# Southeast Plant Show Code of Conduct

The Southeast Plant Show is committed to providing a safe, welcoming, respectful, and professional environment for everyone involved with our event.

For purposes of this Code of Conduct, **“Participant”** includes, but is not limited to, vendors, sponsors, educators, speakers, influencers, content creators, volunteers, contractors, partners, exhibitors, committee members, and other individuals or organizations formally participating in or working with the Southeast Plant Show (“SPS”).

This Code establishes the standards of conduct expected of all participants while participating in SPS activities, including event setup, event days, breakdown, meetings, workshops, educational programming, promotional activities, official SPS communications and online spaces, and other SPS-related functions.

This code also applies to SPS-related communications or conduct outside official SPS channels when the conduct directly relates to participation in SPS and materially affects event safety, operations, or another Participant's ability to participate.

Participants are responsible for their own actions and are expected to contribute to an environment built on safety, integrity, professionalism, and mutual respect.

Violations of this Code may affect a Participant’s relationship with SPS and may result in corrective action, removal from the event, or loss of eligibility to participate in future events.

## 1. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS, RULES, AND REGULATIONS

Participants must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, ordinances, venue requirements, and SPS policies while participating in Southeast Plant Show activities.

This includes applicable requirements concerning health and safety, environmental protection, accessibility, employment and labor practices, permits, licensing, and other legal obligations relevant to the Participant’s activities.

This also includes applicable plant-health, agricultural, quarantine, invasive-species, import/export, wildlife, conservation, and other requirements governing products, plants, or materials displayed or sold at SPS. Participants may not knowingly display, promote, or sell plants, wildlife-derived products, or other materials that were illegally collected, imported, obtained, or distributed.

## 2. REPORTING CONCERNS AND VIOLATIONS

Participants are encouraged to promptly report suspected violations of this Code of Conduct, unsafe conditions, unlawful activity, harassment, threats, or other conduct that may negatively affect the safety or integrity of the Southeast Plant Show.

Concerns may be reported to an SPS Team Member or by emailing **info@southeastplantshow.com**.

When an immediate safety concern exists during the event, Participants should notify SPS staff, venue personnel, security, or emergency services as appropriate.

Participants should provide as much information as reasonably available to assist SPS in reviewing a concern. Supporting documentation may be provided when available but is not required to make a good-faith report.

SPS prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, raises a concern, reports a suspected violation, participates in an investigation, or seeks assistance regarding conduct covered by this Code.

## 3. ETHICAL CONDUCT AND INTEGRITY

Participants are expected to act honestly, responsibly, and ethically in their dealings with SPS, attendees, other Participants, venue personnel, and the public.

Fraud, bribery, corruption, intentional misrepresentation, theft, deception, or other unlawful or unethical conduct will not be tolerated.

Participants must accurately represent their role, credentials, affiliations, relationship with the Southeast Plant Show, and, when applicable, the products or services they provide.

## 4. FAIR TREATMENT, INCLUSION, AND MUTUAL RESPECT

SPS is committed to creating an environment in which Participants and attendees are treated fairly, professionally, and with respect.

Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, protected veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law will not be tolerated.

Participants are expected to respect reasonable accommodations and accessibility needs and to interact respectfully with individuals of differing backgrounds, identities, experiences, and perspectives.

# 5. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Participants are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, respectful, and appropriate manner during Southeast Plant Show activities.

Behavior that creates an unsafe, hostile, intimidating, or significantly disruptive environment will not be tolerated.

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Threatening, intimidating, bullying, stalking, or aggressive behavior.
- Verbal abuse, abusive or obscene language directed toward another person, or excessive yelling intended to intimidate or disrupt.
- Fighting, unwanted physical contact, threats of physical harm, or other violent behavior.
- Sexual harassment, unwanted sexual attention, or other inappropriate sexual conduct.
- Repeatedly disrupting programming, event operations, or another Participant's ability to perform their role.
- Deliberately interfering with another Participant, attendee, SPS staff member, volunteer, educator, vendor, or other individual participating in the event.
- Knowingly damaging, stealing, or misusing another person's property.
- Refusing to comply with reasonable safety, operational, or conduct-related instructions from SPS staff, venue personnel, security, or emergency personnel.
- Retaliating against anyone who makes a good-faith report or raises a concern under this Code.
- Any and all illegal substances are banned.
- Online harassment, including targeted online harassment, threats through electronic communications, publishing someone's private contact/location information, and encouraging others to harass another Participant.

Disagreements and conflicts should be handled respectfully. When a disagreement cannot be resolved appropriately between the individuals involved, Participants should seek assistance from SPS staff rather than escalating the situation.

# 6. SAFETY, SECURITY, AND PROTECTION

SPS strives to maintain a safe and healthy event environment.

Participants must:

- Follow applicable health and safety requirements.
- Use event spaces, equipment, and facilities responsibly.
- Follow instructions provided by SPS, venue personnel, security, and emergency personnel.
- Promptly report accidents, injuries, unsafe conditions, damaged equipment, or other safety concerns.
- Avoid conduct that creates an unreasonable risk to themselves or others.

