

TASQ™ - CORE MODULE

THE TOOL FOR THE ASSESSMENT
OF SUSTAINABLE QUALITY

2016



NESPRESSO®

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GENERALITIES OF THE TOOL

The Tool for the Assessment of Sustainable Quality™ (TASQ™) sets the guidelines to evaluate farms and wet mills participating in the *Nespresso* AAA Sustainable Quality™ Program and identify the cluster needs toward continuous improvement. It also evaluates farmers or owners as they are the actors and keepers of change. The tool is composed of a large set of criteria gathering information on farms and wet mills (number, text, choice in a list, etc) or evaluating a compliance against a standard (comply or no comply).

The TASQ™ 3.0 is divided in modules in order to address three AAA strategic drivers in the *Nespresso* AAA Sustainable Quality™ Program:

Q Quality to monitor the coffee processing performance from harvest to green coffee export.

S Social and environment to evaluate farm compliance against the international standards included in AAA (SAN, FLO, FTUSA and FLA).

P Farm economics through practices and indicators in agronomy and management.

It follows the AAA program philosophy and focus by categorizing its criteria:

- **PRE-REQUISITE:** translate *Nespresso* zero tolerance toward specific criteria.
- **CORE criteria:** push AAA farms and wet mills toward a strategic compliance level in a 3 years' timeframe.
- **Criterion AVANZADO:** assess farms and wet mills' compliance against additional practices and collect further performance indicators.

It is common for all AAA countries even though some criteria may be more specific to certain regions or farms and wet mills' characteristics or context.

The TASQ™ 3.0 enables every cluster to customize the tools to their need through the tips. Each criterion contains a short and full description which detail what the criteria is assessing. Nevertheless, clusters can add or edit comments, recommendations or assessing methodologies in the tips, according to their reality and under their responsibility. Tips have been proposed for CORE criteria, but they can be openly modified by cluster.

TASQ™ CORE

The TASQ™ CORE is the TASQ™ 3.0 module that contains CORE and PRE-REQUISITE criteria. Such criteria have to be assessed every year on every AAA entity. All criteria must present an answer for the assessment to be valid. In the event that a criterion cannot be assessed by any mean, it must be entered as “not applicable”.

Moreover, farms and wet mills failing to comply with 100% of the applicable CORE criteria after 3 years of AAA enrolment will be excluded. Excluded farms and wet mills will remain in *Nespresso* database though they won't receive the AAA benefits (AAA premium and technical assistance). The 3 years counting starts from the next 1st of January following the farms registration so that all farms have a minimum of 3 full year to fulfill the CORE criteria.

The updated information about TASQ™ 3.0 management procedures and structures is available in the AAA Shared Commitment (Reference Document TASQ™ 3.0).

The AAA agronomists must know that document and the content will be included in the TASQ™ 3.0 trainings.



QUALITY

Harvesting

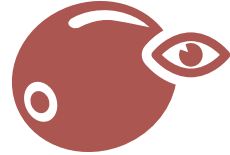


Q1a

Harvest planning & supervision CORE



Harvesting labor is planned and supervised.



Harvesting labor is planned in advance and adjusted according to the ripeness status of the plot. Farmers estimate the resources necessary for harvesting at the appropriate time. There is supervision or control with corrective measures to ensure a good harvest.



Supervision seeks to minimize the percentage of unripe coffee cherries picked and loss of coffee during harvesting, such as mature cherries left on the trees. In the case of mechanical harvesting, machine calibrations are also key.





QUALITY

Harvesting

Q1b

Same-day processing and harvesting CORE

Coffee is processed on the same day that it is harvested.



Coffee is aimed to be processed on the same day that it is picked, through pulping or drying. If processing is delayed, the coffee lot is kept separate from the well processed coffee until its quality has been approved by cupping.





QUALITY

Cherry processing



Q2a

Avoiding mixing during fermentation

CORE



Coffee batches are fermented separately.



Batches of pulped coffee from different days are kept separately. Mixing different batches of pulped and fermented coffee in the water tank is avoided, even by soaking.





