

EUREGIO VENLO

Fossa Eugenia

SELF-DECLARATION ISO26000

COÖPERATIEVE TELERSVERENIGING FOSSA EUGENIA

2024



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# GENERAL

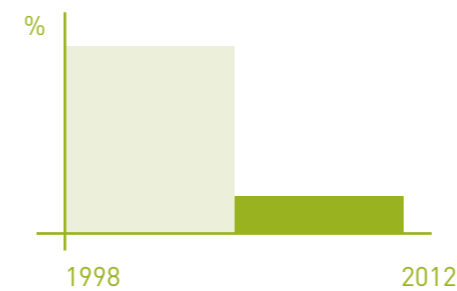
## I Introduction

Ever since its foundation in 1995, Fossa Eugenia has aimed to be a frontrunner in terms of quality when delivering its services. Over this period we have made great progress in the areas of dependable quality, environmental protection, safe food products and a safe and pleasant working environment for the employees who help our growers to achieve these objectives.

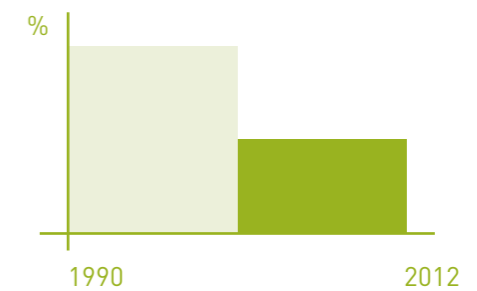
Examples:

- 90% reduction in environmental pollution from crop protection products in 2012, compared with 1998.
- 52% lower energy consumption per kg product in greenhouse production in 2012, compared with 1990.

Reduction in environmental pollution from crop protection products



Reduction in energy consumption per kg product in greenhouse production



Early in 2013 it became clear that the Fossa Eugenia cooperative growers' association wished to reinforce the 'sustainability' of its products. The ISO 26000 standard was chosen because of its international support and completeness.

In order to achieve this ambition, the association set up a CSR working group and contacted The Terrace consultancy from Amsterdam. The Terrace helped us to transfer ISO 26000 into practice in a professional way so that we could ultimately produce this substantiated self-declaration.

Fossa Eugenia's CSR working group was supported by The Terrace consultancy, Amsterdam



It is clear to us that this document is not a final report but merely a beginning which will enable us to provide the term 'Sustainability' with concrete content and direction and to improve the sustainability of our production in the years to come. This report follows the 40 questions set out in the self-declaration guidelines NEN-ISO 26000 (NPR 9026+C1, October 2012).

## II About Fossa Eugenia

The Fossa Eugenia cooperative growers' association (Coöperatieve Telersvereniging Fossa Eugenia) is a cooperative association of vegetable growers from the EUREGIO Venlo.

In the 17th century, the Spanish-Dutch government decided to build a canal between the Rhine and the Maas rivers, in the current EUREGIO area. The canal, which was to be called Fossa Eugenia, was never completed. Even Napoleon Bonaparte was unable to accomplish this feat a century later. In 1995 a group of forward-thinking growers from this region set up the Fossa Eugenia association. The link with Germany, and subsequently with the rest of Europe and America, was created.

Fossa Eugenia's aims are simple: to supply a quality product which meets the requirements of critical customers in every respect. To organise sales by means of short supply chains, avoiding unnecessary links, so that the product remains as fresh as possible. To supply the agreed quantities at the agreed price. Fossa Eugenia has worked with selected trading companies right from the start. Since its formation, new growers have been added all the time. As a result, the range of products and the area covered are growing constantly and structural management for direct supply to retailers has now been implemented.

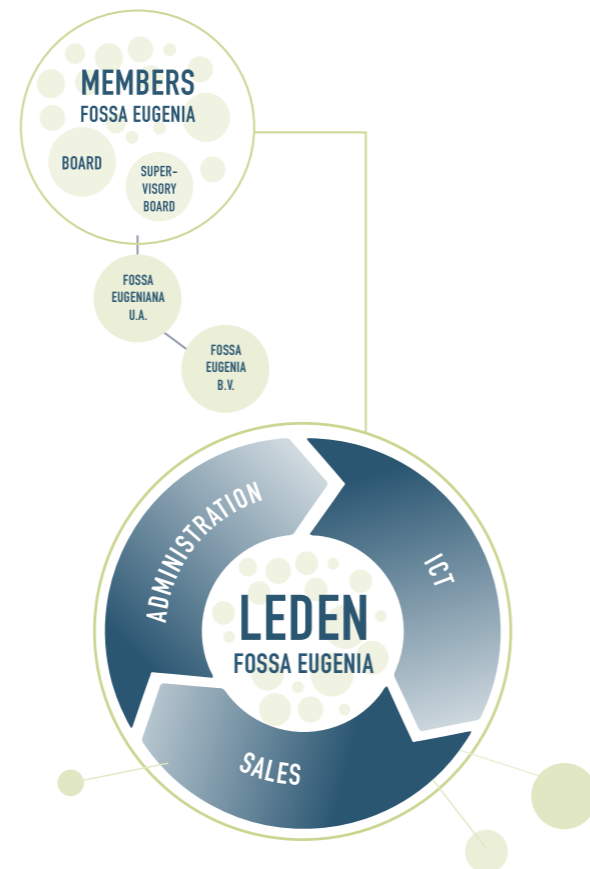
The head office in Horst coordinates quality, sales and logistics flows to ensure that our customers receive the products required. The association brings together approximately 47 member companies with a production area of approximately 52 ha under glass and 2600 ha outdoors. Around 25 different products are grown. The association has a flat organisational format which allows fast and direct communication, and a dynamic structure with plenty of scope for entrepreneurship. This fully reflects the typical spirit of growers from the South-East of the Netherlands, who have their own culture and charm. Crops produced by members of the association are sold by the sales organisation Fossa Eugenia BV.

