

# THE BIRD FRIENDLY® GOLD STANDARD

## A Certification Overview

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Bird Friendly® certified coffee does more to protect birds and wildlife than any other certification on the market. It's the only coffee that is 100% organic, and guarantees that every bean purchased is grown in a way that protects biodiversity. No other certification compares—see for yourself!



### Bird Friendly®

The Bird Friendly® certification criteria were developed by Smithsonian scientists, who determined that coffee farms with a tall and diverse shade tree canopy can support as many birds as nearby undisturbed forests. All Bird Friendly® certified coffee farms provide wildlife habitat that has:

- At least ten tree species
- Three distinct layers of canopy
- A minimum of 40% shade coverage
- Tree height of 12 meters or more

100% of coffee sold as Bird Friendly® is grown in a way that meets or exceeds these standards, ensuring habitat protection.

All Bird Friendly® coffee is certified organic, meaning it is grown without synthetic pesticides or chemicals that can harm the health of humans and the environment.

### Rainforest Alliance

The Rainforest Alliance certification requires farmers work towards 15% natural vegetation on coffee farms, far below the 40% canopy cover required by the Bird Friendly®. There is no core requirement for shade coverage during initial certification, meaning Rainforest Alliance certification does not guarantee that farms provide high quality habitat for birds.

Rainforest Alliance permits farmers to use some pesticides and fertilizers. There is no organic requirement for Rainforest Alliance certified coffee, and less than 20% of Rainforest Alliance certified coffee is grown organically.

The Rainforest Alliance standard offers the coffee sector a pathway towards greater environmental and social sustainability, with multiple indicator metrics that farmers can understand, track, and achieve over a period of years.





## Organic

Organic certification assesses pesticide and herbicide use at the farm level, with an emphasis on natural processes and ingredients. Certified organic coffee farms are only permitted to use limited, USDA- or CFIA-approved pesticides that are vetted for human and environmental safety.

Organic certification operates at 100% product purity, meaning all products labeled as organic meet or exceed standards for natural processes and ingredients.

Organic certification does not assess shade coverage or habitat requirements for birds or other wildlife.



## “Shade Grown”

“Shade grown” generally refers to coffee that is grown underneath shade trees. It is a commonly used term that appears on many coffee bags, but it has no set definition.

“Shade grown” is not a certification standard. It lacks a universal definition or third-party oversight. Without certification standards to verify claims, “shade grown” has become a greenwashed term in the sustainable coffee realm. Coffee farms with just 5% shade cover from one tree species can claim to be “shade grown,” although this provides very little habitat for birds and other wildlife.

“Shade grown” coffee has no affiliations with organic certification or pesticide regulations.



## Fair Trade






FAIRTRADE & FAIR TRADE USA

Fair Trade certifications focus on improving the livelihoods of farmers and producers through equitable trade and fair working conditions. They guarantee a minimum price is paid to certified coffee farmers.

Fair Trade certifications do not guarantee farms provide habitat to birds or other wildlife.

Fair Trade certifications mention a preference for organic practices, but have no organic requirement.

# CERTIFICATION COMPARISON

	<b>SHADE COVERAGE</b>	<b>PESTICIDE REGULATION</b>	<b>PRODUCT PURITY</b>	<b>BIODIVERSITY PROTECTION</b>
<b>Bird Friendly®</b> 	Strictly Regulated	100% Organic. No synthetic pesticides or fertilizers.	100%	All farms provide habitat for a diverse community of birds and other wildlife.
<b>Rainforest Alliance</b> 	Some regulations in place	Highly hazardous pesticides banned; pesticide use must follow a management plan	90%	Some farms provide some habitat for birds and other wildlife.
<b>Fair Trade</b> 	No regulations in place	Not regulated. Suggests managing or decreasing use of pesticides.	100%	No regulations in place to help birds and other wildlife.
<b>Organic</b> 	No regulations in place	100% Organic. No synthetic pesticides or fertilizers.	100%	Biodiversity benefits from the chemical restrictions, but no habitat requirements in place.
<b>“Shade Grown”</b> 	Loosely defined; no real regulations in place.	Not regulated	Not regulated	Some farms provide some habitat for birds and other wildlife, but no guarantees in place.

## Sources:

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