

Sustainability 101: A Webinar Series for ASTA Members

Part III – Putting Sustainability Into Practice: Certifications and Company Initiatives

Tamas Sarkadi – Chair SSI/Sustainability Committee



Thank you to the sponsor of this web series!



Today's Presentation

- What is the importance of sustainability certification and verification schemes?
- What are the most commonly used and recognized sustainability certifications, schemes, frameworks?
- What are the commonalities and differences between organic and sustainability certifications and standards?
- How to choose the sustainability certifications, standards, schemes fitting your requirements and business model?
- Where and how to start your sustainability journey?

Speakers:

- Matthew Ford, Growth Sectors Account Manager, Rainforest Alliance
- Amber Sciligo, Director of Science Programs, The Organic Center
- Daniel Montes, Business Development Executive, Control Union
 - ASTA member testimonials: Adrienne Gifford and Ricardo Gonzales

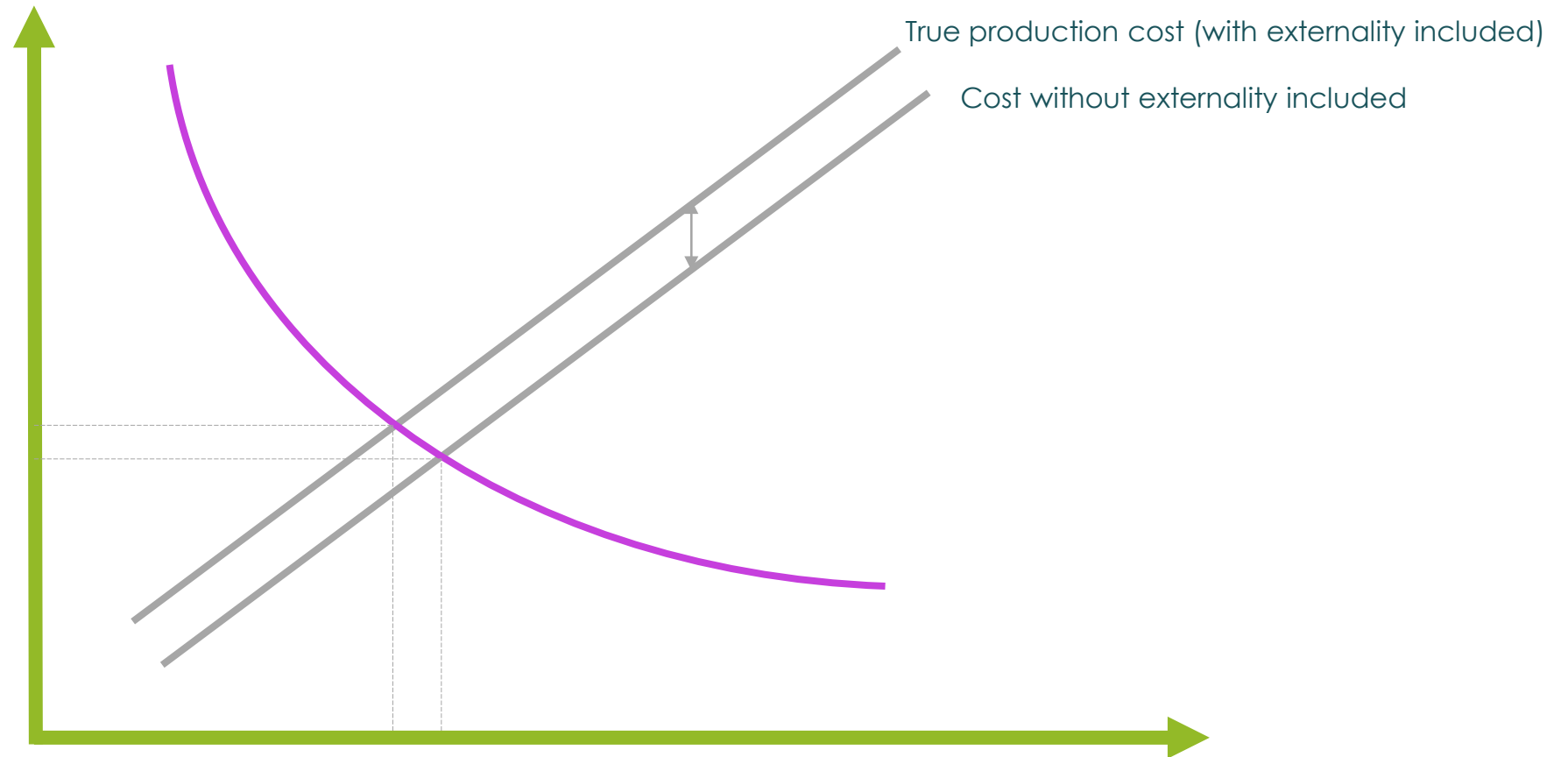


Why source sustainably

Certified Spices

Sustainability issues represent an externality

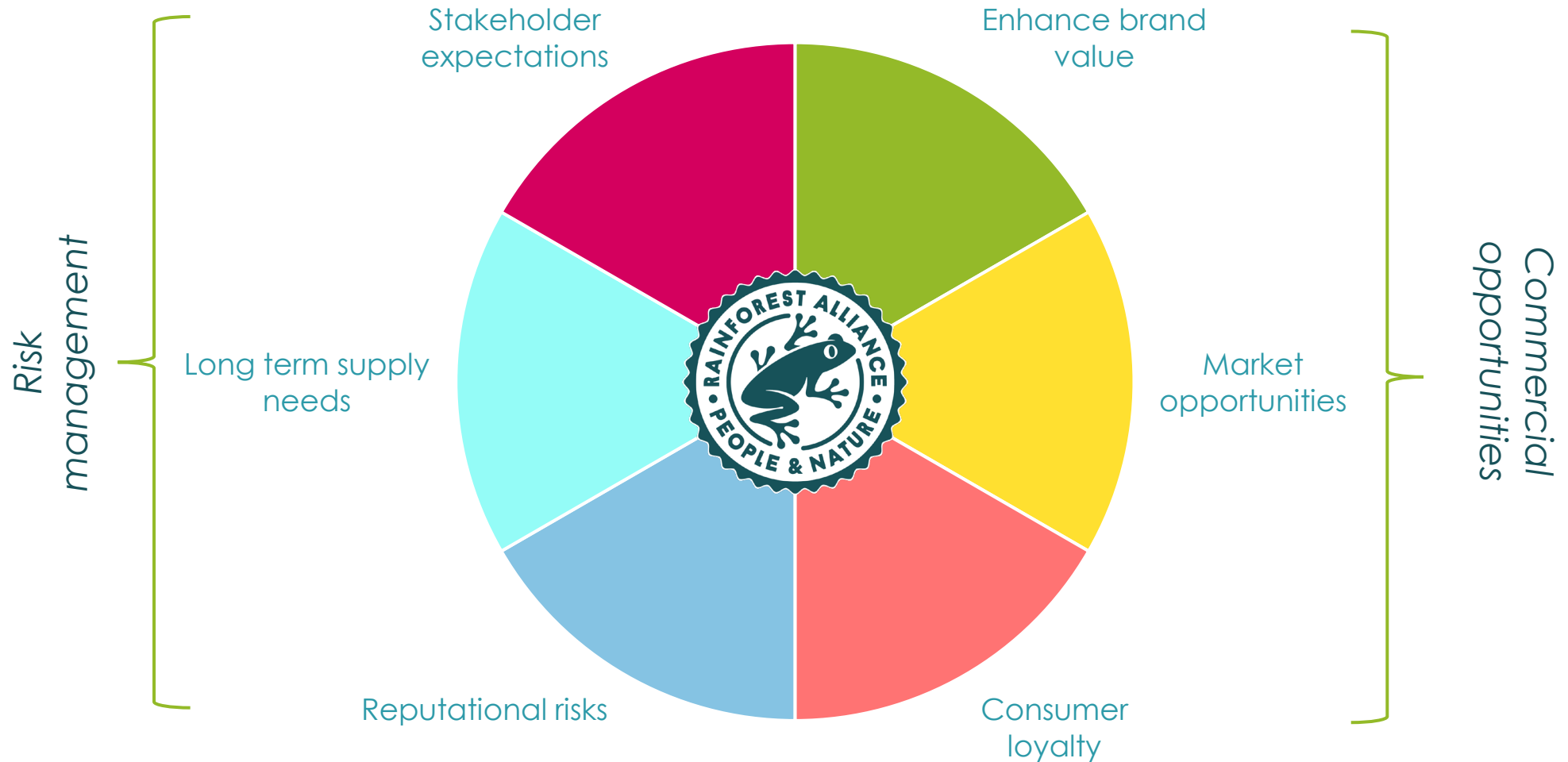
This is a market failure which Govts, Business and Consumers are acting on