## III Scope of the CSR Project 2013

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) is a worldwide development which in the Netherlands is known as MVO (Maatschappelijk verantwoord ondernemen). Its ultimate goal is sustainability. This sustainability objective applies to the production activities that are carried out by the members who are represented by the Fossa Eugenia association. This self-declaration and compliance with ISO 26000 therefore apply to the Fossa Eugenia Growers' Association (Telersvereniging Fossa Eugenia) with head office at Kraneveldweg 4, 5961 GT Horst, The Netherlands.

### Board

<b>Chairman</b>	Peter van Dijck
<b>Vice-chairman</b>	Erik Gipmans
<b>Treasurer</b>	René Baetsen
<b>Clerk</b>	Marcel Dings
<b>Boardmembers</b>	Erik Geurts Johan Tielen
<b>Advisor</b>	Ton Holthuijsen
<b>Advisor</b>	Nico van Knippenberg
<b>Cluster managers</b>	René Baetsen Marcel Dings Peter van Dijck
<b>Sales</b>	Ronny Bruijnen <b>Commercial Director</b> Susan van Horssen Annemie Cleven Céline van de Ven Jaëlle Kuijpers Danny Geulen



## IV Self-declaration NEN-ISO 26000:2010

### Corporate Social Responsibility

I the undersigned, Mr P. van Dijck, Chairman of Fossa Eugenia Cooperative Growers' Association (Coöperatieve Telersvereniging Fossa Eugenia), hereby declare that NEN-ISO 26000 (2010) (Corporate Social Responsibility) applies to Fossa Eugenia Growers' Association (Telersvereniging Fossa Eugenia), and that this has been examined and assessed on the basis of the process described in NPR 9026+C1 (October 2012).

The organisation declares that it will apply the principles and guidelines of NEN-ISO 26000 (2010) and will ensure that this continues to be the case in the long term. This will be examined and evaluated at least on an annual basis in the context of this self-declaration.

In this self-declaration, the organisation substantiates and elaborates the choices made in respect of its corporate social responsibility in the following areas:

- Endorsement and application of the seven principles of CSR.
- Stakeholder identification and engagement.
- The seven core subjects of CSR and the 37 CSR issues.
- Integration of social responsibility within the organisation.

The results of the study can be found at [www.fossaeugenia.com](http://www.fossaeugenia.com).

Name of organisation: Fossa Eugenia  
 Location: Horst  
 Street and building number: Kraneveldweg 4  
 Post code, town: 5961 GT Horst NL

Fossa Eugenia Cooperative Growers' Association (Coöperatieve Telersvereniging Fossa Eugenia),

P. van Dijck  
chairman

Horst, April 1, 2024



# CSR PRINCIPES

## 1. Accountability

Fossa Eugenia is accountable for the impact which production of our fruit and vegetables has on society, the economy and the environment. We want to be open to discussion of this topic.

What we are doing to achieve this:

- Registration and publication of the use of inputs

The use of inputs, such as crop protection products, fertilisers and energy, is recorded and made available to independent inspectors, including during GlobalGAP inspections. The results of the inspections are public and are actively shared with customers. Areas for improvement identified during the inspections are resolved through the internal quality system.
- Monthly testing fresh products for the presence of residues

An independent monitoring system has been implemented, whereby all fresh products are tested for the presence of residues at least once a month. The results are evaluated both internally and with customers with the aim of improving product safety.
- GRASP audits: testing and evaluation of the safety and welfare of employees

Since 2014, independent GRASP audits of all members have been carried out, during which all relevant matters relating to the safety and welfare of employees in the horticultural businesses are tested by independent inspectors. The results of the inspections are public and are shared with customers. Improvements are implemented on an annual basis and independent GRASP inspections are repeated annually.

public  
website self-declaration  
annual report communicate  
membership meetings evaluate

## 2. Transparency

Fossa Eugenia is open about the organisation and its decisions and activities which have an impact on the environment. We provide this transparency in the following ways:

- Via our website [www.FossaEugenia.com](http://www.FossaEugenia.com). Our purpose, nature and production locations are mentioned extensively on the website.
- Our annual report clearly outlines from year to year what has happened, what will happen, and how we view trends and developments in society. It also documents and describes our organisation.
- The organisation, decisions and activities are evaluated and recorded at general membership meetings.
- This self-declaration and its supporting documents explain all the principles and core subjects arising from ISO 26000. The self-declaration is public and is reviewed annually. The supporting documents are:
  - The Relevance, Significance and Priorities Matrix.
  - The Stakeholder Communication Matrix and Action Plan.

## 3. Ethical behaviour

Fossa Eugenia wishes to behave in an ethically correct manner. By ethically correct behaviour we mean:

- The association respects the interests of all our stakeholders.
  - Our main stakeholders are:**
    - Our members (growers)
    - Our customers (retailers and wholesalers)
    - Employment agencies
    - The end consumer
- Certifications at various levels provide us with independent evidence under private law. These include BIO recognitions (BIO certification), IFS Broker, BRC Food Technical Standard, GlobalGAP/ QS, Tesco's Nurture, Albert Heijn's additional requirements and certifications and Planet Proof (environmental quality label) certification.
- Businesses (growers) respect the interests and personal values of their employees. International values and labour standards and the Dutch health and safety (ARBO) legislation are the guiding principles in this area. GRASP recognition for all growers provides us with independent evidence under private law.
- Businesses (growers) respect the interests of the local community.
- Compliance with all the core values and principles set out in this self-declaration.

