



Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture

For positive impacts across farm landscapes

As consumers increasingly consider the environmental and social impact of their purchases, there is a growing demand for responsible agriculture. This is driving companies to seek environmentally and socially responsible sourcing. **The Rainforest Alliance Farm certification** provides a clear roadmap for sustainable farming. It offers actionable strategies for better crops, climate change adaptation, productivity enhancement, sustainability goals, and fostering transparency and responsible business practices.

The Sustainable Agriculture Farm Standard supports farmers in maximising positive social, environmental and economic outcomes of farming. It equips farmers with an advanced framework for livelihood improvement and safeguarding the landscapes where they live and work.

Certified farms and companies receive the **Rainforest Alliance Certified™**, a prestigious badge that can be used to market certified products and thus, motivating consumers to support sustainably produced products.

2020 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard

Designed for maximum value, the 2020 Certification Programme introduces several innovations for context-specific, data-driven and risk-based certification.

The Sustainable Agriculture Standard is rooted in the following sustainability principles: Management, Traceability, Income and Shared Responsibility, Farming, Social, and Environment.

All relevant policies, standards and guidance for audited and certified operations are available on the [Rainforest Alliance website](#) for the 2020 certification programme.

Our experience

With 30 years in certification, our global team specialises in various agricultural products, issuing over 1,000 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture certificates worldwide.

Focused on customer experience, we provide timely, professional, and high-quality services, supporting companies worldwide engaged in Rainforest Alliance certified farms.

We also work with several other internationally recognised agriculture programmes. To date, we have certified over 843K farmers globally.



Over **90 crops** are currently under the certification scope.

The following crops grown in a country included in this list, can attain a Rainforest Alliance certificate, following positive results of a certification audit: **chilli, cocoa, coffee, coconut, cut flowers, fruits, nuts (such as hazelnuts), pepper, tea**. Additional conditions apply for **herbs, spices, other herbal tea ingredients, rooibos, and vegetables**.

According to the 2020 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard, the use of **WHO/FAO-designated Highly Hazardous pesticides and obsolete substances is prohibited**.

Specific risk management protocols apply to certain active ingredients. The certification process takes a holistic approach, offering practical and effective means for farms of all sizes to progressively decrease reliance on agrochemicals.



Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Farm Certification

What is Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Farm certification?

This certification applies to farms seeking to meet the comprehensive requirements of the [Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard](#), addressing social, economic and environmental criteria.

Certified farms are awarded the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal, a prestigious badge that can be used to market products grown on certified farms. Over 90 agricultural crops are currently under the certification scope, and Preferred by Nature is a certification body authorised by the Rainforest Alliance to conduct agricultural audits with geographic scope in more than 40 countries globally.



What are the criteria for a farm to earn certification?

A farm must comply with the certification requirements of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard and the Certification Rules. While the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard forms the foundation of Rainforest Alliance certification, it is complemented by supportive policies. Additional policies have been developed for certain countries and topics.

The Sustainable Agriculture Standard is rooted in the following sustainability principles: Management, Traceability, Income and Shared Responsibility, Farming, Social, and Environment. You can find all policies, standards and guidance relevant to audited and certified operations on the [Rainforest Alliance webpage for the 2020 certification programme](#).

What does the certification process entail?

A [certification agreement](#) must be signed before Preferred by Nature initiates the certification process. Farmers and producer groups must meet the criteria of the [Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard \(RA SAS\)](#) to use the Rainforest Alliance name and the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ (RAC™) seal.

Certified farms must also sign a license agreement and obtain Rainforest Alliance's approval to use their trademarks by sending an e-mail to customersuccess@ra.org.

Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Farm certificates for farms and producer groups involved in crop production are normally issued for a three-year period. An initial assessment is conducted for certification, followed by annual audits to maintain the certificate.

How can I maintain my active certification status?

During the validity period, you need to undergo annual audits where we verify your continued compliance. The annual audits will focus on any weaknesses identified during previous evaluations and on your fulfilment of the certification requirements. Preferred by Nature or Rainforest Alliance may conduct additional audits without announcements, for example, if we have reason to suspect a major breach of the certification rules. In between audits, you need to notify us about any important changes in your organisation.

* Laws assessment reports are made available to stakeholders (e.g., public and certificate holders) upon request. If you are interested in this information, please contact AGRpm@preferredbynature.org

The Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Farm certification is awarded to farms that meet rigorous environmental, social and economic requirements.

Preferred by Nature is an accredited Rainforest Alliance certification body to evaluate companies' compliance with the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard: Farm Requirements.

Certification process in brief



Begin by providing details about your organisation and the desired certification scope. We will use this information to create a customised certification proposal. Once approved, you'll need to sign the Certification Agreement with us to formalise the process.



Ensure full alignment with the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard and the Certification Rules and Policies and relevant local laws*. This involves setting up an integrated farm planning and management system that covers procedures, plans, and records, assigning responsibilities and training relevant staff.



Audits are typically onsite. These include a thorough review of documents, interviews with key personnel, traceability analysis, and visits to your organisation's fields and facilities.



Post-audit, we provide a report detailing results and any identified non-conformities. Correcting these issues is necessary before certificate issuance.



The report is quality-reviewed internally, shared for your input, and, with a positive decision, the certificate is issued.



How can I change the certification scope?

You need to notify Preferred by Nature in any of the following situations which may require formal changes in the scope of your certificate: additional product lines which you wish to sell as certified; use of new types of inputs not covered by your current certification scope; changes in the system used for controlling claims; and expansion or removal of sites or production area covered by the certificate. An additional audit is normally required for scope changes outside the scheduled annual/certification audits.

When is a certification terminated?

Your certificate may be withdrawn for these reasons: failure to sufficiently address the issues leading to suspension within the suspension period; failure to undergo renewal assessment within the suspension period after addressing the issues leading to suspension; failure to address one or more major NCRs by the specified timeline; failure to comply with one or more zero-tolerance critical criteria; deliberate fraud or very serious breaches of the certification requirements; and failure to undergo renewed assessment prior to license expiration.

What is the procedure for complaints and appeals?

For complaints management, all complaints and appeals will be processed using the Preferred by Nature's [Dispute Resolution Policy](#).

What is the cost structure?

The total certification cost includes auditing services and the Preferred by Nature Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture programme fee. Auditing fees vary based on company size and complexity, as specified in our proposal.

Where can I find the rights and duties of Preferred by Nature and my company, as the client, related to the certification activities?

To learn about Preferred by Nature and Clients' rights and duties, please check the [Preferred by Nature Certification Agreement](#).

Which trademarks can be used?

The Rainforest Alliance logo and trademarks are widely recognised in Europe and North America. They can be applied to certified products and used for promotional purposes if you are registered on the Rainforest Alliance Traceability Platform and have signed a Trademark License Agreement. Rainforest Alliance approves trademark usage, while Preferred by Nature, as a certification body, confirms the presence of a license agreement, logo approval system and product compliance during the audit.

What about impartiality and confidentiality?

Preferred by Nature's Quality Management System includes [several policies](#) that allow our organisation to provide assurance services credibly in compliance with accreditation requirements. These include the [Impartiality Policy](#), which ensures impartiality, transparency and independence in all of our activities, and the [Confidentiality Policy](#), describing our rigorous approach to safeguarding confidential data and information provided by our clients.



Get in touch with us

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FSC™ A000535 / FSC accredited certification body

