

# Traceability Guidelines

## Policy & Guidelines for Products Traded as Rainforest Alliance Certified™

The Rainforest Alliance is an international nonprofit organization working to build a future in which nature is protected and biodiversity flourishes, where farmers, workers, and communities prosper, and where sustainable land use and responsible business practices are the norm. We envision a world where people and nature thrive in harmony.

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# Table of Contents

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<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Definitions</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Traceability Requirements</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Roles in Marketplace</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5. Traceability Types</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Specific Requirements for Banana</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7. Specific Requirements for Cocoa</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>8. Specific Requirements for Coconut</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>9. Specific Requirements for Coffee</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>10. Specific Requirements for Orange Juice Products</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>11. Specific Requirements for Palm Oil</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>12. Specific Requirements for Tea</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>13. Additional Guidance or Training</b>	<b>8</b>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

By sourcing and promoting Rainforest Alliance Certified™ (RAC) products, companies are helping consumers make more sustainable choices about the food products they purchase. Companies abiding by the traceability practices in this document are eligible to use the RAC seal to promote the company or brand's sustainability efforts. Coffee, cocoa, tea, bananas, coconut oil, and orange juice products that are sold as RAC, carry on or off pack claims of Rainforest Alliance certification and/or use the Rainforest Alliance name or seal must comply with these traceability guidelines and are subject to a [Participation Royalty](#). Other RAC crops are subject to inclusion in the future.

Traceability protocols provide assurance to the industry and the consumers that products purchased as RAC were grown on Rainforest Alliance Certified farms. Traceability also helps ensure that farms do not sell more than they have harvested as certified, and that supply chain actors do not sell more than they have purchased as certified. Crops not mentioned in this document are still required to provide proof of origin when requesting approval for using the Rainforest Alliance trademarks (i.e. invoices or other documents referencing the origin and volumes purchased). All participating companies trading or making claims regarding RAC products, must also comply with the Rainforest Alliance Chain of Custody system.

This document contains the rules and guidelines for traceability, from Rainforest Alliance Certified farms up to the packers. For information about using the seal or making promotional claims for your RAC products, refer to the [Requirements and Guidelines for Use of the Rainforest Alliance Trademarks](#).

## 2. DEFINITIONS

### Certified Farm or Certified Farm Group or Certificate Holder

Farm or group that holds a valid Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard certificate

### Marketplace

The online system used by the Rainforest Alliance to trace RAC products through supply chains, and to authorize trademark approvals. Found at <http://marketplace.ra.org/>

### Participating Companies

Company other than a certificate holder that buys or sells Rainforest Alliance Certified™ products. Can be an exporter, importer, distributor, retailer, etc.

### RAC

Rainforest Alliance Certified™

### Sale

The change of *legal* possession of a product between a seller and a buyer. A sale can be demonstrated through an invoice or other proof of purchase or payment. Legal possession is not subject to physical possession.

### Shipment

The change of *physical* possession of a product between a seller and a buyer or between sites, generally involving

transportation such as a ship and/or truck. A shipment can be documented by a Bill of Lading (B/L) or warehouse receipt. Physical possession of a shipment is not subject to legal possession, in that one entity may retain ownership of the product while it is shipped to a subcontractor, processor, warehouse or other site.

### Supply Chain Actor

Organizations other than farms.

### Traceability Agent

Party authorized to enter traceability transactions in Marketplace on behalf of another party.

### TC or Transaction Certificate

A record of a sale for a specified quantity of product which confirms that the referenced product originates from a Rainforest Alliance Certified farm or farm group. TC have a unique reference number and can be printed or downloaded as needed.

## 3. TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1 Scope

Bananas, cocoa, coffee, tea, palm and coconut oils and orange juice products sold as Rainforest Alliance Certified, from producers through the supply chain to the final product packers, are within the scope of these traceability guidelines. Additional specifications for each commodity are explained in subsequent sections.

### 3.2 General Requirements

All business-to-business sales of goods claimed as Rainforest Alliance Certified must be reported to the Rainforest Alliance starting from the certificate holder up to the final product packer or the party making the RAC statement or claim. Traceability is based on input and output volumes being recorded via a TC for every sale transaction of RAC products. Requirements vary depending on the commodity and the type of claim made on the certified product.