## 4. Respect for stakeholder interests

Fossa Eugenia respects the interests of its stakeholders. What we do to actively pursue our common interests:

A stakeholder analysis has been carried out with the following result:

- Identification of our stakeholders
- Prioritisation of our stakeholders
- A communication matrix
- An action plan

OVERVIEW OF THE SPHERE of influence of the stakeholders identified



- The action plan contains specific actions arising from the mutual interests of Fossa Eugenia and its stakeholders. The actions are 'smart' and are drawn up in the light of wider social expectations.

## 5. Respect for the rule of law

Fossa Eugenia respects the current laws and regulations. We comply with the rule of law in the following ways:

- We are aware of and adhere to applicable laws and regulations. This applies to the growers' association itself and to the individual members (growers) of the association.

Examples of applicable laws and regulations are:

- Growers: Health and safety (ARBO) legislation (in relation to employees of horticultural businesses), Dutch Pesticides Act (Bestrijdingsmiddelen-wet – pesticide application, environmental protection), Dutch Commodities Act (Warenwet – food safety), fertilisers legislation (environmental protection), EU marketing standard (quality of fresh fruit and vegetables)
- Association: CMO (Common Market Organisation, EU subsidy)
- Independent certification bodies (certification, audits), Groenten en Fruit Huis, public authorities (Quality Control Bureau (KCB), Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA), Labour Inspectorate (Arbeidsinspectie), trade literature (online) and advisors (quality assurance, health and safety (ARBO) services, accountancy) help us to stay up to date with developments in this area. They also act as a regular test of compliance with laws and regulations.

## 6. Respect for international norms of behaviour

Fossa Eugenia respects international norms of behaviour. Where the current legislation in the Netherlands does not provide sufficient protection for the environment, employees or society, international norms of behaviour are applied and promoted.

What this means for Fossa Eugenia in concrete terms:

- We avoid becoming complicit in violations of international norms of behaviour by stakeholders.
- Wherever possible, we seek improvement through discussion with stakeholders. For example, with suppliers who produce their goods in a way which violates international norms of behaviour (e.g. production of seed or planting material).

## 7. Respect for human rights

Fossa Eugenia recognises, respects and promotes the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

For us, this means:

- Our growers work in full compliance with the Dutch health and safety (ARBO) legislation, thereby respecting the welfare and safety of their employees.
- Our growers recruit and treat their employees in a way which does not involve any form of negative discrimination (origin, religion, gender, ethnicity).
- Wherever possible, we seek improvement through discussion with stakeholders. For example, with suppliers who produce their goods in a way which violates human rights (e.g. production of seed or planting material).

# STAKEHOLDERS

## 8. Method of identifying stakeholders

Fossa Eugenia represents its members (growers) and is therefore almost at the start of the fresh fruit and vegetable production chain. The chain in this sector is very short, but nevertheless it is likely to be difficult or impossible for Fossa Eugenia to influence and approach end consumers. In NW Europe, these end consumers buy most of their fresh fruit and vegetables in supermarkets.

The CSR working group that was created included growers, people who could represent the board of directors and an experienced quality advisor who has been involved in quality assurance projects with Fossa Eugenia for many years, knows the organisation and has completed ISO 26000 training in practice. They all had extensive experience in the fresh fruit and vegetable production sector. The consultancy company The Terrace was involved in drawing up ISO 26000 and has now built up considerable experience in the implementation of this standard.

Under the guidance of The Terrace, the stakeholders were identified and prioritised in a number of plenary sessions. The primary and other stakeholders were identified in a communication matrix, with respect to CSR aspects, objectives and actions.

## 9. Identification of stakeholders

The stakeholders and their sphere of influence are shown in the figure on page 11. A brief description of our stakeholders is provided below.

### PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

### DESCRIPTION

Customers (retailers and wholesalers)	These include supermarkets, trading companies, commission agents/brokers and processors. Most (approximately 74%) of our products go to trading companies and retailers in the Netherlands. Approximately 25% is sold to customers outside the Netherlands but within the EU. The rest (approximately 1%) is sold to customers outside the EU. Naturally our products often travel far outside the EU via onward trade channels.
Consumers	This includes all of us: the increasingly well-informed end consumers who, in this part of Europe, buy most of their fresh fruit and vegetables in supermarkets.
Growers	These are the members of Fossa Eugenia. Approximately 47 growers, producing outdoor and greenhouse vegetables and greenhouse strawberries. Professional producers of high-quality, fresh and healthy produce. Grown with professionalism and due regard to the current expectations of society. The growers also employ the workers who maintain the crops and harvest the end products.
Employment agencies	Much of the work carried out by growers still involves manual labour. Depending on the type of business, the grower's labour requirements sometimes experience high peaks but there are quiet periods at other times. Therefore, employment agencies are often used so that the labour requirement and quality of the necessary work can be managed flexibly to suit the grower. The growers and employees naturally have a joint interest in employee welfare and the safety of the work to be carried out. The employees who work for the growers through employment agencies come from various parts of the EU, mainly from outside the Netherlands.



## OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

## DESCRIPTION

Suppliers (seeds, transport, artificial fertiliser, etc.)	Agricultural production in the Netherlands is highly specialised and extremely capital-intensive. A network of suppliers has grown up around professional production to supply growers with the necessary inputs. They supply products such as seed and planting material, artificial fertiliser and crop protection products, as well as transport. The quality of the fruit and vegetables which ultimately leaves the grower after harvesting and packing often depends on the quality of the inputs supplied by the various suppliers at a (much) earlier stage of production.
Local government (municipality, water authority, province, etc.)	All the Fossa Eugenia businesses are based in the Netherlands. They must comply with the applicable laws and regulations, at both local and national level. Municipalities, provinces and water authorities are the law-making powers which growers have to deal with most frequently. For example, with regard to operating permits (construction of business premises), employee housing, the Fertilisers Act (Meststoffenwet) or the use of water.
EU	Fossa Eugenia is CMO approved. The Common Market Organisation (CMO) relates to subsidies granted by the EU to improve the competitive position of European growers. The subsidies are linked to compliance with strict (legal) rules, laid down in EU legislation. Furthermore, more and more legislation in the agriculture sector is being made by the EU rather than by the Netherlands itself.
Environmental organisations	Both Dutch and international environmental organisations represent the voice of a section of society. The growers are well aware of the tension which sometimes exists between maintaining and improving a healthy environment and optimisation of professional business operations.
Trade unions and employees	Reference has been made above to the joint interest of growers and employees in employee welfare (including wages) and the safety of the work to be carried out. Trade unions often look after the interests of employees in the field of rights and obligations. Growers therefore have to deal with trade unions as parties with an interest in their business.
Media	The internet, trade journals, newspapers, TV and radio are important as media which enable Fossa Eugenia and its growers to publicise their objectives, activities and identity.
Financers	Without external financers, it is almost impossible for a modern horticultural business to function nowadays. Banks are the most important financers of the horticultural businesses associated with Fossa Eugenia.
Local residents	Individuals living close to horticultural businesses experience all the activities of these holdings at close quarters. These include, for example, all the movements of tools, machines and transport vehicles, including at less acceptable times of the day. This impact is certainly different from that of other individuals in a residential area.
Sectoral organisations (LLTB)	Agricultural and horticultural organisations or federations, such as the Limburg Agricultural and Horticultural Union (Limburgse Land- en Tuinbouw Bond - LLTB), often represent the interests of growers. These organisations provide members with services such as legal assistance, training and advice about strategic business decisions or environmental matters.

### 10. Stakeholder engagement in the organisation

The stakeholders were identified and prioritised during set-up and implementation by the working group, in conjunction with The Terrace. The document “Stakeholder communication matrix and action plan” (annex to this self-declaration) identifies the stakeholders, in relation to CSR aspects, including specific objectives and actions. This document explains in detail why Fossa Eugenia engages its stakeholders in certain CSR aspects and how these are implemented in practice. This is designed to achieve the objectives which are also set out in this document.

## CORE SUBJECTS

### 11. Statement of relevant issues

The relevant issues were identified during set-up and implementation by the working group, in conjunction with The Terrace. The document “Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues” (annex to this self-declaration) identifies the relevance, significance and priority of all the ISO 26000 issues. To determine the relevance of the issues, we looked at:

- Our own activities and decisions.
- Activities and decisions of organisations in Fossa Eugenia’s value chain and sphere of influence.
- Daily activities and exceptional situations.

### 12. Identification of relevant issues

The abovementioned document ““Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues” assesses the relevance of the issues as L (low), M (medium) or H (high). The really relevant issues are scored as ‘H’, with an explanation. This system clearly identifies the issues which are really relevant to Fossa Eugenia, leaving no room for ambiguity.

### 13. Statement of significant issues

The abovementioned document “Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues” (annex to this self-declaration) identifies the relevance, significance and priority of all ISO 26000 issues. To determine the significance of the issues, we looked at:

- Magnitude of the impact on sustainable development and stakeholders.
- The potential impact of taking or not taking action.
- Stakeholder concern about the issue.
- Social expectations with regard to responsible behaviour in relation to the issues.

### 14. Identification of significant issues

The abovementioned document “Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues” assesses the significance of the issues as L (low), M (medium) or H (high). The really significant issues are scored as ‘H’, with an explanation. This system clearly identifies the issues which are really significant for Fossa Eugenia, leaving no room for ambiguity.

### 15. Statement of priority of issues

The abovementioned document “Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues” (annex to this self-declaration) identifies the relevance, significance and priority of all ISO 26000 issues.

To determine the priority of the issues, we looked at:

- The efforts that still need to be made to achieve the desired result and ambition level.
- Costs and benefits.
- Complexity or ease of implementation.
- Time required for implementation.

### 16. Identification of priority issues

The abovementioned document “Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues” assesses the priority of the issues as L (low), M (medium) or H (high). The issues with high priority are scored as ‘H’, with an explanation. This system clearly identifies the real priority issues for Fossa Eugenia, leaving no room for ambiguity.







### 17. Identification of action points

In the abovementioned document "Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues", the possible actions are derived from the analysis of relevance, significance and priority. The actions which have actually been implemented or will be implemented are then recorded in detail in the document "Stakeholder communication matrix and action plan". The key actions set out in this document are:

- Promote the general sustainability of production: encourage growers to obtain the Planet Proof environmental quality label (customer demand).
- Organise a meeting with customers in relation to labour/correct working conditions. (Achieved in 2016)
- Promote the product experience among customers, e.g. by organising farmers' markets for consumers. (Achieved in 2016)
- Encourage the growth of organic production. The aim is to increase organic production by 5% annually.
- Increase members' awareness of working conditions for employees by means of membership meetings and changes to Fossa Eugenia policy.
- Hold a meeting with the OTTO employment agency in relation to labour/correct working conditions. (Achieved in 2016)
- GRASP (GlobalGAP Risk Analysis Social Practices) audits of all members will be conducted annually in conjunction with the standard GlobalGAP audits (achieved for the first time in 2014).
- Carry out a risk inventory for the purchase of products coming from outside Europe (e.g. seeds, plant stakes).

