

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR RESPONSIBLE FOOD AND MARKETING PRACTICES



EU SPECIALTY FOOD INGREDIENTS 2026 REPORT

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO EUROPEAN ASSOCIATIONS

European Associations pledge	EU Specialty Food Ingredients supportive actions
Endorse the aspirational objectives set out in this Code (where applicable).	Code signed on 01/07/21
Promote and disseminate this Code with(in) their constituency/ies.	2024: Code promoted at EU Specialty Food Ingredients Annual General Meeting on 04/06/24 2024 - 2026: Code promoted to EU Specialty Food Ingredients SFS WG meetings on 22/04/24, 15/11/24, 28/02/25, 24/09/25 and 10/04/2026 and at AGM meetings (2023-26) 2026: Social media: A LinkedIn campaign on the EU Specialty Food Ingredients account started in March 2026, the campaign will last 5 months (1 post per month) 27th March (here), 22nd April (here), 20th May (here) and 17th June (here) and 8th July (here). Website: the page 'sustainability and innovation' of the EU Specialty Food Ingredients website contains specific information on the Code of Conduct.
Encourage their members to align actions and/or business practices to the aspirational objectives and targets of the Code and invite them, on a voluntary basis, to adhere to this Code, as appropriate.	2026: the EU Specialty Food Ingredients Sustainability Food System (SFS) WG will discuss regularly the Code of Conduct and how to involve members in implementing it. Continue to engage in dialogue with other food chain/systems actors and EU and international policy-makers to forge (new) relationships, exchange good practices and discuss challenges encountered, learn from each other (studies, project) and create better mutual understanding, and identify opportunities for collaboration and potential partnership, for instance, one of its association member organises once a year (2023, 2024, 2025) workshops for the food chain operators and start-ups to raise their awareness on the regulatory framework in particular in fields relevant to innovation and Code of Conduct.

Explore the possibility of developing sector-specific tools and resources in support of this Code.	
Provide, on an annual basis, a report of their activities in support of this Code, which will be published on an open dedicated website.	2026: EU Specialty Food Ingredients will publish its 2026 report in a brochure that will be shared with its members to support the Code and encourage broader member engagement.
Continue to engage in dialogue with other food chain/systems actors and EU and international policy-makers to forge (new) relationships, exchange good practices and discuss challenges encountered, learn from each other (studies, project) and create better mutual understanding, and identify opportunities for collaboration and potential partnership.	EU Specialty Food Ingredients supports its members' contributions to reformulation, nutrition improvement and sustainability through dedicated working groups. In addition to facilitating the exchange of best practices and identifying common challenges, EU Specialty Food Ingredients actively seeks opportunities to collaborate and share knowledge with other industry organisations. This includes organising joint meetings, participating in cross-sectoral forums, and establishing regular channels for dialogue to encourage the exchange of expertise and foster partnership on shared objectives.

SPECIFIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE ASPIRATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS EU SPECIALTY FOOD INGREDIENTS

Aspirational objectives of the Code	Aspirational targets of the Code	EU Specialty Food Ingredients' contribution
"Healthy, balanced and sustainable diets for all European consumers, thereby contributing to: 1. Reversing malnutrition and diet-related NCDs in the EU 2. Reducing the environmental footprint of food consumption by 2030" "Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste (at consumer level, within internal operations, and across value chains)".	a) Improved food consumption patterns in the EU b) A food environment that makes it easier to choose health and sustainable diets	Members of EU Specialty Food Ingredients develop innovative technologies and ingredients to support the (re-) formulation of foods. Their work includes: • Adding micro-and macro-nutrients (e.g. vitamins, minerals, fibers, alternative carbohydrates) to support health, including healthy ageing and infant nutrition • Providing solutions (e.g. fermentation) for more sustainable diets, including proteins, fibers, vitamins and aminoacids • Reducing fat, sugar, salt and calories to support weight management and tackle obesity • Replacing allergenic ingredients • Delivering environmental benefits, including alternatives to crop-based ingredients Examples of Innovation: <u>Fiber enrichment</u> A new soluble fiber ingredient supports digestion, weight management, and cardiovascular health. As most consumers do not reach the recommended 25g/day intake, it helps manufacturers increase fiber content, reduce sugar, and improve nutritional profiles.