Q2b

Avoiding over-fermentation

CORE

Over-fermentation of coffee is avoided during processing.



The fermentation time and/or the complete removal of mucilage are monitored to avoid over-fermentation. When using fermentation tanks, the regular fermentation time is known and delaying washing is avoided.

Environmental conditions, such as higher outdoor temperatures, that might accelerate the fermentation process and result in over-fermentation, are considered to adjust the fermentation time. If the mucilage is removed mechanically, the complete removal of the mucilage is verified prior to washing.





QUALITY

Cherry processing



Q2c

Continuous drying

CORE



Even and continuous coffee drying is aimed.



A methodology for even and continuous drying of the coffee is implemented and considers the following aspects:



- Sun drying of coffee is preferred over mechanical drying, considering production and capacity.
- Agitation or raking frequency is adjusted, depending on coffee layer thickness and humidity status.
- Coffee temperature is carefully regulated during mechanical drying to avoid altering its quality, depending on the coffee load and its humidity. The temperature must never exceed 50°C.





QUALITY

Cherry processing



Q2d

Avoiding contamination during drying

CORE

Direct contamination of the coffee is avoided during drying.



Direct contamination of the coffee, mainly by soil or fumes, is avoided. During sun drying, coffee is kept away from soil. Mechanical dryers should use indirect combustion (combustion gases are not mixed with the drying gases).



QUALITY Storage



Q3a

Coffee storage conditions

CORE



Coffee is not stored in the same place as contaminants and is isolated from the ground, walls, and ceiling.



There are no fuels, agrochemicals, fertilizers, or other contaminants present where the coffee is stored. The stored coffee does not touch the ground, walls, or ceiling.





Q3b

Clean storage bags

CORE

Bags used to store coffee are clean and free of contaminants.



Farmers know that coffee can be contaminated if stored in bags that previously contained products such as fertilizers or other chemicals, soil, or other products with a strong odor. At a minimum, farmers clean and dry the bags before using them for coffee storage.





QUALITY

Quality management

Q4a

Equipment cleaning procedure CORE



A routine cleaning procedure is in place for all equipment, including tubes.



Farmers confirm that they follow a cleaning procedure that involves cleaning all equipment and tubes before starting a new batch. The goal is to remove residual fermented coffee beans, foreign matter, and stagnant water before initiating processing.





Q4b

Processing area CORE

Farmers have a dedicated coffee processing area during the harvest.



The processing area is dedicated exclusively to coffee processing during harvest season. The presence of chemicals and oils that can negatively impact quality is avoided in the processing, drying, and storage areas. No animals, wild or domesticated, may access processing facilities or drying areas.





Q

QUALITY Quality management



Q4c

Clean processing water

CORE



Clean water is used to wash the coffee.



It is known and confirmed that clean water is used to wash the coffee. It must be free of muds, colors, odors, foreign flavors, and other contaminants. Storage tanks are regularly cleaned and maintained in order to avoid the accumulation of sediment and other foreign matter.





QUALITY
Quality management

Q4d

Avoiding mixing during processing and storage CORE



Mixing different coffee qualities is avoided throughout coffee processing and storage.



This includes all steps of the coffee processing, as well as the drying and storing stages, to protect its quality and integrity. Procedures are followed for product separation and identification.



QUALITY

Quality management



Equipment maintenance

CORE



Equipment is well maintained to ensure its proper functioning.



The equipment is regularly checked and maintained. This applies to any processing equipment, such as siphon, pulper, fermentation tank, mucilage remover, and washer. It is known that equipment maintenance ensures its good functioning and prevents coffee contamination, off-flavors through threshed, broken, or peeled beans, and loss of coffee beans through rejected pulp or leaks.





SUSTAINABILITY

Working Conditions



S1a

Forced labor PRE-REQUISITE

Farmers protect employees from all forms of forced labor, including working under a regimen of imprisonment.



