

# Sustainable Coffee Certifications

## A Comparison Matrix

Created by the SCAA Sustainability Council (2010)

Certification / Verification	Organic	Fair Trade Certified	Rainforest Alliance	Smithsonian Bird Friendly®	Utz Certified	4 C Common Code
<b>Mission</b>	Create a verified sustainable agriculture system that produces food in harmony with nature, supports biodiversity and enhances soil health.	Support a better life for farming families in the developing world through fair prices, access to direct trade, community development and environmental stewardship.	Integrate biodiversity conservation, community development, workers' rights and productive agricultural practices to ensure comprehensive sustainable farm management.	Conduct research and education around issues of neo-tropical migratory bird populations, promoting certified shade coffee as a viable supplemental habitat for birds and other organisms.	UTZ CERTIFIED's mission is to achieve sustainable agricultural supply chains, where: Producers are professionals implementing good practices which enable better businesses, livelihoods and environments; The Food industry takes responsibility by demanding and rewarding sustainably grown products; Consumers buy products which meet their standard for social and environmental responsibility.	The 4C Association is an inclusive membership driven organization of coffee farmers, trade and industry and civil society. Members work jointly towards improving economic, social and environmental conditions through more sustainable and transparent practices for all who make a living in the coffee sector.
<b>Market Focus</b>	All markets	All markets	Global, with special emphasis on N. America, Europe, Japan, and Australia	All markets	Mainstream and Specialty	Mainstream market (ambition: vast majority of coffee market)
<b>History and Development</b>	Trace back to 19 <sup>th</sup> century practices formulated in England, India, and the US.  First certification 1967. Developed into internationally recognized system with production throughout the world. * The organic coffee	Began as Max Havelaar in the Netherlands in the 1970s. Now the German-based Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO) collaborates with 19 labeling initiatives, including TransFair USA, and three producer networks	Begun in 1992 by Rainforest Alliance and a coalition of Latin American NGOs, the Sustainable Agriculture Network (SAN). First coffee farm certification in 1996. The Rainforest Alliance Certified™ program requires that farms meet comprehensive	Founded in 1997 with criteria based on scientific fieldwork. Operated out of the SMBC office initially, it currently involves 14 organic certification agencies as the managers of the program.	Begun in 1997 as initiative from industry and producers in Guatemala; Utz Kapeh became an independent NGO in 2000. First certified farms in 2001. In 2008, Utz Kapeh changed its name to Utz Certified – Good Inside to better communicate and encompass more	Begun in 2003 as public-private partnership project by the coffee industry and the German development cooperation to initiate a multi-stakeholder dialogue for defining a mainstream code of conduct for sustainability: The 4C Association was

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	sector represented nearly 3 percent of the total U.S. green coffee imports in 2007*	representing Latin America, Asia and Africa. TransFair USA has been administering the Fair Trade Certified label since 1998.	standards covering all aspects of production, the protection of the environment, and the rights and welfare of farm families and their local communities.		diverse agricultural commodities including cocoa, tea, soy, and palm oil.	founded as an international membership association in December 2006. Operational in market since coffee year 07/08
<b>Code Founders</b>	Certifiers and farmer groups began organic certification process around 1967.*	The first Fair Trade codes grew out of Solidaridad movement in The Netherlands. FLO, the Rainforest Alliance and SAN, Social Accountability International and IFOAM worked together to improve social standards and auditing practices	1980s farm-based research by SAN scientists and farmers, field-testing, and involvement of all relevant stakeholders.	Scientific studies in southern Mexico, Guatemala and Peru during the 1990s. Recent studies in Ecuador, Mexico and Sumatra support the criteria as being highly protective of biodiversity and providing refuge for biodiversity.	Continuous Improvement Program for farm and processing applications. Field-based adaptation of Global Gap standard. plus ILO Labor standards.	Multistakeholder adaptation of existing codes which resulted in a baseline Code of Conduct, Rules of Participation for Trade and Industry members, a Verification System, Support Services and a participatory democratic governance structure for decision making.
<b>Scope of the Program</b>	Organic Farming and processing practices.	Economic and environmental sustainability for farmers and their communities. Minimum price and social premium to cover costs of production and community-elected development programs. Organic premium for organic coffees. The model empowers small-farmers organized into democratically-run cooperatives to	Sustainable farm management in most holistic sense – social, environmental, economic and ethical improvements are the cornerstones of the program.	Certification aimed at the production area of the coffee agroecosystem.  (Future development of program may address the landscape mosaic as well.)	Sustainability: Economic performance through productivity and farm professionalism; environmental standards to preserve wildlife and soils; Worker Health and Safety, prohibiting child labor and insuring access to schools, clean water, housing. Web-based traceability systems, with on line links to producers.	Exclude worst practices and continuously increase the sustainability of coffee production and processing in the economic, social and environmental dimension.

