

Declaration of principles on fruit-growing in Val Venosta

We are an association of producers in a climatically advantaged apple cultivation area. Little precipitation, a great number of sunny days, fresh air and a significant difference in temperature between day and night result in a very high product quality. The fact that we only grow varieties that are ideal for the different soil conditions guarantees fruits of extraordinary quality. It is the special microclimate of our area which allows the cultivation of apples, strawberries and vegetables of the highest quality. We therefore stand for a healthy product which was naturally produced in intact surroundings. Technology and progress play an important role and are combined with human knowledge and manpower. One of the best examples for this is the careful harvesting by hand. Thanks to our great commitment and the collaboration of experts we were able to develop a progressive and foresighted model of fruit-growing which will also be guaranteed in future. Fruit-growing in Val Venosta is based on the following principles:

- **Principle of customer satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction is one of the most important principles of our business policy and it is, together with our commercialization businesses, guaranteed with the high quality of our products and services. We would like to meet the different requirements defined in client specifications and rules.

- **Principle of work safety**

We meet all relevant safety regulations and minimize or eliminate potential safety risks or dangers with the help of a specific risk analysis which is checked once a year. We constantly try to offer a safe workplace and we put the necessary working clothes (e.g. protective gear) at the disposal of our employees/guests. In case of an accident we dispose of emergency equipment and trained persons in our businesses who can guarantee competent and fast help.

- **Principle of hygiene – food safety**

We constantly try to adapt our cooperative buildings as well as the cultivated fields and orchards to the newest hygienic standards for professional fruit production. Furthermore, our many years of experience in the fruit-growing field constitute the base for a permanent optimization of our processing phases regarding hygiene from the cultivation of the plants to the delivery of the fruits to the cooperatives.

As professional food producers we are well aware of the important role we have as far as hygiene and food safety are concerned. The instruction of our employees and the respect of hygiene measures contribute to a healthy and safe product.

- **Principle of environment**

Agriculture and nature have always been closely linked. This is why the sustainable use of natural resources (water, current etc.) is very important for us. Our cultivation area is situated in the heart of nature parks and national parks. Thanks to integrated production and biological production we can realize the fundamental principles of environmental protection and conservation of nature. These principles help us, for example, to guarantee the preservation of the natural flora and fauna in our orchards. By complying with environmental provisions, by protecting plants and with the help of organized waste disposal we can protect nature and environment. We basically have a positive attitude towards new developments in this field.

- **Principle of quality**

We, the producers and our employees, guarantee a high quality of our products. We constantly aim at improving ourselves. In order to be able to guarantee the quality of our products we try to apply all necessary measures which include the choice of the variety according to the soil conditions and the position of the orchard, the use of healthy seeds, the efficient use of fertilizers and pesticides, for example by taking advantage of natural antagonists for fighting pests, and

delicate harvest. Fundamental in this respect are the AGRIOS guidelines for integrated production and the European guidelines as well as the guidelines of biological associations for biological production. The respect of these guidelines is certificated by controls executed by third parties. Our well organized storage and commercialization structures contribute to the preservation of fruit quality until the shelf.

- **Principle of social issues**

Skilled employees are a precious capital of a business. We therefore offer good working conditions to our employees that include the necessary equipment, trainings to ensure the correct execution of the tasks, a safe working environment and an adequate salary.

- **Principle of technology and progress**

We producers try to use the newest cultivation technologies and we are constantly interested in modernizing our businesses. A big contribution is made by the South Tyrolean advice centre for agriculture and viticulture and the agricultural and silvicultural experimentation centre Laimburg that constantly follow the developments in fruit-growing. Our storage and processing centres have to correspond to the state of the art.

- **Principle of guarantee of origin**

We stand for high quality products from Val Venosta according to the guidelines of the Protected Geographical Indication designation for South Tyrol apples PGI. Thanks to marking and to our traceability system we can reconstruct the product flow in every single phase for awakening the interest and ensuring the trust of our clients.

- **Principle of legal parameters**

We daily try to respect all legal provisions and to show a fair behaviour.

These principles are the basis for fruit-growing in Val Venosta. They are checked and, if necessary, adjusted annually.