

ASC Feed Standard v1.2

Disclaimer: This text provides an explanation of the ASC Feed Standard v1.2, in plain English with minimal jargon. **It is not intended for use in certification.** Only the official standard document is valid for certification purposes.

The ASC Feed Standard is structured in five principles. It has the following requirements:

PRINCIPLE 1: Have a management system to implement the ASC Feed Standard and operate legally and socially and environmentally responsibly.

Principle 1 ensures that feed mills run their business properly and that they follow the law, manage things well and treat people, communities and the environment responsibly. This principle has **twenty-one criteria**:

1.1 (Legal compliance): Feed mills must hold all licences and permits required by law.

1.2 (Management system): Feed mills must have a management system to make sure that they meet ASC requirements and have a senior manager who is responsible for this system and ensure it is regularly reviewed. They must promote ethical business practices and discourage corruption and not falsify or misrepresent evidence of conformance.

1.3 (Comply with labour laws): Feed mills must follow all applicable laws about worker rights and conditions and should make sure their workers are aware of their rights.

1.4 (No forced labour): Feed mills must ensure no forced, bonded, or compulsory labour is used, respecting workers' freedom of movement, freedom to leave their job, not withholding pay, and not retaining ID documents. If forced labour is found, proper actions must be taken to resolve it.

1.5 (No child labour): Feed mills must ensure no child labour is used. Any child labour found must be addressed, protecting the child's best interests. Children aged 13–14 may only do light tasks under strict conditions and young employees aged 15–18 must not work excessive hours.

1.6 (No discrimination): Feed mills must treat all employees equally, free from discrimination, violence, and harassment. Medical tests are only allowed when necessary for the job or safety.

1.7 (Health and safety): Feed mills must conduct health and safety risk assessments, address any hazards, train employees and maintain accident records. Safe machinery, protective equipment, emergency procedures, first aid, and proper facilities like drinking water, food preparation areas, and breastfeeding areas, where needed, must be provided.

1.8 (Freedom of association and collective bargaining): Feed mills must allow workers to join trade unions, choose representatives, and collectively negotiate for better working conditions and contracts, without interference.

1.9 (Transparent contracts): Feed mills must provide written contracts with clear terms for roles, hours, wages, benefits, and policies. False apprenticeships and other contract forms that avoid social or labour rights are banned.

1.10 (Minimum wage): Feed mills must pay workers at least the legal minimum wage. Wages should be paid in full and on time. At least 14 weeks of maternity leave should be provided.

1.11 (Reasonable working hours): Feed mills must follow the law and collective bargaining agreements for working hours and paid leave, including limits on daily and weekly hours, rest periods, and leave, including special considerations for young employees. No employee can exceed 8 hours a day or 48 hours a week (excluding overtime), with averaging over a 3-week period allowed. Overtime must be voluntary, capped at 12 hours per week, and paid at a premium rate.

1.12 (Respectful discipline): Feed mills must ensure their disciplinary policy respects workers' dignity. Deductions from wages or benefits for rule violations are not allowed.

1.13 (Grievance mechanisms): Feed mills must engage in dialogue with employees to address concerns and prevent grievances. They must have a fair and accessible grievance system for employees. Grievances must be addressed within 90 days, with records maintained, and shall have a grievance decision-making committee.

1.14 (Worker accommodation): Feed mills must ensure that, where provided, accommodation is safe, decent and hygienic, and with reasonable rent.

1.15 (Local communities): Feed mills should engage with nearby communities and have a fair and accessible grievance system for them. They shall avoid negative impacts on communities and support their social and economic wellbeing.

1.16 (Indigenous rights): Feed mills must respect Indigenous Peoples' rights, culture and land, and have a fair and accessible grievance system for them. They shall avoid negative impacts on communities and support their social and economic wellbeing.

1.17 (Environmental law compliance): Feed mills must follow all applicable environmental laws.

1.18 (Water use): Feed mills must use water responsibly, report to ASC on water consumption, and implement a plan to conserve water. In areas at risk of water stress, they must perform an annual risk assessment.

1.19 (Waste handling): Feed mills must manage waste responsibly, and report to ASC annually on the waste produced, and implement a plan to reduce waste. They should handle and store chemicals in a safe way.

1.20 (Effluent): Feed mills must handle discharged liquids (effluent) responsibly and develop a plan to reduce negative impacts on receiving waters.

1.21 (Energy use and GHG monitoring): Feed mills must use energy responsibly and must track and report to ASC on greenhouse gas emissions. They must implement a plan to reduce GHG emissions.

