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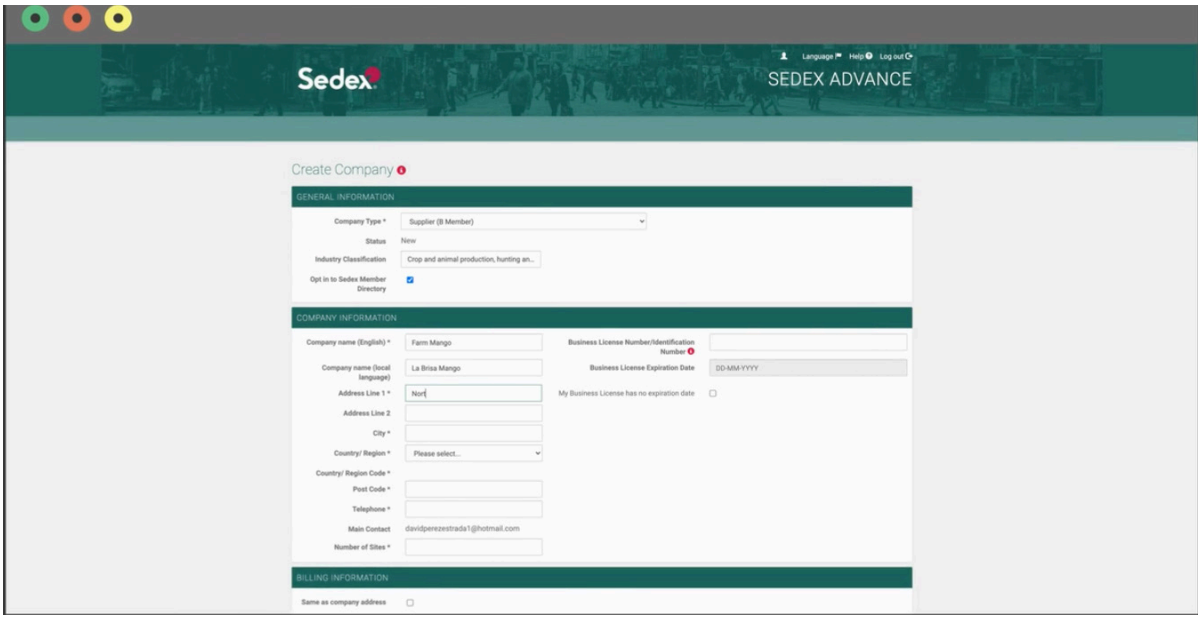
SMETA Quick Guide

SMETA - The Basics

The Supplier Ethical Data Exchange or SEDEX is a membership organization with the objective to promote improvements in the social standards of supply chains. The SEDEX Members Ethical Trade Audit or SMETA is a universal audit protocol created by SEDEX which attempts to combine the different standards of social audits. The online SEDEX platform facilitates the reliable exchange of accurate information related to SMETA audits between suppliers and buyers.

On the SEDEX platform we can carry out several activities, such as registering and paying the annual membership fees; linking our company with buyers, suppliers and the auditing company, as in social networks; scheduling an audit; completing a self-assessment; and sharing it with buyers and auditors. After an audit, you will be able to review the audit report, share it with buyers and follow up on the findings – all on the platform.



Support Instruments

SEDEX has prepared a set of guidance documents for companies to learn about the audit process. Access or download them directly on the SEDEX website (https://www.sedex.com/). Researching its content will help you know about documentation, management systems, and practices that will be assessed in the audit.

The main documents include:

- **SMETA Best Practice Guidance.** Explains the planning and execution steps of the SMETA audit.
- **SMETA Measurement Criteria.** Explains the areas and specifics points evaluated in the audit.
- **SMETA Audit Report.** Is a standard form where the auditor records the audit findings. The auditor uploads it to the SEDEX platform. The audited company controls its visibility and can share it with clients.
- **SMETA Corrective Action Plan Report (CAPR).** Is a document that provides a structure to help the audited company develop a corrective action plan.