### 18. Explanation of priority setting

A detailed explanation of priority setting is provided in the document "Relevance, significance and priority of ISO 26000 issues". Priorities are usually assessed as 'high' if Fossa Eugenia's ambition level in this area is also high. In these cases, high priority is often determined by our customers and by society, both of which have made their wishes in this area very clear recently. They include, for example, the safety and welfare of employees working for growers. Where matters such as the environment are concerned, the ambition level is high but it appears that in many cases little remains to be done in order to achieve this level because our growers are already operating at a very high level in environmental terms (professional cultivation methods). The priority for this issue is therefore assessed as 'low'.

### 19. Explanation of stakeholder involvement

In order to integrate CSR into the soul of Fossa Eugenia, a working group was created, comprising experienced external advisors, growers and account managers from Fossa Eugenia. The growers know their crops and their input suppliers, and have intensive contact with their employees and the employment agencies concerned. The account managers have daily contact with customers and have a good understanding of their wishes and how they are evolving. In the working group, the marketing side (end consumer) was represented via The Terrace and an experienced marketing professional employed by one of Fossa Eugenia's growers. The wishes and interests of the most important stakeholders – growers, customers, suppliers, employment agencies, employees – were known as a result of constant contact with them. Good contact with the two main stakeholders (growers and customers) with regard to CSR issues will also be achieved in the near future through supplementary actions (see also 17).





## Integration of social responsibility into the organisation

### 20. Identification of organisations in the sphere of influence and their relationship to Fossa Eugenia

The analysis of stakeholders and their position within Fossa Eugenia's sphere of influence is set out in the document "Stakeholder communication matrix and action plan". The stakeholders which are most visibly and directly within Fossa Eugenia's sphere of influence are the growers and customers (retailers and wholesalers). Slightly further away are the growers' employees and, also related to labour within the horticultural businesses, the trade unions and employment agencies. The primary interest of these closest stakeholders may be classed as mainly 'economic'.

### 21. Promotion of social responsibility among third parties by Fossa Eugenia

Fossa Eugenia promotes social responsibility among its stakeholders. Fossa Eugenia has the most influence on its growers. Through its growers, its influence is transferred to employment agencies and the growers' employees. We also try to remain in constant contact with our customers (both retailers and wholesalers) through proactive dialogue. The methods which Fossa Eugenia uses to promote social responsibility among its stakeholders include the following:

- We organise meetings with our key customers, covering the management and organisation of work and correct, pleasant working conditions within horticultural businesses. (Achieved in 2016)
- We enter into partnerships with our key customers, with aims including shortening supply chains and selling more organic products.
- To improve communication with our customers, the central complaints administration and handling system has been simplified and shortened.
- Relevant CSR information will be added to our website FossaEugenia.com to provide information for customers and third parties. This will include the self-declaration and the GRASP audit reports on growers.
- Growers are fully informed about CSR topics and the developments which apply to them (e.g. GRASP audits) through visits to the business by an external consultant and membership meetings.
- The CSR principles are adopted into the policy of the growers' association and are therefore directly applicable to members.
- Growers are encouraged to comply with the requirements of the GRASP standard as closely as possible, via annual audits by an independent certification body.
- A workshop has been held with the OTTO employment agency, covering the management and organisation of work and correct, pleasant working conditions within horticultural businesses. (Achieved in 2016)

### 22. Assessment of the impact of our activities on society, the environment and the economy

The analyses conducted by the working group, in collaboration with The Terrace, have shown clearly that the (potential negative) impact of our own activities on society, the environment and the economy is very low. The activities of growers and our customers have a much greater impact. Therefore the impact of our own activities can mainly be detected indirectly, through the activities of these primary stakeholders.

### 23. Assessment of the impact of stakeholder activities on society, the environment and the economy

The (potential negative) impact of our growers' activities is easier to assess than that of our customers because we are a cooperative association of growers, by growers, for growers.

We try to assess the impact of our two main stakeholders as follows:

- By requiring On the Way to Planet Proof or BIO certification for our growers (customer demand).
- Through record-keeping and administration by our growers in relation to production forecasts, crop protection, fertiliser application and environment.
- Through GlobalGAP and ISO 9001 certification of all our growers.
- From 2014, through the results of the GRASP audit of all our growers.
- Through our residue monitoring plan, which applies to all products from our growers.
- Through meetings with our key customers, focusing on CSR, promotion of organic products, price agreements and shortening the supply chain.
- Through independent publications, supported by arguments and proven facts, relating, for example, to the role of retailers in sourcing and price setting of fresh fruit and vegetables, or to developments in eating trends among end consumers.
- Through annual visits, worldwide, to markets and trade fairs in order to assess developments and issues among international retailers and wholesalers.
- We focus on the CO2 footprint of our products and the possibilities of selling our products as CO2 neutral.

### 24. Due diligence by Fossa Eugenia

#### *Policy making and articles of association*

Fossa Eugenia is a cooperative association of growers. The growers are members who help to set the policy and action points of Fossa Eugenia by means of the general membership meeting. The CSR principles have been brought to members' attention and clarified through company visits by an external consultant and a presentation by The Terrace at a general membership meeting, and have now been adopted into the association's policy.

The rules laid down in Fossa Eugenia's articles of association allow sanctions to be imposed if members fail to comply with the code of conduct or do not adhere to the association's terms and conditions.

#### *Quality system and certification*

Membership of the association is subject to the requirement that a clearly implemented quality system, certified against at least ISO9001 and the GlobalGAP, GRASP and On the Way to PlanetProof/BIO standards, must be in place. As part of Fossa Eugenia's current quality system, at least one internal audit per year is carried out on the certified quality systems mentioned, and during the production season all growers receive an unannounced visit at least once a month from an independent quality and inspection body for a quality assessment as well as residue monitoring of the product that is ready for dispatch. A review of all these monitoring points is carried out and documented annually.