- 3.2.1 Certificate holders or companies buying or selling certified goods or its derivatives must register and declare their RAC sales via [Marketplace](#).
- 3.2.2 The sale is recorded by the issuance of a Transaction Certificate (TC) to their buyer online. The TC confirms the quantity and that the product originated from a Rainforest Alliance Certified farm or group of farms.
- 3.2.3 Participating companies must comply with the [Chain of Custody policy and standard](#)—including traceability criteria—if they want to make claims about the RAC status of their products or sourcing practices.
- 3.2.4 Participating companies using Rainforest Alliance trademarks must comply with the [Requirements and Guidelines for Use of the Rainforest Alliance Trademarks](#)—which requires appropriate traceability prior

to trademark approvals—and have a current License Agreement with the Rainforest Alliance.

### 3.3 Requirements for Certificate Holders

- 3.3.1 Certified farms or farm groups must have a valid Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard certificate issued by an authorized Certification Body and have product volume for the respective annual period available, before it can be sold and claimed as RAC with a TC issued via Marketplace. The approved volumes are automatically updated in Marketplace and correspond to a 12-month period.
- 3.3.2 Certificate holders may sell RAC products and issue corresponding TCs within the approved harvest volume. Volumes that are in transit prior to the first audit that led to certification will not be considered part of the approved volumes. However, volumes available at the time of a certificate renewal audit will be considered part of the producer's approved volumes. To allow for normal variance in annual yields, in exceptional circumstances a 10% overselling will be allowed for certificate holders if actual yield exceeds approved annual volumes.
- 3.3.3 TCs cannot be issued for future harvest dates.
- 3.3.4 Certificate holders may authorize their buyers to issue TCs on their behalf as a Traceability Agent. When permission is granted, the buyer is set up as the producer's Traceability Agent in Marketplace.
- 3.3.5 When the certificate holder and the exporter are one single entity and the product doesn't undergo industrial processing or transformation prior to shipment, the organization can opt to issue TCs directly to the importer using only the certificate holder's account in Marketplace. This guideline does not apply to juice products, where the certificate holder is always required to move fresh fruits to an inventory prior to declaring the sale.

#### 3.3.6 Expiration and Cancellation of Certificates

- 3.3.6.1 When a Certificate holder's certificate is voluntarily cancelled (i.e. voluntarily relinquished by the certificate owner), product harvested that is in stock can be sold as RAC and TCs issued within a sell-off period of six months after the expiration or cancellation date, as per the certification policy.
- 3.3.6.2 When a certificate holder's certificate is cancelled due to special circumstances (i.e. non-conformities with the Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard), sales of RAC product must cease immediately and no further TCs will be allowed.
- 3.3.6.3 Certificate holders may not sell products as RAC while a certificate is "suspended" but may recommence following reinstatement of the certificate.

Product produced during the suspension period may be sold as RAC and TCs issued once the certificate is reinstated. For more about this, refer to the [policy on sales during suspension and cancellation](#).

### 3.4 Requirements for Participating Companies

- 3.4.1 Participating companies (e.g. exporters, importers, processors and brand owners) must have an account in Marketplace and enter their products and buyers in the Organization Profile section. Companies that do not have an account may register online at <http://marketplace.ra.org>.
- 3.4.2 Participating companies must issue a TC when the buyer intends to make a claim or a statement about the certification status of the product. Buyers are responsible for requiring TCs from their suppliers.
- 3.4.3 Output products with less than 100% RAC content—even at the 90% level—must indicate the actual percentage of RAC content in the TC.
- 3.4.4 Stocks sold as not certified or sold under a non Rainforest Alliance sustainability scheme should be declared in Marketplace as "sold as non-RAC". In this case, companies cannot use packaging with the RAC trademarks.
- 3.4.5 RAC product that is destroyed (such as overripe fruit, or weight lost in transit) should be declared as a "Loss" in Marketplace via either the Inventory feature (see Section 3.6) or the remove option within each transaction.
- 3.4.6 RAC product volume that is rejected by the buyer needs to be reinstated in the seller's account. This can be accomplished by amending the TC from the seller or by issuing a TC for the product back to the seller.
- 3.4.7 All companies are responsible for verifying that transactions of RAC products are recorded accurately in their Marketplace account by their suppliers.
- 3.4.8 Companies must have adequate volumes of certified product in their Marketplace account at the time of reporting sales for the TC to be issued.