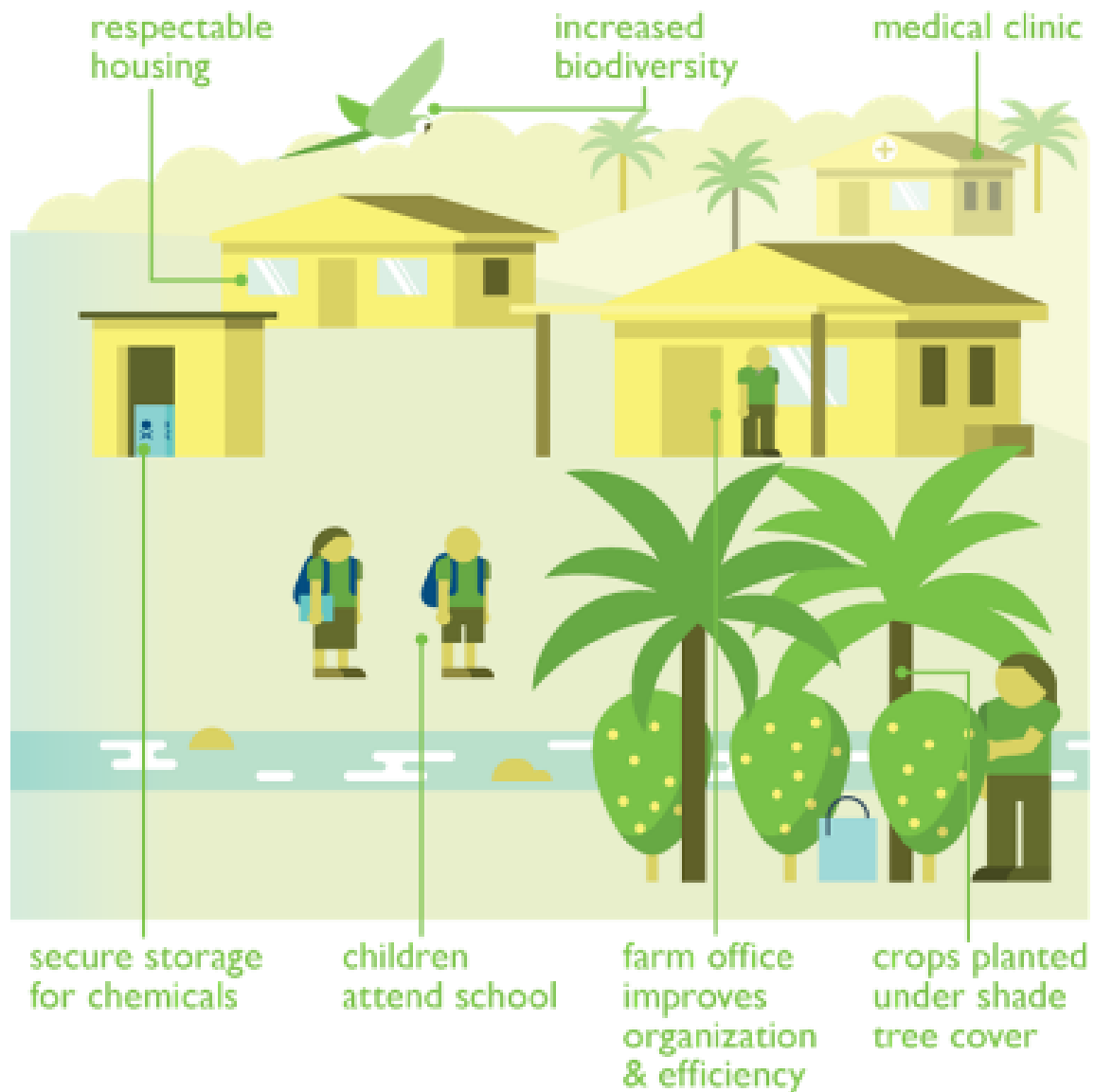
- ✓ Value for farmers
- ✓ Impact for habitats
- ✓ Creating opportunity



