

## BETTER FOR BUSINESS

# RAINFOREST ALLIANCE CASHEWS



Photo: Kischmisch, Unsplash

**Sourcing cashews from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms is not only a delicious choice, but one that has wonderful benefits for businesses. It can help companies to minimize risk, promote responsible supply chains, and meet their sustainability commitments. It also helps drive consumer preference and raises a company's standing and reputation among investors, buyers, employees, and the entire industry.**

### CHALLENGES IN THE CASHEW SECTOR

Between 1980 and 2020, the estimated land used for growing cashews ballooned from 526,250 hectares to 7.1 million hectares, while production soared to more than five million tons in 2022. The biggest producers of cashews globally are Côte d'Ivoire, India, and Cambodia, which grow more than half of the world's cashew nuts. While mechanization has led to some improvements in yield and efficiency, cashew farmers and workers in these countries still face many sustainability challenges:

- **Expanding cashew plantations threaten biodiverse forests and landscapes**, with farmers often using slash-and-burn techniques to clear land.
- **Cashew farmers, who are mainly small-scale farmers, struggle to earn a living income** as competitive markets and complex supply chains with many intermediaries reduce farmers' share of profits.
- **Processing cashews is a difficult and sometimes dangerous task.** During the roasting phase, the shells of cashews release a corrosive oil that can pose a risk to workers in processing plants who often remove the cashew nut by hand without proper protection.

### THE RAINFOREST ALLIANCE CASHEW PROGRAM

Since 2022, the Rainforest Alliance has been working with producers in West and East Africa—particularly in Cote D'Ivoire and Benin—to improve cashew farming practices.

Certified cashews are grown according to the strict guidelines of the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard, which includes a wide range of good agricultural practices and rigorous social and environmental criteria. These include

enhancing farm management techniques, conserving biodiversity and natural resources, and improving the well-being of farmers, workers, and their families.

The Rainforest Alliance works with accredited third-party auditors to inspect farms and farm groups against the farm requirements in the Sustainable Agriculture Standard. Likewise, businesses are audited against the supply chain requirements in the standard. Cashews purchased from certified farms can then be sold to consumers with the Rainforest Alliance seal, helping to communicate sustainable sourcing practices. Over 40,000 food, beverage, and forestry products across the globe already proudly display the Rainforest Alliance Certified green frog seal, which shows both businesses and individuals that the product contributes to a better future for farmers, workers, and their families.



Photo: Anton Shuvalov, Unsplash

### THE IMPACT OF RAINFOREST ALLIANCE CERTIFICATION

Rainforest Alliance certification is a proven tool to address the economic, social, and environmental challenges of rural communities engaged in agriculture and forestry. Our certification program drives sustainable transformation by supporting farmers and foresters with innovative training, data tools, and technical assistance. We also engage with producers, traders, manufacturers, brands, and retailers to help make responsible business the new normal.

By working with us, companies are responding to the rising demand of customers, employees, and stakeholders for more responsible business that demonstrates credible, positive impact on people and nature.

Certification can play an important role in a company's due diligence processes. It can be used to address and monitor identified risks through the various tools certification offers and through improved supply chain relationships. Certified companies must demonstrate advanced management of their production and sourcing practices, meeting the Rainforest Alliance's expected levels of social and environmental responsibility.

### GET STARTED

Are you interested in producing or sourcing Rainforest Alliance Certified cashews? Whether you simply want to learn more or are ready to get to work, it's easy to get started!

- **Visit our website** for info on [supply chain certification requirements, costs, how to use the seal, and the six steps to certifying your company.](#)
- **Email us directly** at [customersuccess@ra.org](mailto:customersuccess@ra.org). We are ready and able to assist across all regions worldwide.
- **Complete our quick form**, and we will be in touch.

The Rainforest Alliance team of experts is ready to support your business's sustainability journey, from production to marketing.

### ABOUT THE RAINFOREST ALLIANCE

The Rainforest Alliance is an international non-profit organization working in more than 60 countries at the intersection of business, agriculture, and forests. We are an alliance of farmers, forest communities, companies, and individuals, committed to creating a world where people and nature thrive together by making responsible business the new normal.

Learn more at [rainforest-alliance.org/for-business](https://rainforest-alliance.org/for-business).

### SUSTAINABILITY IS GOOD BUSINESS

Sustainability in sourcing and the supply chain brings direct benefits to people and the planet while driving business value. A wide array of research studies has demonstrated measurable positive business impacts:

- 43 percent of businesses experience sales and marketing benefits after adopting sustainability standards—these include areas such as improved reputation (33 percent), increased profitability (23 percent), cost reduction (25 percent), and improved resilience (20 percent).<sup>1</sup>
- Consumers are more likely to trust a product with the Rainforest Alliance seal: 63 percent of consumers in the UK, 49 percent in Germany, 44 percent in the Netherlands, 47 percent in France, and 51 percent in Sweden.<sup>2</sup>
- Certification boosts brand reputation: 60 percent of British consumers, 50 percent of German, 36 percent of Dutch, 50 percent of French, and 48 percent of Swedish say that seeing the Rainforest Alliance seal on a product improves their opinion of a company.<sup>3</sup>

1 Molenaar, J. W. "The Business Benefits of Adopting Sustainability Standards: A Review of Literature and Evidence in the Last Six Years." *London ISEAL*, (2022). [https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2022-09/Business-Benefits-Report\\_ISEAL\\_09-2022.pdf](https://www.isealalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource/2022-09/Business-Benefits-Report_ISEAL_09-2022.pdf).

2 "Brand Tracker Results 2023 (IPSOS I: Omnibus Tool) USA, UK, Germany, The Netherlands, France, Sweden, Brazil, India, China." (2023).

3 "Brand Tracker Results 2023 (IPSOS I: Omnibus Tool) USA, UK, Germany, The Netherlands, France, Sweden, Brazil, India, China." (2023).

**Want to help change the way the world sources and produces cashews?**

**Join our alliance!**