Farmers do not partially or fully retain salaries, benefits or any other rights acquired or stipulated by law, nor do they retain any worker's documents such as passport, identity paper, land lease or other deposit, in order to oblige them to work or remain on the farm, to restrict their freedom of movement or as a disciplinary action. Engaging in trafficking and use of trafficked labor is prohibited. The farmers do not make it a condition of employment that a worker's spouse or other family member consents to work at the farm as well.



S

SUSTAINABILITY Working Conditions



S1b

Harassment and abuse

PRE-REQUISITE



Every worker shall be treated with respect and dignity.



No worker shall be subject to any physical, sexual, psychological or verbal harassment or abuse.





SUSTAINABILITY

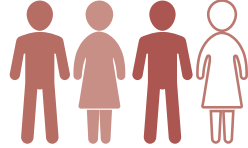
Working Conditions



S1c

Discrimination CORE

Discriminatory practices are never allowed on the farm.



These include discrimination at any point in time by race, ethnicity, color, sex, gender, age, religion, social standing, political tendencies, nationality, affiliation with labor associations or other legal groups, medical status, family obligations, sexual orientation or marital status, or for any other reason, according to fundamental ILO conventions 100 and 111 and national legislation.

Equal remuneration conditions, work allocation, training and advancement opportunities, and benefits (insurance and pensions) are offered to all personnel for the same kinds of work. Seasonal and piece rate workers are treated equitably.

Influence is not exerted on the political, religious, social or cultural convictions of the workers.



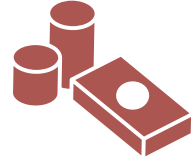
S

SUSTAINABILITY Working Conditions

S1d

Minimum wage CORE

Workers have the right to receive a salary equal to or greater than the minimum wage.



All workers receive no less than the legal minimum wage or the appropriate prevailing industry wage and all legally mandated benefits. Farmers respect legal specifications about in-kind payment. If the salary is negotiated via collective bargaining or another kind of pact, workers must have access to this document during the hiring process. For work remuneration based on production, quota or piecework, the established pay rate must allow workers to earn a minimum wage based on an eight-hour workday under average working conditions.



SUSTAINABILITY

Working Conditions

S1e

Freedom of association and collective bargaining

CORE

Workers have the right to freely organize and voluntarily negotiate their work conditions in a collective manner.



Farmers recognize and respect the right of workers to freedom of association and collective bargaining in accordance with ILO Conventions 87 and 98. Workers can freely form or be members of labor unions, carry out collective bargaining, or organize for ideological, religious, political, economic, social, cultural or other reasons. Farmers will not retaliate or discriminate against workers who are attempting to or are part of a labor union.





S

SUSTAINABILITY Children and Youth

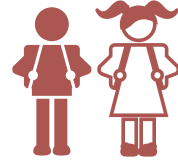


S2a

Child Labor PRE-REQUISITE



The hiring of minor workers under the legal age and the worst forms of child labour are prohibited.



No person shall be employed under the age of 15. If local minimum age law stipulates a higher age for work or mandatory schooling, the higher age applies. If, however, local minimum age law is set at 14 years of age in accordance with developing country exceptions under ILO Convention 138, the lower age applies.



The farm must comply with ILO Conventions 138 and 182 as well as the Minimum Age Recommendation 146. Minor children can perform work at their own parents' farm for activities not considered dangerous, as long as it does not affect their school attendance and their moral, social and physical development. Work must be appropriate to the subject's age and physical condition.



S3a**Agrochemicals: accident prevention**

CORE

Accidents related to the use of agrochemicals are prevented.



All workers who apply, handle, transport or come into contact with agrochemicals or other chemical substances must be given general training on the safe use and handling of chemical inputs.

All workers who apply, handle or have contact with agrochemicals, including those who wash clothes or equipment previously exposed to agrochemicals, must use personal protection equipment (PPE). PPE must be in good condition to reduce contact with agrochemicals and the possibility of acute or chronic intoxications.





S

SUSTAINABILITY

Occupational health and safety



S3b

Agrochemicals: restricted products

CORE



Farmers reject the use of products that have national as well as international restrictions.