Value for Supply Chain Companies



Benefits of Certification

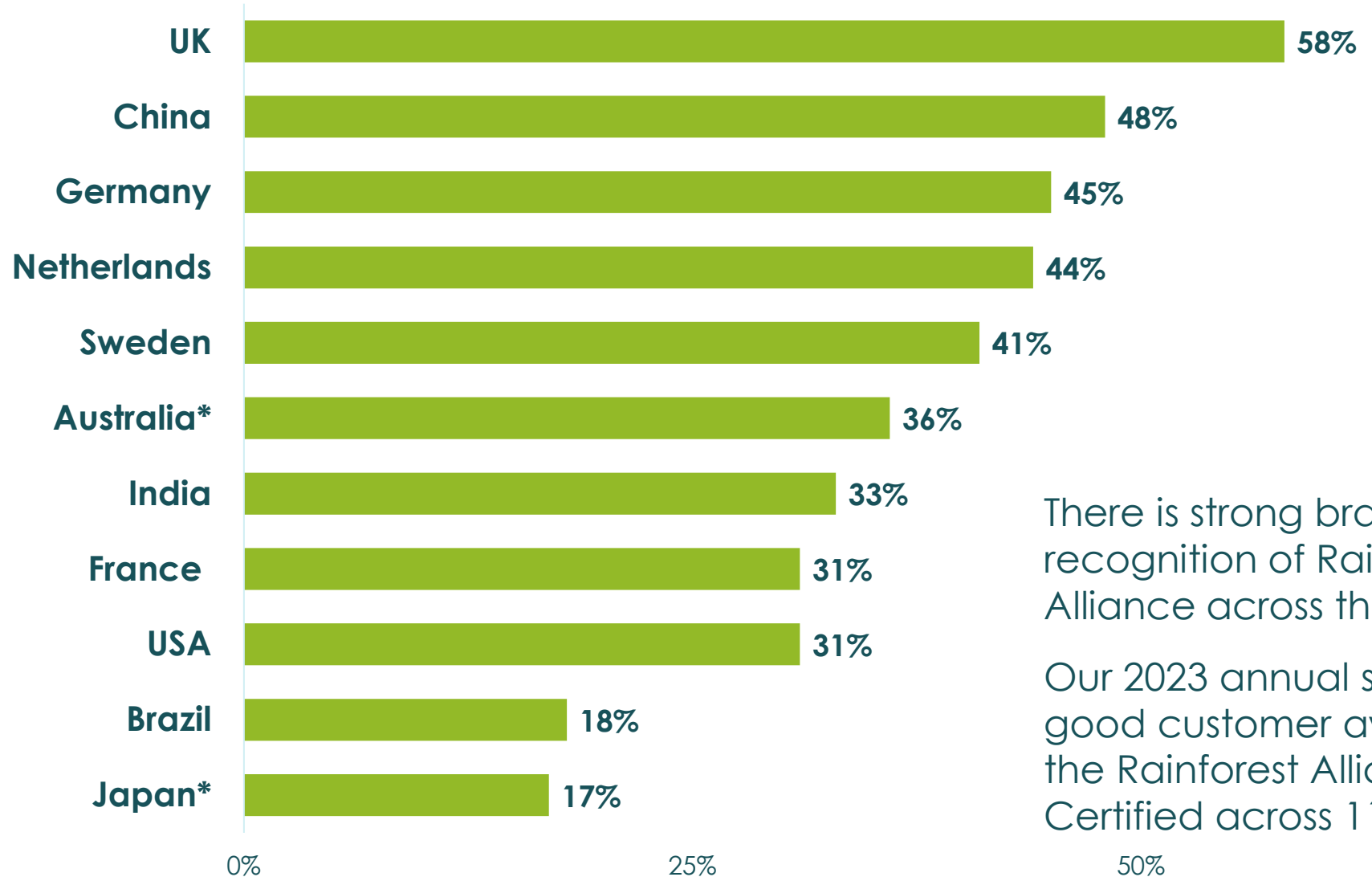


Rainforest Alliance certified crops provides benefits to producers, communities and habitats...

...but also to suppliers, retailers and consumers

- ✓ Provides an internationally credible definition of sustainable agricultural production.
- ✓ Tells consumers that a product has been produced in accordance with a standard of best practice endorsed by a trusted third party.
- ✓ Provides assurance of traceability from the product to a Rainforest Alliance Certified farm.
- ✓ Helps to identify and ***mitigate*** the risk of bad socio-economic and environmental practices **on farms**, supporting resilient supply chains

Building on strong global consumer recognition



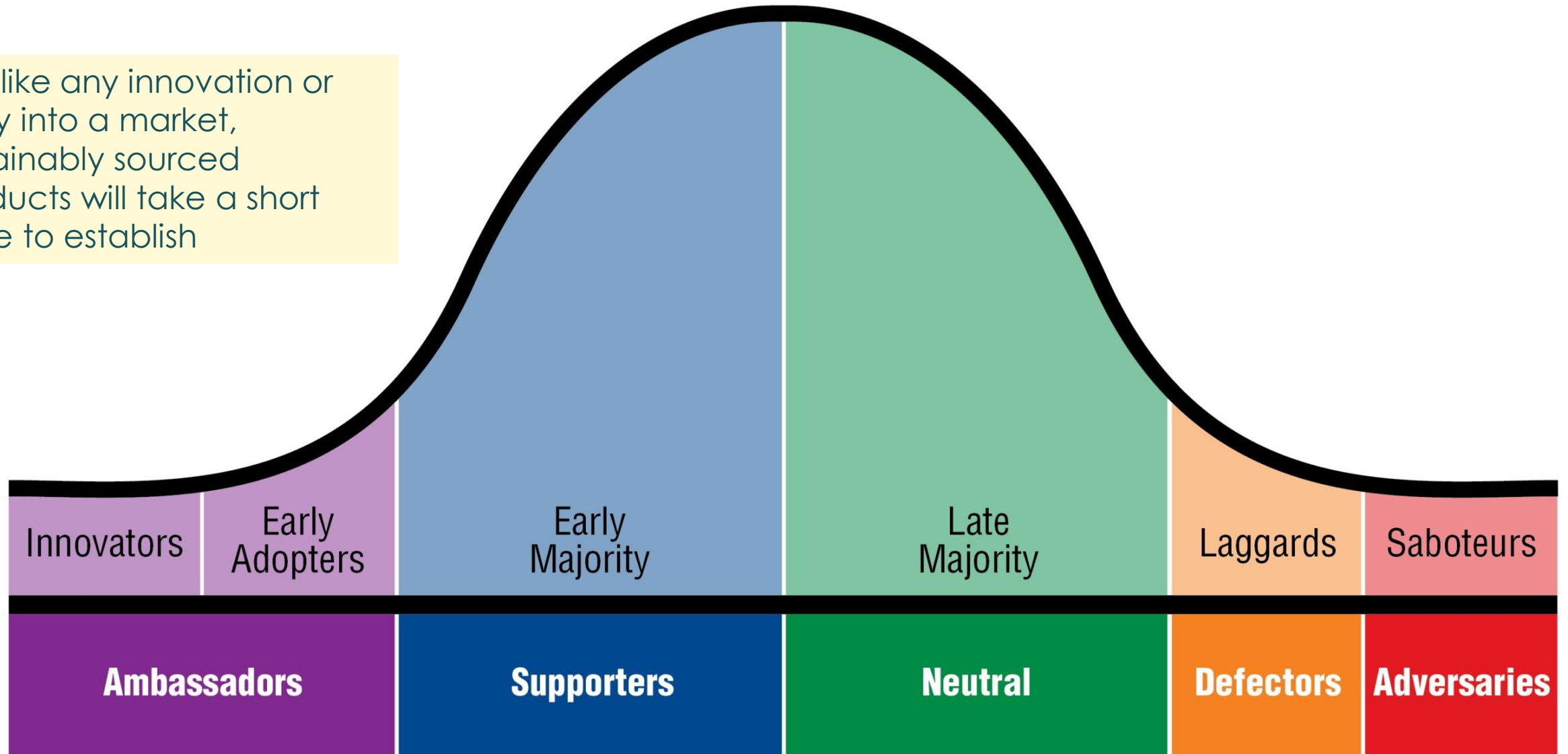
There is strong brand recognition of Rainforest Alliance across the world.

Our 2023 annual survey found good customer awareness of the Rainforest Alliance Certified across 11 markets.