#### *Sale and contact with customers*

Through its own professional sales staff and cluster managers, Fossa Eugenia has daily contact with its customers and is therefore also able to discuss CSR aspects of the products and both organisations.

### 25. Identification of negative impacts on society, the environment and the economy

Negative impacts are caused by our two main stakeholders, namely the growers and the retailers.

The main negative impacts identified are:

- Environmental pollution resulting from the use of pesticides, fertilisers and fossil fuels during production.
- The welfare of growers and people working in cultivation is declining due to the high price pressure.

### 26. Fossa Eugenia's fulfilment of its social responsibility

Fossa Eugenia started to fulfil its social responsibility over 10 years ago with the implementation and certification of an ISO 9001 quality system for the whole association, and later the implementation of the GlobalGAP requirements for all members. Our policy and vision have been regularly fine-tuned in recent years and our growers have paid attention to environmental protection and product safety and quality for many years.

The sustainability of the organisation and of production by its growers will be improved by implementing the ISO 26000 guidelines and by drawing up and updating this self-declaration and the action points arising from it:

- The seven principles of ISO 26000 have been incorporated into the association's policy.
- ISO 26000 has been fully implemented under the guidance of The Terrace consultancy.
- The priorities matrix, stakeholder analysis, action plan and this self-declaration have been documented as the key output of this implementation.
- GRASP certification, in addition to the existing GlobalGAP and On the Way to PlanetProof or BIO certification, are required from growers.
- Meetings with our key customers, focusing on CSR, will put promotion of organic production, price agreements and shortening the supply chain on the agenda.
- We focus on the CO2 footprint of our products and the possibilities of selling our products as CO2 neutral.
- We are accountable to our customers through participation (assessment) in ECOVADIS.



## 27. Raising awareness of social responsibility

We raise awareness of CSR, both within our own organisation and among our growers and customers, in the following ways:

- By holding training courses (e.g. "CSR in practice" delivered by Fossa Eugenia's NEN quality manager).
- Discussion at membership meetings.
- Formation of a CSR working group at Fossa Eugenia, comprising various growers and board members and an external quality manager, under the guidance of The Terrace.
- Meetings with our key customers, focusing on CSR, will put promotion of organic production, price agreements and shortening the supply chain on the agenda.

## 28. Development of competencies for taking social responsibility

Competencies are developed and improved. Important competencies are developed through the training referred to above ("CSR in practice" / NEN) and 'training on the job', based on the abovementioned priority matrix, stakeholder analysis and action plan under the guidance of The Terrace. This applies to relevant people within the organisation but also to growers, through their involvement via membership meetings and implementation of the GRASP requirements, among others, in conjunction with the quality manager at Fossa Eugenia.

The competencies of growers as important stakeholders will be improved on the basis of the results of the ongoing certification systems (GlobalGAP, GRASP and Planet Proof certification as a minimum) and by sharing and discussing developments in this area during internal audits and at the General Membership Meetings.

The competencies of relevant people within the organisation (including the quality manager, members of the CSR working group and board members) will be improved by means of supplementary training, visits to trade fairs and other visits, by maintaining publications on this topic and through contact with customers and colleagues. This self-declaration will also act as a continuous source of self-reflection in the field of social responsibility.



## 29. Integration of social responsibility into governance processes and quality systems

Fossa Eugenia has had a comprehensive quality system based on ISO 9001 for a long time.

Basic management of 'caring about quality' is provided by the association. Our member growers are subject to requirements which are specifically relevant to the production of our fresh fruit and vegetables.

The management and policy of the association (Fossa Eugenia office) are regularly tested by:

- Annual ISO 9001 audits (external certification body).
- Annual IFS Broker audits (external certification body).
- An annual BIO audit (external certification body).
- At least annually, an RIK (Internal Quality Inspection Scheme) audit (Quality Control Bureau (KCB)/ external certification body).
- Annual management review (internal).
- Twice-yearly internal audit (internal).
- Twice-yearly HACCP Team assessment (internal).
- Annual recall test (traceability/ internal).
- Annual review of this self-declaration and the associated documents: priorities matrix, stakeholder analysis and action plan (internal).

The requirements are rolled out to growers through the management of our organisation. All growers are regularly tested as follows:

- ISO 9001 audit once every two years (external certification body).
- Annual GlobalGAP audits (external certification body).
- Annual GRASP audits (external certification body).
- Weekly and two-weekly quality controls (external inspection body, component of RIK certification and quality control procedure (accredited laboratory)).
- Once a year an internal audit, whereby all ISO 9001/ GlobalGAP and GRASP requirements are tested every year (internal).

As well as GlobalGAP, ISO 9001 certification and GRASP audits, various growers are subject to supplementary tests, partly due to additional customer requirements:

- Annual Planet Proof audit (external certification body)
- Annual IFS Food/ BRC audits (external certification body)
- Annual BIO audits (external certification body)
- Annual Tesco Nurture audits (external certification body)
- Annual audits on Albert Heijn additional requirements and schedules (external certification body)

Elements arising from our social responsibility are incorporated into all these governance processes and quality systems. These are monitored internally and externally, including via audits. The results of the audits can be used to carry out assessments and analyses which enable us to measure and improve our social responsibility.





### 30. Criteria for communication about social responsibility

Fossa Eugenia communicates about many aspects of social responsibility. It communicates with its growers, its clients and various third parties. Any communication which relates specifically to its social responsibility will always refer to the self-declaration and/or other formal reports. Communication is the responsibility of the CSR spokesperson. The current version of the self-declaration is available on the website. The CSR spokesperson at Fossa Eugenia is responsible for the following aspects of content quality in communications:

- Complete
- Understandable
- Interests of growers and customers (and any other stakeholders) are covered
- Accurate and balanced (factually correct, fair, up to date)

### 31. Implementation of communication about social responsibility

We communicate with different stakeholders in different ways. We mainly communicate with growers about CSR directly and through the general membership meetings. We talk to customers daily via Fossa Eugenia's sales staff. There are also formal contract negotiation meetings when CSR can be discussed. CSR can be discussed with both our main stakeholders either informally (daily by telephone or e-mail) or formally (general membership meetings, contract negotiations). The website and annual report provide formal information which is always available. Other methods of communication about CSR (including printed and spoken press information for radio, TV or internet media) will always go through the CSR spokesperson and are published or approved under his/her responsibility and with the approval of the board.

