried exudation from the stems and branches of strains of Sterculia urens Roxburgh and other species of Sterculia (family Sterculiaceae) or from Cochlospermum gossypium A.P. De Candolle or other species of Cochlospermum (family Bixaceae).

Quality requirements and application of Good Practices for Gums

Quality matters and food safety requirements are major issues in the entire food and food additive branch, and thus are of high importance also in case of natural exudates/ gums such as e.g. Gum acacia. **Particularly, consumer safety is a matter of high concern.** Without prejudice to existing legal requirements, AIPG members accept the importance of high-quality requirements applying to the raw material, particularly with a view to pesticide residues, microbiological load, mycotoxins, heavy metals and any other possible contaminants. In particular, members are aware of the problem of contamination with allergens.

AIPG has established the AIPG Good Practices for Gums (AIPG GPG), <http://www.treegums.org/> giving some recommendations on local collection, interim storage, transportation, warehouse storing and processing in facilities of the producing countries. AIPG members commit themselves to the application of the AIPG GPG and further support and promote the implementation of Good Practices for Gums in the producing countries.

Labeling Practice, Product Information and CoA

Without prejudice to customers labeling requirements and to relevant legal obligations where and to the extent applicable, AIPG members in the producing countries commit themselves to label their products accurately and in a manner clearly identifying the quality grade, the species and the origin.

Organic product labelling may only be applied, and relevant references may only be used in accompanying documents, if the handling and processing of the gum is compliant with all applicable legal rules and provisions (e.g. on organic production, use of active substances, documentation, certification etc.).

Natural Gums should be clearly labeled in order to allow a proper handling of the goods. Where appropriate, particular storage conditions / recommendations should be communicated on the label.

If required so by the customer, AIPG members shall provide a data sheet / product information sheet, showing some minimum information for the relevant batch of the natural gum supplied.

Each consignment should be accompanied by a Certificate of Analysis.

Use of the Natural Exudate Gums

AIPG members will take into consideration information/recommendations if and to the extent prepared and communicated by AIPG.

AIPG members will act in accordance with their relevant national laws applicable to their specific stage of the supply chain, and to the type of business operation concerned, particularly taking into account the relevant legislation on

- foodstuff and food additives
- animal feed and feed additives
- cosmetics
- pharmaceutical excipients

and any other legislation applying to the product for the specific use intended by the member.

Labour conditions, corporate integrity and Environmental Conduct

AIPG members **agree** to comply with their national occupational standards and to apply working conditions and occupational safety and health measures stipulated by their relevant national legislation. **AIPG members respect the ILO conventions on child labour.**

AIPG members **agree** to strictly abstain from any agreements and arrangements restraining the free competition. AIPG members **agree to** keep their business conduct free of dishonest methods and to strictly act in accordance with their relevant national legislation.

AIPG **recommends their members to comply with the main principles and requirements of environmental sustainability.** With a view to the protection of the environment and in order to safeguard natural resources, **AIPG members are expected** to apply responsible operating and production methods and to consider their responsibility for the use and handling of resources such as water and energy and for a proper waste management in line with applicable law.

AIPG is aware that different aspects of **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** have gained increasing importance all over the supply chain. In terms of CSR, AIPG recommends their members to consider and apply approaches based on each member's individual company policy.

As regards to the different aspects of sustainability and particularly to the compliance with labour, social and environmental standards, AIPG members are aware that there is an increasing focus on the due diligence in the supply chain which is increasingly reflected in existing or upcoming legislation particularly in the countries of the EU. They are aware of some main international conventions and guidelines (see non-exhaustive list in the annex to this CoC) governing the issues addressed above and make efforts to consider these in practice wherever applicable and possible. AIPG members take measures to assure that sustainability issues are dealt with on the management level and commit themselves to provide and forward adequate information in the supply chain if requested so by their customers.

Obligations under this Code of Conduct

AIPG members commit themselves to support the overall targets and objectives laid down in the AIPG Statutes and to actively contribute to AIPG's activities. In order to safeguard the natural exudate gums the members work together to further promote the use and the positive image of natural exudate gums in food, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and technical applications.

AIPG members are recommended to co-operate in associations on the national level.

Particularly with a view to gum Arabic but also referring to all other natural gums, AIPG members acknowledge the importance of three key elements in production and trade in natural gums, i.e.

- permanent availability
- reliable standard qualities
- increase of production and consumption

Members are expected to make use of the information sources offered by AIPG. Reference is made to the AIPG website under <http://www.treegums.org/> which will permanently be reviewed and updated. AIPG members commit themselves to follow recommendations if issued by AIPG.

Annex: Non-exhaustive List of International Conventions and Guidelines

- Human rights including fundamental labour standards
(in particular: ILO Conventions No 29,87,98,100,105,111,138,155,182,187)
- Fair and favourable working conditions
(in particular: ICESCR, UN Social Covenant Art.7)
- Environmental protection
(Minamata Convention - protection against mercury emissions, Stockholm Convention - protection against the negative effects of persistent organic pollutants)
- Proper competitive behaviour
(in particular: OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and UN Anti-Corruption Regulations)
- Sustainability (17 UN Sustainable Development Goals ,SDGs)

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