Sustainability in the Market

Just like any innovation or entry into a market, sustainably sourced products will take a short while to establish





The Benefits of Organic Spices, Herbs and Teas

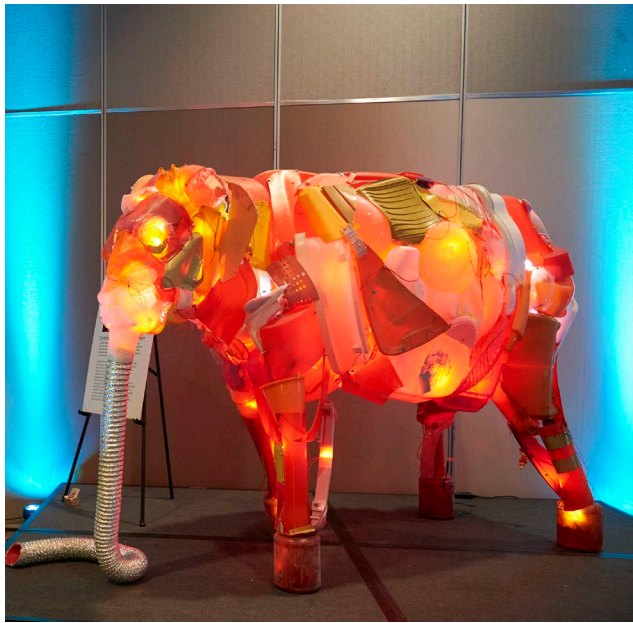
Amber Sciligo, PhD

Director of Science Programs, The Organic Center

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The Organic Center is THE trusted source on the science of organic farming and products.



THE ORGANIC CENTER™



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Communicate benefits of organic to consumers

Organic is good for the planet, good for people and animals, and good for business.

Environmental benefits include improvements of: Biodiversity, soil health, farm resilience and climate change mitigation

Organic protects farmers, farmworkers, animal health, and rural communities, by reducing chemical exposure

Organic is good for business as it continues to be one of the fastest growing sectors in US agriculture and organic aligns with consumer priorities and values



Graphic from OTA's Organic Opportunities Toolkit

[View site information](#)

Resource Library

Want to learn more about the human health and environmental benefits of organic food, fiber and farming? You've come to the right place! Read our review publications to get the latest science on organic. Watch our explainer videos to learn how organic is good for you and the planet. Check out our fact sheets to get quick tips on how to maximize the benefits of organic in your daily life – from how to pack an organic lunchbox to reducing your exposure to pesticides, we've got you covered.

Publications

[View all Publications](#)



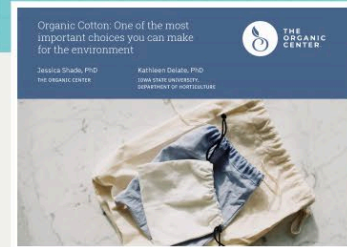
OCTOBER 11, 2022
The Benefits of Organic Spices, Herbs, and Teas
Published by Katrina Hunter, Amber Sciligo

[Read More](#)



MARCH 22, 2021
Maximizing Carbon Sequestration in Organic Systems
Published by Jessica Shade, Amber Sciligo, Robert Crystal-Ornelas, Kate Tully

[Read More](#)



JANUARY 14, 2021
Organic Cotton: One of the most important choices you can make for the environment
Published by Jessica Shade and Kathleen Delate

[Read More](#)



MAY 20, 2020
The Benefits of Organic Meat
Published by Amber Sciligo, Ph.D. and Jessica Shade, Ph.D.

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THE
ORGANIC
CENTER™

The Benefits of Organic Spices, Herbs, and Teas

Katrina Hunter
THE ORGANIC CENTER

Amber Sciligo, PhD
THE ORGANIC CENTER

**NEW
REPORT**

organic-center.org/spices



What information does the report contain?

- Organic Standards:
What does organic mean when it comes to spices and teas?
 - Rules for both production and processing



With spices, herbs, and teas, organic means:

X NO harmful synthetic pesticides or fertilizers

X NO artificial flavors, colors, or preservatives

X NO GMO ingredients

X NO sewage sludge or irradiation

Rigorous U.S. organic standards apply to all organic foods—both domestic and imported—for small, medium and large organic food makers and farmers.

What information does the report contain?

- Pesticide Use in Conventional Spices, Herbs and Teas: Quality Benefits of Organic
 - Health Benefits of Organic
 - Benefits of Organic to Worker Health and Safety



What information does the report contain?

- Socioeconomic Benefits of Organic Spices, Herbs, and Tea
 - Role of price premiums and responsible business models



The Organic Center - Spices, Herbs, and Teas 12

What information does the report contain?

- Environmental Benefits of Organic Spices, Herbs, and Teas
 - How organic impacts important environmental health indicators



Key Findings

The production of organic spices, herbs, and teas:



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- ✓ Reduces the potential for consumption of harmful pesticide residues, which are amplified in dried products where residues can concentrate.

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- ✓ Reduces occupational exposure to hazardous pesticides often used in conventional production.
- ✓ Can increase the concentration of antioxidants.

Key Findings



The production of organic spices, herbs, and teas:

- ✓ Reduces the potential for consumption of harmful pesticide residues, which are amplified in dried products where residues can concentrate.
- ✓ Reduces occupational exposure to hazardous pesticides often used in conventional production.
- ✓ Can improve farmers' livelihoods by increasing income from organic premiums.
- ✓ Can increase the concentration of antioxidants.