		<u>Canola protein</u> A high-quality canola (rapeseed) protein—developed after over 10 years of research—provides a complete plant-based protein. Produced from a co-product of oil production, it enables allergen-free products and improves texture and mouthfeel in plant-based foods. <u>Prebiotic chicory root fibres</u> Prebiotic ingredients derived from chicory root fibers support gut microbiota, digestive health and overall well-being, including reducing stress-related cortisol levels (link). <u>Fighting malnutrition</u> A member has partnered with the World Food Programme (WFP) for over ten years, supporting food safety systems, laboratory analysis in Belgium and quality management expertise in the U.S., contributing to the UN Zero Hunger goal. <u>Sustainability Benefits</u> Low- and no-calorie sweeteners perform better than sugar on key environmental indicators such as land use, greenhouse gas emissions and water consumption. More examples here. Through their functional properties, specialty food ingredients contribute to product reformulation that preserves taste, texture and safety while improving nutritional profiles, thereby supporting a food environment that facilitates healthier consumer choices.
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Prevention and reduction of food loss and waste (at consumer level, within internal operations, and across value chains).	A 50 % reduction of per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level by 2030 and reduced food losses along the food production and supply chains in the EU.	EU Specialty Food Ingredients members reduce food waste through scalable solutions: extending shelf life, improving production yields, and upcycling side streams into new food, feed, and ingredient applications. These actions directly support EU food waste reduction targets and the circular economy. Members develop innovative technologies and specialty ingredients that preserve quality and palatability while minimizing waste. They also work to reduce raw material losses to near zero by valorizing production streams through tailored, circular solutions. For example, a member developed a moisture-permeable, breathable membrane eliminates the need for inedible cheese rind while maintaining taste and quality, preventing up to 10% of waste. Another member targeting research on mould strains has created a cultured wheat ingredient that inhibits mold growth in bread and bakery products enabled shelf-life extension of bread by three days through optimized preservation methods—improving quality and reducing waste. 2025-26: An EU Specialty food ingredients member has developed a new circular lactic acid production process. Lactic acid is widely used in the food industry as an acidifier, preservative, and flavor enhancer. In this process nearly all chemicals are recycled, resource efficiency is optimized, and by-products are eliminated. Over the past decade, this company scaled up this process from the lab to pilot scale to demonstration scale, moving now to a viable industrial scale. The member has now built a new circular lactic acid plant in Rayong Province in Thailand. In 2026 another member announced the extension of its circular coproducts' partnership at its German pectin facility: all remaining
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		coproducts from pectin extraction are valorized as animal feed, with the objective to beneficially use 100% of its waste by 2030, a direct example of industrial food waste prevention through upcycling, fully aligned with the EU waste hierarchy. See practical examples on EU Specialty Food Ingredients' dedicated webpage here.
A climate neutral food chain in Europe by 2050.	Reducing net emissions from own operations, contributing to a 55 % GHG emission reduction target in the EU food chain by 2030 (following a science-based approach).	2021-24: One EU Specialty Food Ingredients member company produces food additives through fermentation using plant-based renewable carbon sources as fermentation feedstock. One member company (details available upon request) has committed to significantly reducing its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. In 2021, it aligned its targets with the ScienceBased Targets initiative (SBTi), with validation achieved in 2023. Its commitments include: • Reducing absolute Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 25% by 2030 (from a 2020 base year); • Reducing Scope 3 emissions (fuel- and energy-related activities, upstream transport and distribution) by 12.3% within the same timeframe; • Ensuring that 70% of suppliers (covering purchased goods and services) set science-based targets by 2026. The company has calculated its Corporate Carbon Footprint annually since 2013 and, since 2021, assesses Product Carbon Footprints yearly to better track progress. Key projects implemented or initiated in 2023 include: • Installation of a third heat pump in Austria; • Engineering of a hot water loop in Canada;

		• Electrification of evaporation and rectification processes in Austria - Installation of photovoltaic systems on warehouses and parking areas - Development of a 42 MWp photovoltaic installation near its Austrian production site (start-up planned for March 2024). Another member company (details available upon request) committed to reducing operational emissions by 10% by 2025 and already achieved this target in 2022, reaching nearly 11% reduction. The company is also implementing 15 renewable energy projects across 12 countries, expected to be fully operational by 2024 and to reduce CO₂ emissions by more than 715,000 metric tons annually. In addition, members are contributing to the decarbonisation of maritime transport through long-term initiatives such as wind-assisted propulsion, biofuels, and energy-saving technologies. Since 2021, solutions including biodiesel and fuel-efficient devices have been deployed on major global shipping routes. 2025-26: Two EU Specialty Food Ingredients members reached 100% renewable electricity at all operated production sites by end 2025, and another is on the way before 2030. Some members extend sustainability objectives at supply chain level with their commercial partners and/or to all primary inputs. A member company has set its global 2030 environmental and climate plan which include: by 2030, subsidiaries must complete at least one biodiversity project; by 2030, 100% of raw materials recovered; by 2033, reduce industrial GHG emissions by 50% and primary sector emissions by 36%. At the plant level, the company aims to modernize equipment, increase renewable energy usage, and reduce and reuse water from production processes (details available on request).
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