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		compete on a global scale.				
<b>Code Elements for Coffee Production</b>	Environmental, farm production and processing standards.	Social, economic, environmental, democratic organization of cooperatives.	The Rainforest Alliance Certified™ program is based on the fundamental principles of sustainable agriculture including: best management practices; conservation of natural resources, ecosystems and wildlife; workers rights and benefits; and benefits to local communities.	Biophysical criteria of the shade component, provided that the farm is certified organic.	Socially, environmentally, and economically conscious growing standards. Food safety and Quality elements.	Economic, social and environmental dimension
<b>Scope of the Code</b>	Federal standard with practices for producers and handlers applies to all organic product sold in US. Similar but unique standards are applied internationally.	Baseline and progress criteria. Continuous improvement required through Progress Requirements. Applies to democratically organized cooperatives formed by small-scale farmers.	More than 200 criteria (checkpoints); Field-tested indicators. Applies to farms and coops of all sizes. Continuous improvement required.	Organic certification as a condition for BF certification. Certification applicable to estate farms and cooperatives. Inspection done at same time as organic inspection, but only every three years.	Baseline criteria with field-tested indicators and independent, third-party auditing. Applies to farms and coops of all sizes. All countries possible. Continuous improvement required.	10 Unacceptable Practices and 28 Baseline principles with 84 criteria according to the “traffic-light-system” (red, yellow, green practices); Participation possible with minimum “average yellow” in each dimension of sustainability, continuous improvement towards “green” practices required.  Applies to farms and to production structures of all sizes. Minimum capacity of “4C Unit” =

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						1 container of green coffee. Every country. "Stepping stone function" to provide easier access to certification/marketing schemes for producers.
<b>Technical Assistance and Capacity Building</b>	<p>Part of many certifiers' role. Organic research federally and privately funded by non-profits and NGOs.</p> <p>SCAN perhaps the most well-known Technical Assistance and Capacity provider network – for all systems, not just organic.</p>	<p>Provided by TransFair USA for specific grant-funded projects and by FLO (Fair Trade Labelling Organizations International) worldwide through its Producer Business Unit. FLO Liaison officers located in most of the countries to support producer organizations. (Technical assistance and audits are kept separate.)</p>	<p>Provided by local NGO partners (Sustainable Agriculture Network), extensionists trained by the program, and by collaborating institutions. (TA and auditing are kept separate.)</p>	<p>Continual provision of training workshops to organic inspectors, NGO staff, cooperative technicians, grower groups and government representatives.</p>	<p>Provided by the program at very low cost to producers, in alliance with Solidaridad (CSN). Technical assistance providers are trained by Utz Certified and are available worldwide.</p>	<p>Support to 4C Units, members and other interested stakeholders through training-of-trainer workshops, access to tools &amp; manuals through the 4C Tool Library; project facilitation; regional stakeholder meetings and sustainability fora; trainings and tool development through in-kind-contribution by 4C Members; cooperation with other national and international organizations and between members of the 4C Association. Regional Offices in major coffee regions.</p>
<b>Inspection Frequency and Accreditation</b>	<p>Annual inspections for certified entities. USDA accreditation required for certifiers of organic product sold in US.</p>	<p>Annual inspections by independent and annually trained Fair Trade inspectors.</p>	<p>Audits are conducted on an annual basis by trained auditors including teams of biologists, agronomists, sociologists and other</p>	<p>Every three years, linked to organic inspection. Inspection/certification arranged/provided by a USDA-accredited organic certification</p>	<p>Independent auditors accredited to ISO 65 standard. 10 % shadow/surprise audits. Audits done annually of farm and roasters (if logo used).</p>	<p>Independent third-party auditors accredited to ISO 65 standards and trained by 4C.</p> <p>Free tri-annual</p>