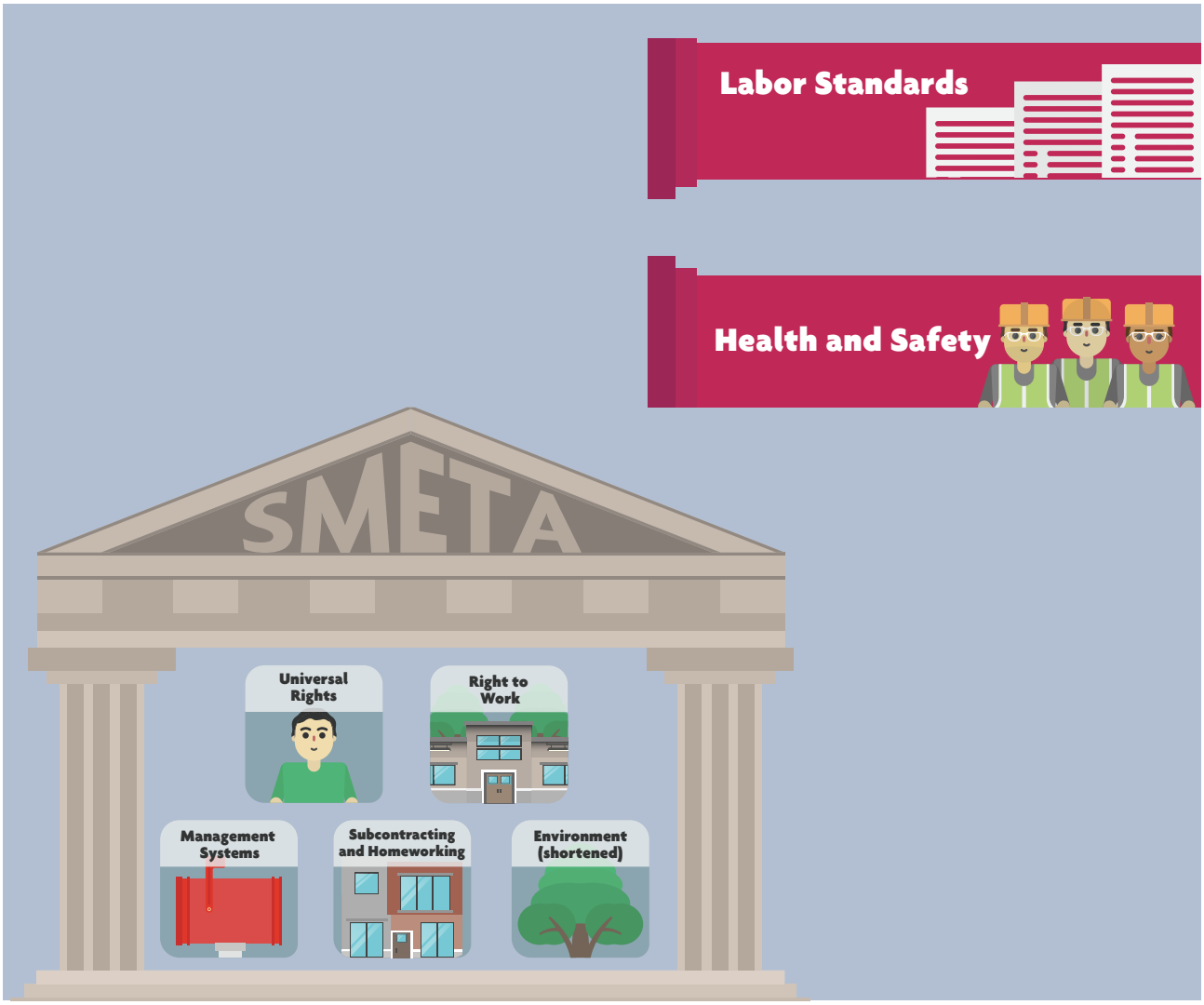
Materials from the "SMETA Audit Preparation Kit" developed by Food Safety CTS for the National Mango Board are also available:

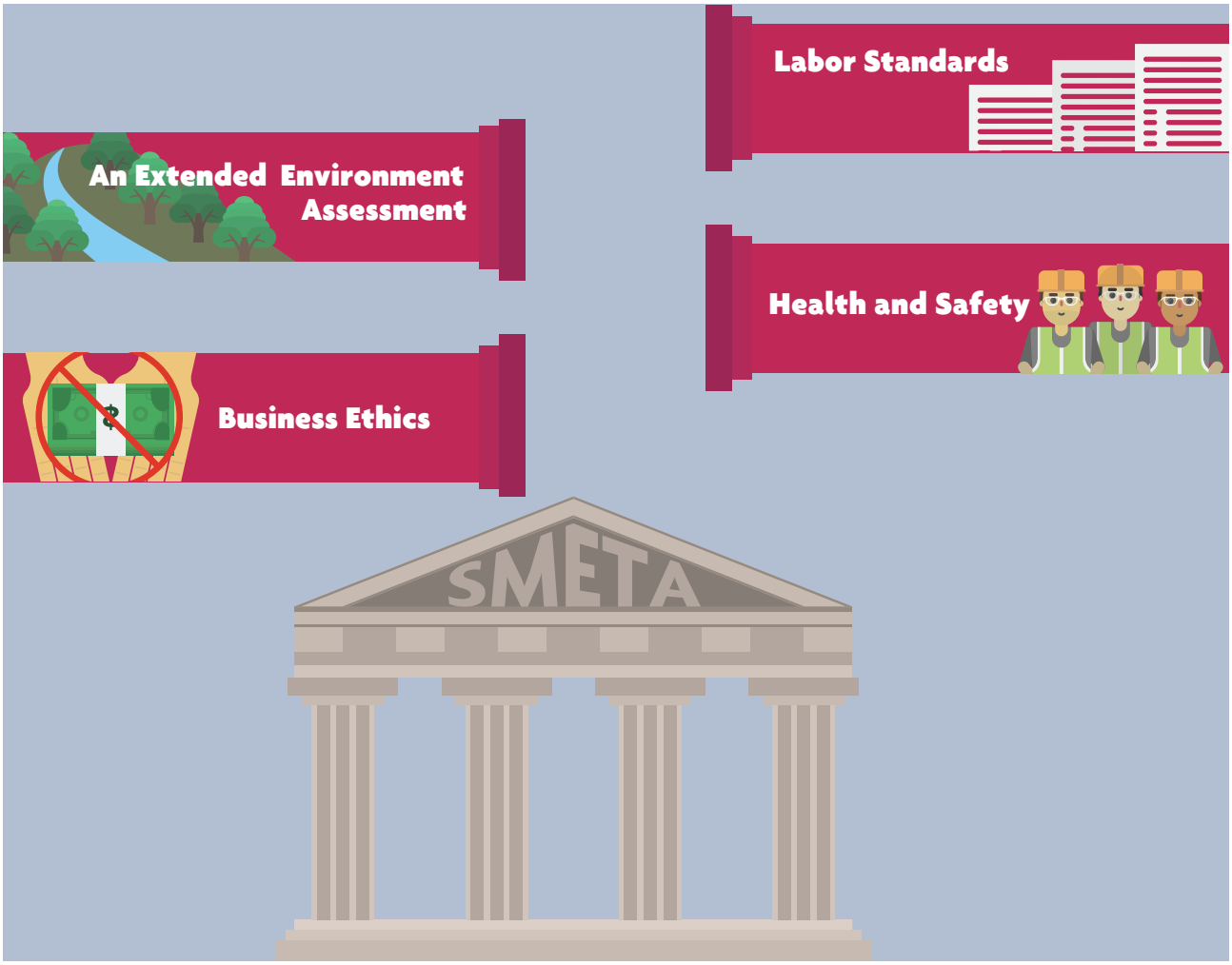
- **Free Videos: What is SMETA and the SEDEX Platform.** These videos explain in a simple way the audit process, details of the 2-Pillar and 4-Pillar modalities, evaluated elements, as well as how to log in to the SEDEX platform and a brief tour of basic activities that can be carried out on it.
- **SMETA Implementation Guide for the Mango Industry** This manual provides a brief explanation and description of the criteria to be assessed in the audit, the required documents and practices to be implemented on your farm or packinghouse, and ready-to-use, customizable templates.
- **Checklist for SMETA in the Mango Industry.** This checklist allows you to conduct a self-evaluation which will be similar to an audit.

What are the 2-Pillar and 4-Pillar SMETA Audit? Which should I apply for?

2-Pillar Audit

This basic, mandatory modality is included in every SMETA audit. The 2-Pillar audit includes: Labor Standards, Health and Safety, Universal Rights, Management Systems, Right to Work, Subcontracting and Homeworking, and a shortened Environment Assessment. This modality assesses compliance with local labor regulations and Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI) Base Code.
Check the modality your client needs before starting the audit application process. Most companies only require a 2-Pillar audit where the labor and social practices are addressed.





4-Pillar Audit

SEDEX members created this modality in order to satisfy greater demands of Corporate Responsibility. The 4-Pillar Audit expands on the basic standards of the 2-Pillar Audit by also evaluating Business Ethics and Extended Environment, which replaces the shortened Environment Assessment.

The 4-Pillar modality standards are international regulations, applicable legal requirements and good practices agreed to by affiliated members through a multi-sector consultation.

It is important to check with your client to determine if a 4-Pillar audit is required. For your company, it will represent an investment of additional resources to prepare and comply and a more lengthy audit, all of which could mean additional costs .

Audit process

Finally, we will review the SMETA audit process.

Preliminary steps. If your company is interested in properly preparing and committed to undergo the audit, first you need to do your research. You need to evaluate if your farm or packinghouse meets the standards.

You are on the right!

Step 1. Register your company on SEDEX

Step 2. Select the auditing company of your preference and request the audit date from the SEDEX platform.

Step 3. Document preparation. Organize your records, forms and documents related to the social practices of your company.

Step 4. Facilities and personnel preparation. You will probably have to make some adjustments, adaptations or changes in health and worker safety or in environmental practices.

Step 5. You must complete the SEDEX Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) on the SEDEX platform. This is an important step, remember to share it with the auditor, and if required, with your clients.

Step 6. Welcome the auditor. He will verify the social responsibility performance of your company through a review of documents, a tour of the facilities, and possibly by interviewing workers. The auditor will record the findings in the SMETA Audit Report. Prepare the SMETA Corrective Action Plan Report (CAPR) and upload it to the platform. Conduct the corresponding actions in a timely manner.

Step 7. Follow up on findings and corrective actions. The auditor will review the evidence on the platform, or it may be necessary for the auditor to return to the facility to verify the corrective actions.

There are several available tools regarding the standards, process and assessment of the SMETA audit. Review these carefully to properly prepare for the audit.

This material was developed by Food Safety CTS, for the National Mango Board

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