Key Findings



The production of organic spices, herbs, and teas:

- ✓ Reduces the potential for consumption of harmful pesticide residues, which are amplified in dried products where residues can concentrate.
- ✓ Helps mitigate climate change impacts by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing carbon capture, and limiting the uptake of heavy metals.
- ✓ Reduces occupational exposure to hazardous pesticides often used in conventional production.
- ✓ Can improve farmers' livelihoods by increasing income from organic premiums.
- ✓ Can increase the concentration of antioxidants.

Some other compelling takeaways: Quality benefits



Organic dried botanical products
reduce pesticide consumption

Dehydration can increase
pesticide residues in tea
four-fold



Water-soluble pesticides
used to grow conventional
teas can infuse into the
consumers cup



Some other compelling takeaways: Quality benefits



- Overall more antioxidants found in organic spices, herbs and teas
- Synthetic pesticides used during production can impact the concentration of antioxidants (carotenoids, Vitamin E, etc.) in spices like Hungarian paprika, according to a 2018 trial.

Some other compelling takeaways: Socioeconomic benefits



- One study found 100% of pesticide applicators reported symptoms of acute pesticide exposure. Organophosphates are the main culprit and not allowed for use in organic production, reducing the risk of chronic illness and impairments.

A meta-analysis of 14 epidemiological studies and data from more than 1,600 participant studies identified a significant association between chronic low-level exposure to organophosphates and neurobehavioral impairments, such as motor speed and working memory.

Some other compelling takeaways: Socioeconomic benefits



- Many processing facilities where leaves are dried and packaged are largely still run under the colonial British era model, some organic companies are challenging this model

Some other compelling takeaways: Socioeconomic benefits



- Organic tea premiums from certification can increase farmer livelihoods in revenue between 10 to 15%.

Some other compelling takeaways: Socioeconomic benefits



- Organic tea premiums from certification can increase farmer livelihoods in revenue between 10 to 15%.

Organic + Fair Trade

The benefits of organic certification can be **enhanced when combined** with fair trade certification, leading to increased household incomes and the ability to accumulate more assets.



Some other compelling takeaways: Environmental benefits



As a result of the organic standards ...

Organic soil has 13% higher total soil organic matter than conventional soil



Organic soil has 44% more stable sequestered carbon than conventional soil

Organic roots have 40% more beneficial mycorrhizae fungus

Organic soil has up to 60% higher soil stability than conventional

Organic reduces crop uptake of the heavy metal cadmium by more than 70%

Some other compelling takeaways: Environmental benefits



- Synthetic nitrogen fertilizers acidify soils and free up heavy metal ions bound in the soil, organic fertilizers help to "remediate" the soil reducing mobile heavy metal ions in the soil and uptake in plants.

Some other compelling takeaways: Environmental benefits



- Increased rates of carbon storage in the soil and roots of organic tea orchards, especially those 10 years or older, and yield gaps also decreased.

Thank you to the brands that contributed their time and expertise in the development of this report.

Catspring Yaupon Tea
Davidson's Teas
Draco Herbs
Fuchs Group North America
Guayaki
Kalustyan
McCabe Sun-Dried Herbs and Teas
Frontier Co-op

Organic India
Teecino Herbal Teas and Roasted Coffees
Mountain Rose Herbs
Riega Foods
Young Mountain Tea
Bioactive Resources
American Botanicals
Numi Tea



Stay informed at [Organic-Center.org](https://www.Organic-Center.org)





CONTROLUNION

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**Global Headquarters
Rotterdam, NL**

**North American Headquarters
Ft. Lauderdale, FL**

1920



70 Countries



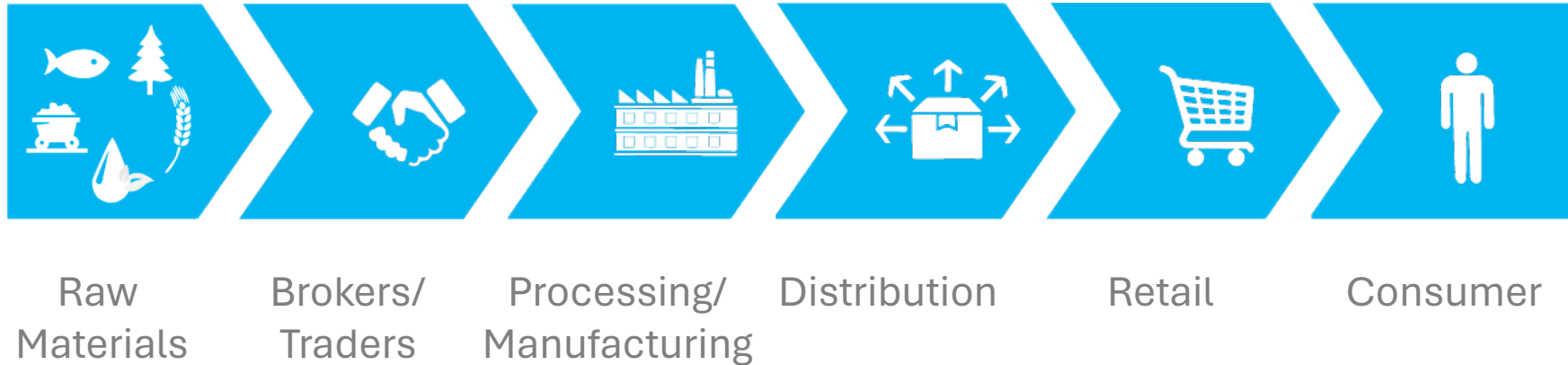
4500+ People



**>28,000 on-site visits annually
>40,000 field days annually**



Covering The Entire Supply Chain



Food and Beverage – Consumer Products

Certification - Verification – Training



Farm Sustainability Assessment
(FSA)
3.0

Introduction SAI Platform and its FSA Program

WHO IS SAI

The **global food and drink industry platform** for developing sustainable agriculture solutions through member-driven (>100) pre-competitive collaboration.