Violence, threats of violence, or behavior that reasonably causes another person to fear for their safety are prohibited.

The possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs is prohibited. Alcohol may not be possessed, distributed, or consumed where prohibited by law, venue rules, or SPS policy.

Weapons or other dangerous items may not be possessed or used in violation of applicable law, venue rules, or SPS policy.

# 7. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Participants must respect the intellectual property rights of SPS and others.

Participants may not knowingly sell, distribute, display, promote, or use counterfeit, pirated, or otherwise unauthorized materials.

Participants are responsible for ensuring that materials they create, display, provide, or distribute do not improperly infringe another party's copyrights, trademarks, patents, or other intellectual property rights.

Use of Southeast Plant Show names, logos, graphics, photographs, or other branded materials is also subject to the **Southeast Plant Show Advertising, Marketing & Media Policy**.

# 8. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

SPS values authenticity, originality, and human-created work. Participants are expected to use artificial intelligence responsibly and may not use AI-generated or AI-manipulated content in a manner that is deceptive, misleading, unauthorized, or inconsistent with SPS policies.

The use of artificial intelligence in products, merchandise, advertising, marketing, social media, photography, video, promotional materials, or other content associated with SPS is subject to the requirements established in the applicable Vendor Agreement, Advertising, Marketing & Media Policy, or other participation agreement.

Participants are responsible for ensuring that their use of artificial intelligence complies with applicable laws, intellectual property rights, and SPS requirements.

# 9. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

Participants must respect confidential, proprietary, private, or sensitive information shared with them through their involvement with SPS.

Such information should not be shared with third parties or publicly disclosed without appropriate authorization.

Participants must also respect the personal privacy of other Participants, attendees, and SPS representatives and should not improperly disclose private contact information, personal records, internal communications, or other non-public information obtained through their involvement with the event.

Nothing in this section prohibits a Participant from reporting suspected unlawful conduct, safety concerns, harassment, or other good-faith concerns to SPS or an appropriate authority.

SPS will make reasonable efforts to handle reports and related information discreetly and will share information only as reasonably necessary to review the concern, protect safety, enforce SPS policies, or comply with legal obligations.

# 10. PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND REPRESENTATION OF SPS

Participation in the Southeast Plant Show does not authorize a Participant to speak on behalf of SPS or the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds.

Participants may discuss or promote their own involvement with the event but may not represent themselves as an authorized spokesperson for SPS or the venue unless specifically authorized to do so.

Participants may not knowingly make false representations regarding SPS policies, decisions, partnerships, positions, or official communications.

# 11. PROTECTION AND PROPER USE OF PROPERTY

Participants are expected to respect and protect property belonging to SPS, the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds, other Participants, attendees, and third parties.

SPS and venue property may only be used for authorized purposes.

Theft, intentional damage, unauthorized use, or misuse of property is prohibited and should be reported promptly to SPS.

Participants may be held responsible for damage or loss resulting from their intentional misconduct, negligence, or unauthorized use of property, as permitted by applicable agreements and law.

# 12. RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPRESENTATIVES

Organizations or businesses participating in SPS are responsible for ensuring that individuals acting on their behalf—including employees, booth staff, assistants, contractors, representatives, and authorized guests—are aware of and comply with this Code of Conduct while participating in SPS activities.

Actions taken by an individual acting on behalf of a participating organization may be considered when SPS determines the organization's continued participation or eligibility for future events.

# 13. ENFORCEMENT

SPS reserves the right to respond to violations of this Code in a manner appropriate to the nature and severity of the conduct.

Actions may include:

- Providing guidance or requesting that conduct stop.
- Issuing a verbal or written warning.
- Restricting access to certain activities, spaces, or privileges.
- Requiring removal of inappropriate or unsafe materials or activities.
- Removing an individual or organization from the event.
- Contacting venue security, law enforcement, emergency personnel, or other appropriate authorities when necessary.
- Limiting or denying eligibility to participate in future SPS events.
- Taking any additional action permitted under the Participant's applicable agreement with SPS.

SPS may take immediate action when reasonably necessary to protect the health, safety, property, operations, or experience of Participants or attendees.

SPS will review reported concerns based on the information reasonably available. A good-faith report does not guarantee a particular outcome or disciplinary action.

# 14. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing, accepting, or agreeing to this Code of Conduct as part of their participation in the Southeast Plant Show, the Participant acknowledges that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with its requirements.

Participants also acknowledge that additional agreements or policies applicable to their particular role—including vendor, sponsorship, educator, influencer, volunteer, contractor, or other participation agreements—may establish additional requirements.

If a role-specific agreement or SPS policy establishes stricter or additional requirements regarding a particular subject, those requirements also apply.

Compliance with this Code helps SPS create a safe, professional, welcoming, and enjoyable event for everyone involved.