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			specialists whose knowledge and capacity to conduct audits is authorized and monitored by the Sustainable Agriculture Network.	agency.		verifications for "4C Units"; free addendum verifications possible.  Annual Self Assessment.
<b>Communication and Promotion</b>	Business to consumer. Backed by Federal Governments. Consumer groups, suppliers, and some certifiers communicate benefits to consumers.	Strong promotional efforts to consumers and businesses through awareness campaigns, media and on-product labeling.	Business to business and consumer marketing, communications, and media outreach undertaken by RA staff. Business to business, on-product labeling and off-product promotion backed by the Rainforest Alliance.	Business to consumer; business to business. Popular, trade, and academic articles.	Business to business and on-product labeling	Business to business. No product claim, seal or on-product labeling. Membership statement on pack possible.
<b>Traceability/ Chain of Custody</b>	Yes, required by USDA National Organic Program. Organic products traceable from retailer to producer.	Yes, traceable from roaster to producer.	Yes, traceable from roaster to producer; transparency ensured via mandatory transaction certificates.	Yes, traceable from roaster to producer, based on organic lot number.	Yes, traceable from roaster to producer following supply chain roles. Identity preserved and mass balance functionality. Audited chain-of-custody for logo users.	Identity preservation from roaster to container level ("4C Unit").  Traceable from 4C Unit to producer.
<b>Addresses All Actors in the Chain</b>	Yes, except handlers who do not further process and retailers.	Yes, in fact all major actors must be registered with the program.	Yes, engages all actors in supply chain, from producer to retailer. Rules/regulations for participation for actors along the chain include mandatory transaction certificates, license agreements, and seal approvals by Seal	Yes. Farms are certified; actors further down commodity chain are registered and bound by written contracts.	Yes, rules for participation and chain of custody requirements.	Yes, membership association with defined roles and responsibilities for all actors along supply chain (especially Rules of Participation for coffee trade and industry)

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			Approval Committee.			
<b>Price Differential to Farmers</b>	Yes. Premiums versus non organic certified coffees are paid to farmers.	Yes, this is the heart of the program. All purchases must be at or above the <b>Fair Trade Minimum Price</b> as set by FLO (price varies by coffee type and origin). If the <b>ICE futures market price</b> is higher than the Fair Trade Minimum Price, buyers shall pay the ICE market price plus a relevant origin premium, a social premium of USD\$0.10 per pound and, when applicable, a minimum Organic Differential of USD\$0.20 per pound.	Yes. Differential is negotiated between buyer and seller.	Growers have used BF seal to obtain 5-10 cents more per pound, over and above what they get for organic, with as much as an 18% "plus" in one long-term arrangement. Importers/roasters report seal tends to increase the speed of circulation of coffee.	Yes. Differential set by the markets Feedback on market information of differentials and demand per quality provided to members.	No influence on mainstream market price mechanisms: no fixed, guaranteed or minimum price, but free negotiation between individual 4C members. Price should reflect coffee quality and sustainable production practices.
<b>Fees to Producers</b>	Vary by certifier. Inspection costs drive up costs but are being reduced and increased coverage provided by regional in-country certifiers.	Cost of auditing, re-inspection fees. Producers may apply for financial assistance to cover these fees.	The cost of audit. The Annual Fee for Certification will be eliminated as of January 1, 2010 to enable more producers to engage in certification. Producers will have to pay only the cost of the audit; auditing fees often paid for by buyers.	Per diem cost for BF inspection added at time of organic inspection, plus a minimal symbolic charge for the certificate.	Zero from UTZ, auditing fees only	Yearly membership fees for all actors along the chain according to size and position in chain: producer's fee is smallest. Free verification and trainings
<b>Fees to Buyers</b>	Certification costs vary by certifier. Fees ranging from \$700 to	Importers are not charged a licensing fee, but they must pay at least the Fair Trade	Beginning on October 1, 2010, the Sustainable Agriculture Network and the Rainforest Alliance will implement a new financial	Importers pay \$100 per yr. to participate/use BF logo/term. Roasters	USD\$0.012 per pound to "first buyer", passed on through supply	Yearly membership fees for all actors along the chain according to size and position in