### 32a, b and c. Annual report, content and fulfilment of CSR

This self-declaration is reviewed annually and the current version is published on the website. The results of the review are documented in a separate report which will also be published on the website. In its annual report, Fossa Eugenia provides a summary of current CSR developments over the past year. The annual review will, as a minimum, cover:

- Analysis of the status of the objectives relating to the issues and core subjects (successes and areas for improvement with regard to the objectives set and actions).
- Stakeholder involvement in this process.
- Improvement plan, corrective measures.

Through the annual report, self-declaration and annual review, we seek to show professional growers the spirit of Fossa Eugenia and reflect the perception of stakeholders.

### 33a. Identification of conflicts with stakeholders

This self-declaration lists the current conflicts and disagreements. The abovementioned review report summarises conflicts and disagreements over the past year and their evaluation. This ensures that a transparent overview is available at all times.

Conflicts and disagreements with our stakeholders identified during the 2013 to 2023 season: no conflicts or disagreements with our growers or customers were identified in 2013 to 2023.

### 33b. Implementation of the approach to conflicts with stakeholders

Fossa Eugenia wishes to behave in an ethically correct manner, respects the current laws and regulations, and complies with international norms of behaviour. This mindset will dominate the approach to conflicts and disagreements. Any applicable agreements (contracts with customers, articles of association of the growers' association, CSR agreements) will guide the discussion. These agreements will naturally be tested against European and Dutch laws and regulations. Communication with regard to conflicts and disagreements will be transparent and conducted in writing (verifiable and traceable).

Fossa Eugenia also has a central complaint recording and management system. Any complaints relating to Fossa Eugenia and its products can be made via [km@FossaEugenia.com](mailto:km@FossaEugenia.com). Of course, all other channels may also be used (telephone, post).

### 34. Implementation of monitoring of activities with an impact on relevant subjects

The strategic and operational management and policy of the association (Fossa Eugenia office) are regularly tested (see also question 29). This self-declaration and the associated documents (priorities matrix, stakeholder analysis and action plan) are reviewed annually. Customer requirements, product quality analyses (both internal and external product quality and food safety) and complaint analyses are always taken into account and reported in the various audits and reviews. Where necessary, the management and/or policy of the association is changed.

The requirements are rolled out to growers through the management of our organisation. All growers are audited regularly (see also question 29).

Relevant topics arising from our social responsibility are incorporated into all these governance processes and quality systems. These are monitored internally and externally, including via audits. The results of the audits can be used to carry out assessments and analyses which enable us to measure and improve our social responsibility.

### 35. Assessment of performance on relevant subjects

Fossa Eugenia has had a comprehensive quality system based on ISO 9001 for a long time. Basic management of 'caring about quality' is provided by the association. Based on this experience Fossa Eugenia has, as a matter of course, adopted a "SMART" approach to setting and reviewing objectives.

As outlined above, the results of the various audits are used to carry out evaluations and analyses. This enables us to measure and improve our social responsibility. The most important documents, which contain assessments and analyses, are the management review, the annual report and the review report on this self-declaration.

### 36. Stakeholder involvement in performance

Performance assessment includes direct and individual appraisals with customers and growers. Customer requirements, product quality analyses (both internal and external product quality and food safety) and complaint analyses are always taken into account and reported in the various audits and reviews. Where necessary, the management and/or policy of the association are changed.

Customer requirements and issues raised by customers will also be discussed with growers at general membership meetings. The main stakeholders are therefore very closely involved in achieving CSR performance.

### 37a. Successes achieved

In general it may be stated that awareness of CSR issues and concrete implementation of these by our growers' association and its stakeholders have increased. Growers, in particular, are closely involved in this process.

Specific successes in the last 4 years are:

- Implementation PlanetProof certification of all growers is completed.
- A 5% growth in organic production has been achieved through increased sales by Especia and Bio Brothers and the entry into the association of 3 new BIO companies from 1.1.2024
- Preparation of the self-declaration, priorities matrix, stakeholder analysis and action plan.
- The seven CSR principles have been incorporated into our policy.
- GRASP audits of all member growers have been carried out since 2014.
- The association has gained RIK (Internal Quality Inspection Scheme) certification.
- Fossa Eugenia, Especia and Bio Brothers have gained BIO certification.
- Implementation of a central complaint handling system.
- CSR communication via the Fossa Eugenia website. Appointment of a CSR spokesperson for Fossa Eugenia.
- Promotion of the product experience among customers, e.g. by organising farmers' markets for consumers.
- QS Wholesale certification is completed in 2020.
- PlanetProof Chain of Custody certification is achieved from 2021.
- CO2 footprint for lettuce & herbs is calculated in 2022.
- ECOVADIS assessment is completed in 2022.

### 37b. Objectives yet to be achieved

Our main objectives are listed in section 17 of this self-declaration. The action points which we have not yet achieved or which require improvement are:

- Carry out a risk inventory for the purchase of products coming from outside Europe (e.g. seeds, plant stakes).
- Encouraging and guiding Planet Proof certification where applicable (customer request).
- Investigate possibilities to deliver carbon neutral products.

