Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture
Drive responsible agricultural production and supply chains

Consumers and businesses increasingly seek products that align with sustainable development goals. Obtaining certification through a recognised and reputable scheme, such as the Rainforest Alliance, serves as a powerful method to showcase your commitment to sustainability.

Supply Chain certification meticulously tracks a product's journey, beginning at a certified farm and spanning every stage of the production process. This ensures supply chain integrity, granting consumers the confidence to assert the certified origin of your product.

2020 Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard: Supply Chain Requirements

Unlike the traditional 'chain of custody' model, which solely focuses on tracking certified volumes along supply chains, the Supply Chain Requirements take a more comprehensive approach.

The Rainforest Alliance introduces innovative elements both in the requirements and in the overall approach. These innovations include tailored requirements for each supply chain actor based on their specific circumstances, a more thorough risk assessment to identify and address sustainability risks, and shared responsibility requirements.

These requirements help incentivise sustainable production by farmers while directing investments towards achieving sustainability goals.

The Rainforest Alliance Supply Chain certification allows your company to source and sell certified products with the Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal. This meets the rising demand for sustainable goods, eases new market entry, and lowers potential reputational risks.

The Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal appears on food and beverages in supermarkets, trains, planes, hotels and restaurants worldwide.

It signifies that ingredients in agricultural products have been certified to meet the standards of the Rainforest Alliance.

Which agricultural crops can be certified?

Cocoa, coffee, tea, fruits and vegetables, nuts, flowers, herbs & spices. For a full list of crops certified by the Rainforest Alliance please see this link.

Verification method and Audit cycle			
SCRA Verification level	Year 1: certification	Year 2: surveillance	Year 3: surveillance
A - very low	Rainforest Alliance review	Rainforest Alliance automated check	Rainforest Alliance automated check
B - low	CB remote surveillance audit	Rainforest Alliance review	Rainforest Alliance automated check
C - medium	On-site CB certification audit	CB remote surveillance audit	Rainforest Alliance review
D - high	On-site CB certification audit	On-site CB surveillance audit	CB remote surveillance audit
E - very high	On-site CB certification audit	On-site CB surveillance audit	On-site CB surveillance audit

The Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Supply Chain certification controls the flow of certified farm products from farm to shelf.

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

Certification process in brief

SUBMIT Upon registration with the Rainforest Alliance Certification Platform (RACP), eligible companies must complete a SCRA as per Supply Chain requirements.

Once SCRA results are received and the Certification Application Form (CAF) is completed, send your application to Preferred by Nature. A quote for certification services will then be provided.

Preferred by Nature will work with you to arrange the audit.

Post-audit, we provide a report detailing results and any identified non-conformities. Correcting these issues is necessary before certification is approved. The report is reviewed internally, and, with a positive decision, the certificate is issued.

Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Supply Chain Certification

What is the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Supply Chain certification?

In 2020, the Rainforest Alliance Certification Programme introduced innovations for a more context-specific, data-driven and risk-based certification process. This evolution applies to **Supply Chain certification,** which tracks a product's journey – from a certified farm through trading, manufacturing and warehousing – to assure end consumers the ingredients in that product have been responsibly sourced and produced.

This assurance lies in accurate claims about the product's certified content and sourcing. The Rainforest Alliance Certified™ seal stands as a symbol of responsible production.

What are the key roles and responsibilities within the RA Supply Chain Certification system?

Certification bodies (CB) are third-party organisations accredited to conduct certification and verification audits for companies seeking to comply with the standard's regulations in producing, processing, trading or selling products. All RA SAS certification bodies adhere to Rainforest Alliance's accreditation guidelines for approval. They also require Rainforest Alliance's authorisation to conduct Supply Chain audits.

What does the certification process entail?

A certification agreement must be signed before Preferred by Nature initiates the certification process. Rainforest Alliance Supply Chain certificates are valid for **three years, and the licence is renewed annually.** As a certification body, we start with an initial assessment as the foundation for your certification. Subsequently, based on the Supply Chain Risk Assessment (SCRA) results, annual audits may be required to maintain certification. Full recertification occurs every three years. Learn more here.

How is the complaints and appeals process managed?

All cases will be processed following the Preferred by Nature's Dispute Resolution Policy. The SCRA assesses potential risks linked to an organisation's operations at individual sites, influencing verification frequency and type. The organisation's profile leads to a contextualised checklist and required verification level.

Which trademarks can be used?

The **Rainforest Alliance logo** and **trademarks** can be used on certified products and for promotional purposes. Rainforest Alliance's approval is necessary to apply the trademark to any products or promotional material. During the audit, Preferred by Nature checks for a license agreement, a logo approval system, and alignment of product content with claims.

Which certification standards apply to my organisation?

The Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Supply Chain Standard applies to all supply chain-certified companies and sets out general requirements for material handling. The standard has five principles: Management, Traceability, Income and Shared Responsibility, Social, and Environment. Specific requirements may or may not apply to each company, depending on certified site activities performed and the SCRA results. For example, Principle 2 covers Traceability. Companies can choose to separate certified material (Segregation) or mix certified and non-certified materials (Mass Balance model - currently applicable to cocoa, flowers, hazelnuts, coconut oil and orange juice).

What is the cost structure?

The **total certification cost** includes auditing services, expenses for an on-site audit (if applicable), and Preferred by Nature's Programme fee. The total cost differs based on the SCRA results, company size and supply chain complexity. Our proposal will provide these details. Additionally, Rainforest Alliance may impose a separate fee for calculating the SCRA result or volume-based royalty fees and payments towards sustainability premiums (SD/SI). Please consult the Rainforest Alliance website for more details.

What about impartiality and confidentiality?

For accurate certified volume accounting, RA SAS Supply Chain auditors need access to specific confidential information, such as your suppliers, buyers, recipes and conversion factors. Data confidentiality is guaranteed, and our staff follows stringent confidentiality protocols. Preferred by Nature's Quality Management System includes policies and procedures ensuring credible assurance services aligned with external requirements. These consist of the Impartiality Policy, ensuring fairness, transparency and independence in all activities; the Confidentiality Policy, emphasising strict data protection for partners; and the Anti-corruption Policy, instating controls for ethical and integrity-driven conduct among employees. All RA Supply Chain certificates are publicly listed in the **Rainforest Alliance database**, along with information about certificate's scope, such as product types and sites.

How do I maintain my certificate?

You need to **comply with the certification requirements** to remain certified. Annual surveillance audits, following **Rainforest Alliance's Certification and Auditing Rules** and the Supply Chain Requirements, are used to verify compliance. Keep in mind that reassessments cannot be postponed, and they must occur before your certificate's anniversary. Failure to comply will lead to certificate termination.

Between audits, we assist you in staying informed on requirements through **regular system change updates**. If audits reveal non-conformities in your system, prompt and effective action is necessary to address them.

How can we support your business?

Preferred by Nature is an accredited Certification Body against the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard.

We can support your sustainability journey by carrying out audits of your supply chain operations against the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Supply Chain requirements.

Added value of engaging with us

You can opt for additional services that support your sustainability efforts. For example, you can enlist in Forest Stewardship Council™ (FSC™) Chain of Custody (CoC) certification to work with us on responsible packaging if you are using paper-based packaging.

If your organisation deals with palm oil, consider bundling your RSPO Supply Chain Certification with Preferred by Nature to demonstrate your commitment to sourcing sustainable palm oil.

We also offer Carbon Footprint Support and Verification Programme and the Preferred by Nature Certification, based on our Sustainability Framework, which is a unique verification programme which draws inspiration from several existing international sustainability schemes and aligns with EU Deforestation Regulation (EUDR).