WHAT THEY DO

Work with their members and external stakeholders to catalyze and accelerate widespread adaptation of **sustainable agricultural practices** throughout the food industry supply chain.

Current working groups



FSA
FARM SUSTAINABILITY
ASSESSMENT



ERBS
EUROPEAN ROUNDTABLE FOR
BEEF SUSTAINABILITY



SPOTLIGHT



SDP
SUSTAINABLE DAIRY
PARTNERSHIP

+ 2 new working group: Wild Harvest, Regenerative Agriculture

What is Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA)?

All-inclusive system for promoting sustainable crops production all around the world
Global benchmark reference



What is Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA)?

Production level

SELF-ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK for ON-FARM SUSTAINABILITY WITH VERIFICATION OPTION

- Questions cover sustainable farming practices
- Identical questions for worldwide farming for all product categories
- Same principals everywhere
- Principles & Practices and agreed definitions of sustainable agriculture practices one single, harmonized and practical tool



to check the
**accuracy of the self-
assessments**

Audit level

Purpose of the FSA Verification Audit is to validate that the FSA has been implemented correctly, and hence that the result of the FSA Self-Assessment is accurate.

Not a certification – no minimum compliance
Stays at farm/production level – no Chain of Custody

Deliverable: LETTER OF ATTESTATION VALID FOR 3 YEAR (unless changes occur)

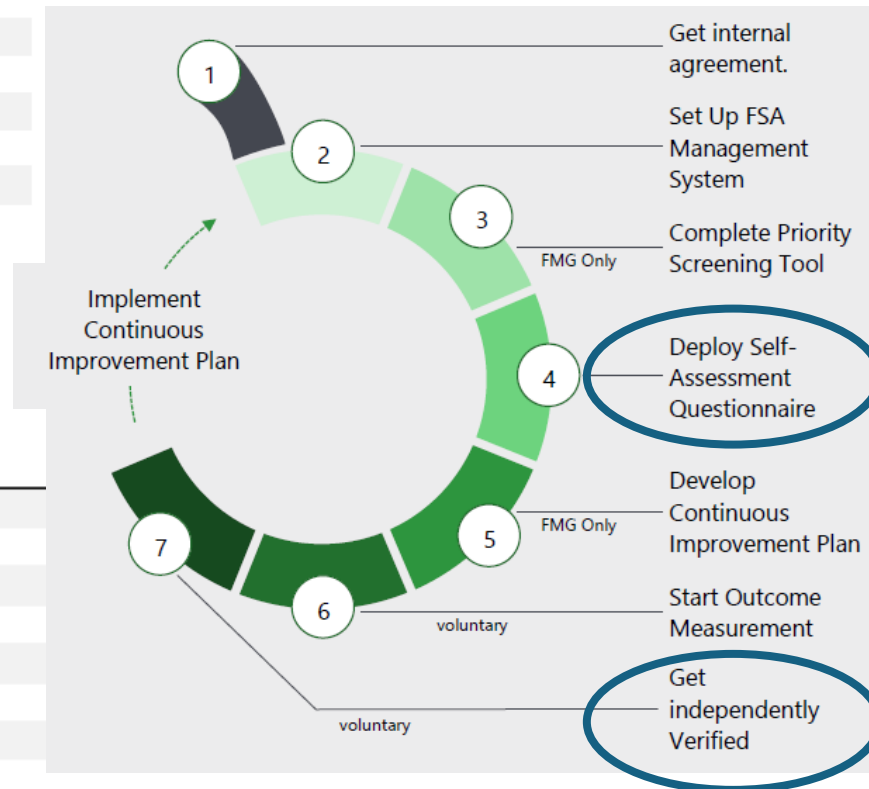
How does FSA implementation work?

Audit Self-Assessment sample

Number of farms in FMG	Self-assessment sample size
0 – 10	6
11 – 20	10
21 – 30	13
31 – 50	18
51 – 100	24
101 – 200	30
201 – 500	36
501 - 5000	40

Verification sample

Number of Audit Self-Assessments	On-farm audit sample size
6	4
10	4
13	7
18	7
24	9
30	9
36	9
40	9