The most important general objective, which is also a framework condition, is to achieve reasonable income levels and welfare for growers and therefore also, in part, for their employees.





### 38. Participation in CSR initiatives

The main, specific CSR initiatives can currently be listed as follows:

- Planet Proof environmental quality label certification for all growers.
- BIO certification for Fossa Eugenia and five of its growers.
- The annual review and publication of the priorities matrix, stakeholder analysis and action plan.
- The annual review and updating of the self-declaration.
- Implementation of annual GRASP audits of all growers.
- Central complaint handling and assessment.
- Investigate the possibilities of working together with Climate Neutral Group, in connection with the supply of carbon neutral products.

### 39. Choice of CSR initiatives

For Fossa Eugenia, the main considerations underlying participation in CSR initiatives were:

- The self-declaration, priorities matrix, stakeholder analyse and action plan are targeted at compliance with ISO 26000.
- ISO 26000 has wide international support and is complete in terms of CSR issues.
- BIO and Planet Proof certification are increasingly required by our customers and generally have environmental benefits in production.
- Compliance with the standard requirements of GRASP to a large extent anticipates the growing demand for transparency in the area of social responsibility with regard to employees involved in fruit and vegetable production.
- The GRASP standard was drawn up by the GlobalGAP organisation and therefore enjoys international support and acceptance.

### 40. Specific actions in relation to CSR initiatives

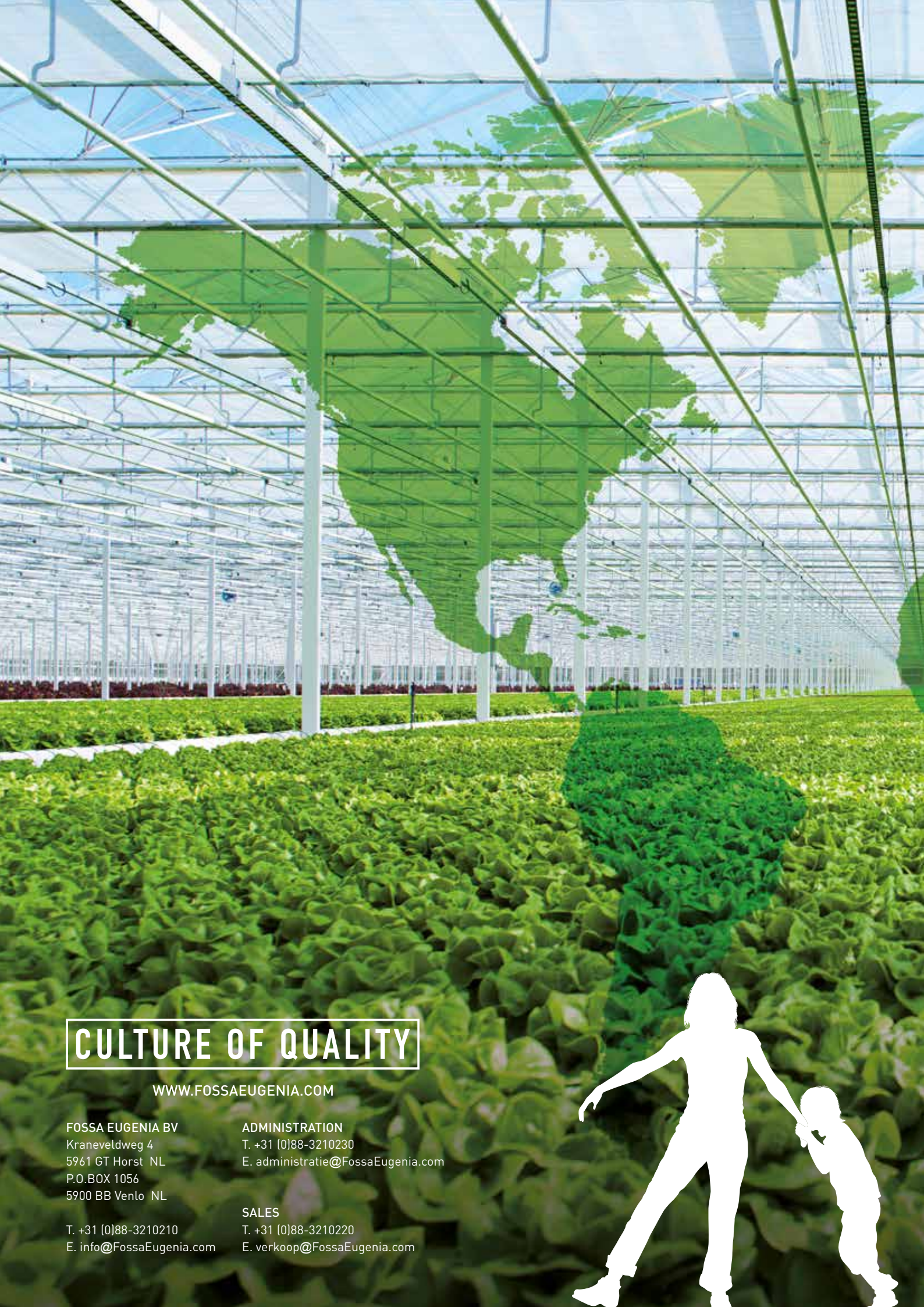
The specific actions which Fossa Eugenia is currently carrying out in relation to the abovementioned CSR initiatives are:

- Publication of the self-declaration, after internal and external testing.
- The annual review and analysis of the self-declaration, priorities matrix, stakeholder analysis and action plan.
- Coordination and management of any resulting action points and areas for improvement.
- Coordination and management of BIO and Planet Proof audits and any resulting areas for improvement.
- Coordination and management of GRASP audits and any resulting areas for improvement.









# CULTURE OF QUALITY

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