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	\$3000/year.	Minimum Price and provide up to 60% of pre-harvest financing when requested by cooperatives. Licensed roasters pay TransFair USA USD\$0.10¢ per pound to cover the cost of audits, consumer awareness campaigns and FLO affiliation.	model. The Participation Fee will be levied on volumes of Rainforest Alliance Certified™ coffee purchased by importers. The fee is 1.5 cents USD on every pound of green coffee that is purchased as Rainforest Alliance Certified by coffee importers. This fee will only be charged once in the supply chain.	pay USD\$0.10 per pound on coffee roasted and sold as “Bird Friendly®”.	chain to final buyer	chain: roaster's fees are the highest.
<b>Price Premium Associated with Code</b>	Average price differentials of USD \$0.255¢ (+/-) per pound are paid to producers.	Minimum price of USD \$1.25* per pound plus a \$0.10 per pound social premium. An extra USD\$0.20 premium if the coffee is also certified organic. *Fair Trade Minimum for washed Arabica. Prices vary by coffee type.	The Rainforest Alliance Certified™ program works with farmers to control costs, increase production, improve crop quality, build up their workforce, foster community cohesion, manage their valuable natural resources and protect the environment. Certification helps farmers learn how to negotiate for themselves and compete in an increasingly complex and globalized marketplace. Farmers earn more through gains in efficiency, improved quality and controlling farm costs.	USD \$0.05-0.10¢ per pound (sometimes more, depending on coffee and producer/buyer)	2009: USD\$0.05¢ per pound average for Arabica: \$50 per metric ton for Robusta, based on quality and market drivers	No; individual negotiation possible between 4C members

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<b>Pounds Certified in 2009</b>	93.7 million pounds in 2009. Approximately 3.1% of total North American green coffee imports	183 Million Pounds	Over 370 million lbs certified in 2009 ( up from 247 million lbs in 2008.) Over 193 million lbs sold in 2009.	8 million	800 million certified. 180 million purchased as Utz Certified	8 million bags production potential of verified 4C Units (964 million pounds)
<b>Countries of Consumption</b>	US, Canada, EU, Russia, Japan	US, Canada, EU, Japan, Australia, New Zealand	From Singapore to Switzerland, Rainforest Alliance Certified™ coffee is consumed in 44 countries on 6 different continents.	US, Canada, Japan, The Netherlands	US, UK, NL, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Spain, France, Japan, Australia, Germany, Finland	Countries of operation of 4C Industry members
<b>Countries of Origin Represented</b>	More than 40 nations supplying the global market – more than any other certification.	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Haiti, East Timor, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Laos, Malawi, Mexico, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Rwanda, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda	Rainforest Alliance Certified™ coffee is produced in 22 countries throughout the tropics: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Tanzania, Vietnam, Uganda, the United States and Zambia.	Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela	Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Colombia, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Burundi, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, PNG	Supply coming from: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Philippines, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, Vietnam,  Additional countries represented by members: Cameroon, Cote d' Ivoire, India, Malawi, Peru, Zambia
<b>Information Provided by:</b>	Organic Trade Assc. <a href="http://www.ota.org">www.ota.org</a> ,  Contact: Danielle Giovannuci	Transfair USA <a href="http://www.transfairusa.org">www.transfairusa.org</a>  Contact: Katie Barrow	Rainforest Alliance <a href="http://www.rainforest-alliance.org">www.rainforest-alliance.org</a>  Contact: Petra Tanos	<a href="http://www.smithsonianbirdfriendly.org">Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center</a>  Contact: Robert Rice	<a href="http://www.utzcertified.com">Utz Certified</a>  Contact: Graham Mitchell	<a href="http://www.4c-coffeeassociation.org">http://www.4c-coffeeassociation.org</a>  Contact: Annette Pensel