Stand Alone

Individual company/farmer
always one farm, location

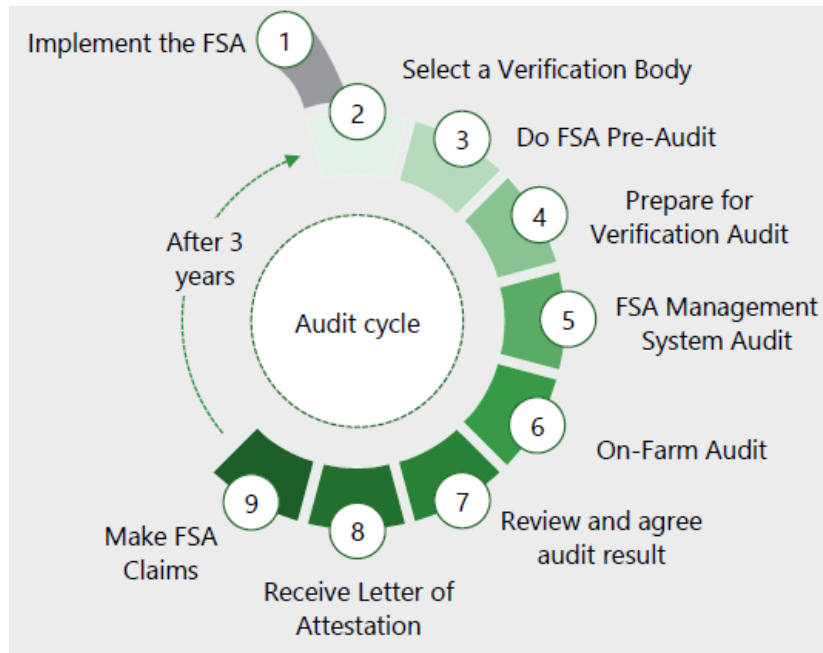
Farm Management Group (FMG)

Group of farms/farmers

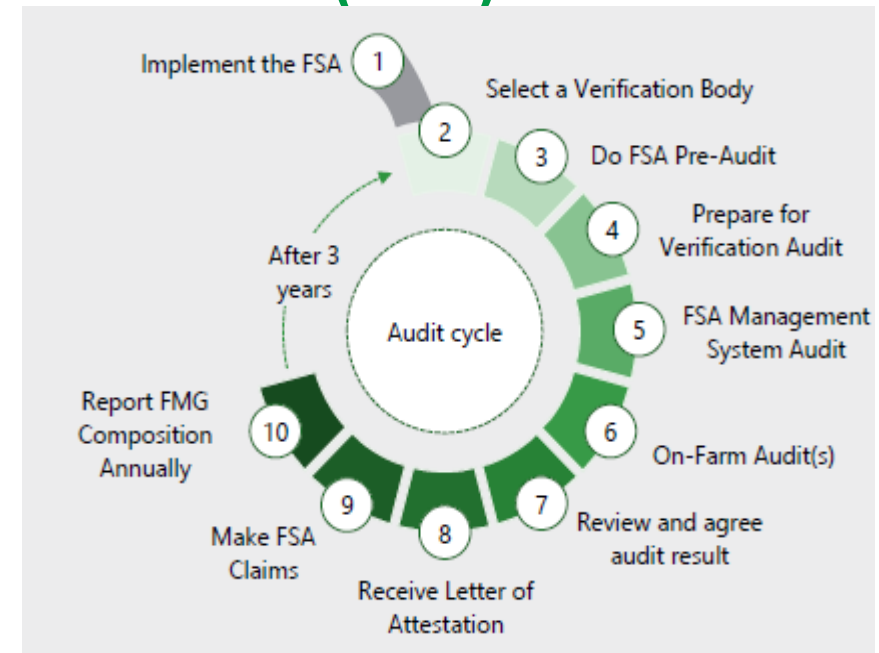
Control Union

How does FSA verification work?

Stand Alone



Farm Management Group (FMG)



FSA verification: FSA Management System Audit + On-Farm verification

FSA Management System Audit

It consists of 4 components:

- Farm Management Group (FMG)
- Accountability and Administration
- Volume Accounting System
- Continuous Improvement Program (voluntary for Stand Alone)

On-Farm Verification

It consists of verifying the accuracy of the self-assessment questionnaire in the field with the farmer and FMG Manager

The questionnaire has 109 points (multi-part questions):

Topics:

- Farm Management and Community
- Plant Material Selection & Propagation
- Soil Management
- Nutrient Management
- Chemical Control
- Integrated Pest Management
- Waste Management
- Water Management
- Biodiversity
- Air Quality and Emissions
- Labour Conditions





We work direct with farmers via our Grown for Good framework

GROWN FOR GOOD (G4G), illustrates McCormick's dedication to advancing accountability and performance in the sustainability space. Our approach builds upon credible third-party verified sustainability standards and includes the following impact areas:



Ethical & Safe Supply Chains

- ✓ Legal Compliance
- ✓ Safe & Productive Labor Force
- ✓ Quality & Food Safety

Scope:
Applicable to Supplier's Factories



Regenerative Production Systems

- ✓ Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services
- ✓ Regenerative Agriculture
- ✓ Water Conservation

Scope:
Applicable to Farms



Resilient Communities

- ✓ Farmer Resilience
- ✓ Gender Equality & Women's Economic Empowerment

Scope:
Applicable to Farming Communities

[CLICK HERE FOR Info on Grown For Good](#)



RICARDO GONZALEZ



NUEVA KERALA



14 certified farmers + families
263 Metrics Tons of Fresh Cardamom
150 Ha

Achievements in sustainability

- 15 ha (15 k trees) of forest saved by using gas drying system.
- Temporary workers now have decent living conditions (Smeta standard).
- Increase in production by 67% kg/ha (fresh cardamom)
- 60 families from the community trained:
 - Labor rights
 - Health issues
 - Occupational security

Challenges for sustainability

Climate change, droughts in the region
Migration of young people
Advancement of tradit







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