Use of the following chemical or biological substances is not allowed:



- Biological or organic substances not legally registered in the country for commercial use
- Agrochemicals that are not legally registered in the country
- Products banned by the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides, and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants
- Agrochemicals with technical grade Class Ia / Ib active ingredients according to the classification of the World Health Organization (WHO).





SUSTAINABILITY
Occupational health and safety

S3c

Agrochemicals: safe storage CORE



Safe practices for agrochemical storage.



Agrochemical (pesticides and fertilizers) storage and distribution areas must be designed, built and equipped to reduce the risks of accidents and negative impacts on human health and the environment. Safety standards must be implemented and order must be maintained for reducing the possibility of accidents. At a minimum, agrochemicals are kept in a specific, enclosed area. The storage areas must be used for this purpose only. Food (human and animal) cannot be kept in these areas nor can the areas be used to raise animals, as offices, or for the storage of fuels or flammable substances.



S

SUSTAINABILITY Water



S4a

Water contamination

CORE



Farmers ensure that no polluting substances are discharged into the water.



Farmers do not discharge polluting substances into water, directly, or indirectly. This includes wastewater, pesticides, wastes, and fuels. Organic or inorganic solids must not be deposited into aquatic ecosystems. This includes solids such as domestic or industrial waste, rejected products, rubble, soil, and stones from excavations, rubbish from cleaning land, or other materials.





SUSTAINABILITY

Water

S4b

Water consumption

CORE

Farmers use water responsibly during coffee processing.



Farmers avoid wasting water and regulate their water consumption by using available technology and resources responsibly. These include water recirculation and reuse, maintenance of water distribution networks, and minimization of water use. Recommended coffee processing practices keep water consumption below 20 liters of water per kilogram of dry parchment coffee. For example, water should not be used to transport cherry coffee or coffee pulp, or for depulping. A good practice is to recycle the water used to sort coffee cherries and remove floaters in the classification tank (siphon).





S

SUSTAINABILITY

Water



S4c

Irrigation water

CORE



Farmers regulate use of water during irrigation.



Farmers using irrigation must employ mechanisms to precisely determine and demonstrate that the amount and duration of irrigation water applied are not wasteful or excessive. The water amount and the duration of the application are based on climate information, available soil moisture, and soil properties and characteristics. The irrigation system must be well designed and maintained to avoid waste.





SUSTAINABILITY

Biodiversity

S5a

Ecosystem protection CORE

The environment and biodiversity of the ecosystems on the farm are protected.



The natural ecosystems on the farm are identified, protected, and restored. These include forests, wetlands, aquifers, waterways, and areas undergoing natural succession. There is no evidence of the alteration or destruction of high-value ecosystems due to activities related to production, deforestation, or intentional fires.

Of special importance for environmental conservation are habitats that enable the reproduction of endemic and threatened species, house wild populations of animals or plants, provide ecosystemic services such as the protection of watersheds in severe circumstances, or are rare ecosystems. Examples include primary and secondary forests, paramos, savannahs, creeks, rivers, lakes, lagoons, bogs, swamps, and marshes.





S

SUSTAINABILITY Biodiversity



S5b

Endangered species CORE



Threatened or endangered species are given special consideration in farm production activities.



Farmers take special measures to protect threatened or endangered species by prohibiting hunting, collection, extraction, and species-trafficking practices. Cultural or ethnic groups hunt or collect wildlife in a controlled way and in areas designated for those purposes under the following conditions:



- Cases of subsistence activity must be amply proven.
- There are established laws that recognize the rights of these groups to hunt or collect wildlife.
- Hunting and collection activities do not negatively impact the ecological processes or functions important for agricultural or local ecosystem sustainability.
- The long-term viability of species' populations is not affected.
- Hunting and collection activities are not for commercial purposes.





SUSTAINABILITY

Biodiversity

S5c

Transgenic crops

CORE

Farmers take measures to avoid introducing, cultivating, or processing genetically modified organism (GMO) crops.