PRINCIPLE 2: Source ingredients responsibly.

Principle 2 ensures that all major feed ingredients and their suppliers are held to clear social, legal and environmental standards so the feed mill knows where ingredients come from and how they are made. This principle has **two criteria**.

2.1 (Supplier Code of Conduct): Feed mills must have a clear code of conduct for suppliers that sets standards for responsible behaviour. In this Code of Conduct, the feed mill's suppliers are required to meet the indicators of Criterion 1.1, 1.3-1.21, 3.4.2, and 3.4.3 in the ASC Feed Standard, and set out the consequences of not doing so.

2.2 (Due diligence): Feed mills must actively investigate (do "due diligence" on) their major plant and marine ingredient producers and the raw materials they use to check for social, legal and environmental risks. This involves the following:

- Feed mills must identify all plant and marine ingredients that make up more than 1% of their feed and record who makes them and where the raw materials come from. They must publish this information each year, including the country of origin.

- Properly qualified people within the feed mill must assess social, legal and environmental risks linked to both the plant and marine ingredient manufacturer and the original raw material production, using the risk pathways and methods set out in the standard's appendices, and following documented procedures. These risk checks must look at issues such as legal compliance, labour rights, environmental protection and land use. Evidence for low risk include the ASC country scorecard, certain allowed third-party certification schemes or a risk assessment undertaken by the feed mill. They must publish a summary of the due diligence results each year and keep clear records.
- Only ingredients assessed as Low Risk can count as eligible. A temporary exception allows some Medium Risk raw materials for a limited time, but these cannot count as eligible feed and must improve to Low Risk within the set deadline.

PRINCIPLE 3: Make feed inputs and output transparent.

Principle 3 ensures that feed mills keep accurate records of ingredients coming in and feed products going out and are transparent about what is in the feed. It has **four criteria**.

3.1 (Ingredient accounting system): Feed mills must track and record all significant ingredient inputs and feed outputs in a clear system. There are two methods they can use. The **mass balance model** lets feed producers mix eligible and non-eligible ingredients together, as long as they keep careful records to ensure the amount of ASC eligible feed sold matches the amount of eligible ingredients used. The **segregation model** requires producers to keep eligible ingredients separate from non-eligible ones throughout the entire production process. Only feed of the segregated model can carry the ASC label.

3.2 (Eligible ingredient calculation): Feed mills must work out which ingredients count toward responsible sourcing and calculate the eligible volume correctly.

3.3 (Correct product labelling): Feed mills must label feed products correctly or provide other ways by which buyers know what they are using.

3.4 (Transparency on product traits): Feed mills must share information about issues like protein levels, presence of GMOs, additives and emissions with buyers.

PRINCIPLE 4: Source marine ingredients responsibly.

Principle 4 focuses on increasing the use of whole-fish marine-based feed ingredients from fisheries or sources that have been independently judged as responsible. This principle has only **one criterion**.

4.1 (Improve sustainability level): Feed mills must work to raise the overall sustainability of their marine ingredient supply, for example by sourcing from better-managed fisheries. This involves the following:

- Feed mills must calculate the percentage of marine ingredients that meet the standard's sustainability requirements, using the method set out in the appendices of the standard.
- Only ingredients from approved certified fisheries, or credible fishery improvement projects can count.
- Feed mills must increase the sustainability of the marine ingredients over time and must keep clear records to prove where marine ingredients come from and their sustainability status.

PRINCIPLE 5: Source plant ingredients responsibly.

Principle 5 ensures that plant-based ingredients (like soy and palm oil) are sourced in ways that avoid deforestation and land conversion and that feed mills move towards sourcing from supply chains that have low environmental risk. It has only **one criterion**.

5.1 (Work towards a supply chain that has a low risk for deforestation and conversion): Feed mills must have commitments and plans to ensure plant ingredients come from sources that do not contribute to legal or illegal land conversion or deforestation. This involves the following:

- Feed mills must trace plant ingredients to their country of origin and publish this information each year.
- Feed mills must identify high-risk plant ingredients and assess the risk of deforestation and land conversion in the countries and regions where they are grown, using the method set out in the appendices of the standard.
- Only ingredients assessed as Low Risk can count as eligible (with limited, time-bound transition rules where allowed). Recognised certification schemes may be used where they meet the standard's requirements.
- They must keep records and show continuous improvement towards fully deforestation- and conversion-free sourcing.