This criteria covers all crops possible within the farm boundaries. A genetically modified organism (GMO) is one whose genetic material has been altered using genetic engineering techniques. These techniques are generally known as recombinant DNA technologies. With this technology, DNA molecules from different sources are combined in a molecule to create a new set of genes. This DNA is transferred to other organisms, resulting in modified or new traits. When foreign transgenic materials are accidentally introduced into crops on a AAA farm, the farmers must develop, execute, and follow up on a plan to isolate the crops in compliance with the requirements of this criterion.





S

SUSTAINABILITY

Erosion



S6a

Soil coverage

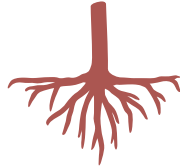
CORE



Farmers use soil coverage and other soil conservation practices.



Farmers use soil coverage and other soil conservation practices to prevent erosion during the rainy season. Weeds are managed through practices such as selective weeding and the use of live cover crops, other vegetation or mulching. Tillage is not used to control weeds. Slash and burn practices are not permitted.





PRODUCTIVITY

Variety



P1a

Approved varieties CORE

Coffee varieties present on the farm are approved by the AAA Program.



Farmers understand that the variety of coffee cultivated is a key factor in achieving best productivity. The Nespresso AAA Sustainable Quality™ Program relies on the Cluster Manager to determine the appropriate varieties that should be promoted to develop the best quality and productivity. Varieties, such as Costa Rica 95, can negatively affect the quality profile that the AAA Program seeks and are therefore restricted.



P

PRODUCTIVITY Farm management



P2a

Farm map

CORE



Farmers have a map of the farm identifying main crops and environmental information.



The farm map is a farm administration tool that helps to identify production areas and indicates crop information, such as variety, age, and number of trees. It must not be to scale or topographically accurate. The map can be a drawing that represents the farm. Conservation areas and farm infrastructure are also indicated on the map.





PRODUCTIVITY

Farm management

P2b

Renovation plan CORE



Farmers have a plan for the renovation of their coffee farm.



The farm renovation plan addresses variety, density, shade recommendations, and renewal seasons. Agronomists can guide farmers in developing and implementing this plan. The plan can be indicated via a technical recommendation or some other document, such as an element on the farm map. Together, the farmers and agronomists assess the feasibility of the renovation plan, taking into consideration economic and technical factors.



P

PRODUCTIVITY Farm management



P2c

Planting Density

CORE



Farmers understand coffee planting density.



Farmers understand that appropriate planting density is a very important factor in achieving the best productivity. Farmers must begin by knowing how many coffee trees are planted on their farm.





PRODUCTIVITY

Farm management

P2d

Correct pruning

CORE

General pruning of coffee trees is performed correctly.



Coffee is pruned correctly in order to ensure good tree shape. This includes sanitary pruning but not rejuvenation through renovation pruning.





P

PRODUCTIVITY IPM



P3a

Pest and disease awareness CORE



Farmers are aware of the main diseases and pests on their farm.



Farmers are familiar with the main pests and diseases that can affect economic productivity on their coffee farm. Farmers can recognize damage or symptoms originating from pests or common diseases on their farm.





PRODUCTIVITY

Weeding

P4a

Weed management

CORE

Farmers perform weeding.



Judicious weed management activities are undertaken, especially during the critical competition stage, such as the establishment stage.





P

PRODUCTIVITY Fertilization



P5a

Fertilization practices CORE



Fertilization practices are performed.



This includes mineral or organic fertilization sources. Mulching can be considered a fertilization source if evaluated and recommended by an agronomist.





P6e

Coffee sales documents CORE

Farmers keep coffee sales receipts.



Coffee sales receipts or production records are kept at least for one year to enable the analysis of overall farm production.

Criteria P6a to P6d are informative criteria about volume production. Please see AAA Database.



P

PRODUCTIVITY Income



P6f

Cost sources

CORE



Farmers know the sources of their main costs.



Farmers can identify the sources of their main costs without necessarily making a precise cost analysis.



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