### 3.5 Reporting Frequency

- 3.5.1 Certificate holders and exporters should declare volumes of certified product sold and issue a TC as close as possible to the time of shipment. TC must be issued within a month of shipment.
- 3.5.2 Importers, and all participating companies downstream, should issue TCs regularly for their sales of RAC products. At minimum, all sales conducted during a calendar quarter must be registered in Marketplace 2.0 within 30 days of the end of that quarter.

### 3.6 Use of Inventories<sup>1</sup>

3.6.1 Supply chain actors have the option to use the Inventory feature in Marketplace. This feature allows the user to aggregate incoming TC volumes into one larger volume pool for easier reporting. Inventories can be created based on a specific type of product or by traceability types or to report transactions to customers, loss or products sold as non-Rainforest Alliance. Inventories are required to record product conversion from fresh oranges to soluble solids in the case of Orange Juice (see below).

## 4. ROLES IN MARKETPLACE

Most companies will report their own sales in Marketplace. In some cases, producers may wish to have other companies report on their behalf to facilitate reporting (as in point 3.3.4 above). A single user may have access to multiple accounts within their organization – and other organizations to which they’ve been authorized – to facilitate reporting. There are two functions available in Marketplace to facilitate a buyer’s ability to declare sales on behalf of suppliers: The Traceability Agent role and the Purchase option.

### 4.1 Traceability Agent Role

Certificate holders may grant permission to another company (e.g. an exporter/processor) to report sales on their behalf with the other entity acting as a “Traceability Agent.” Traceability agents do not have access to the farm’s confidential information, such as total harvest, available volumes, or other customers. Producers must provide approval for another company to act as an agent.

### 4.2 Purchase Option

Companies buying directly from a certificate holder may initiate a TC using the “Purchase” option, available at the time of creating a new TC. This “Purchase” option will report a purchase. The certificate holder has three days to approve, reject or request changes to the TC. If no action is taken by the producer, the TC status is automatically changed to “approved” after three days.

## 5. TRACEABILITY TYPES

For each Output Product, Marketplace users must designate a traceability type. Note that the traceability type in a product does not carry over from one transaction certificate to the other, each account must have output products with their respective traceability type.

Currently, the following traceability types are available: **Segregated, Traceable to the Country of Origin, Traceable to a Certificate Holder (Identity Preserved) and Mass Balance**

1 Currently only available for bananas, coconut, and orange juice products.

### 5.1 Segregation

This is the most common option. There is no mixing with non-certified products of the same ingredient – the whole content is certified although it can come from different certified sources/farms including different countries of origin.

The product can be traced to the certified source, or to the point where it was mixed with other certified sources. Traceability, segregation and identification systems are in place at the facilities to ensure only certified sources are in the product.

### 5.2 Traceable Back to the Country of Origin

Traceability option that refers to a claim where it is possible to trace the product back to its specific country of origin. There is no mixing with non-certified products. It can come from different certified farms but they are all in the same country. It is a stricter form of segregation.

### 5.3 Traceable Back to the Certificate Holder

Traceability option where it is possible to trace the RAC product or ingredient to one specific certified farm or group. This option is also known as **Identity Preserved**. There is no mixing with non-certified products nor different farms. This is the strictest form of segregation.

### 5.4 Mass Balance

Mass Balance traceability is available for cocoa, palm and coconut oil and orange juice products at this time. In this traceability type, products are physically segregated from the time they are harvested until, the time they get to the exporter or first processor’s facility (when products are processed in country of origin). Afterwards, certified and non-certified products can be physically mixed. For detailed information on Mass Balance processing and accounting, see [Guidance for Working with the Rainforest Alliance Mass Balance Sourcing Guidelines](#).

The most common traceability type is Segregated. Companies need to specify to their suppliers if they want a stronger traceability type, such as Traceable back to the certificate holder

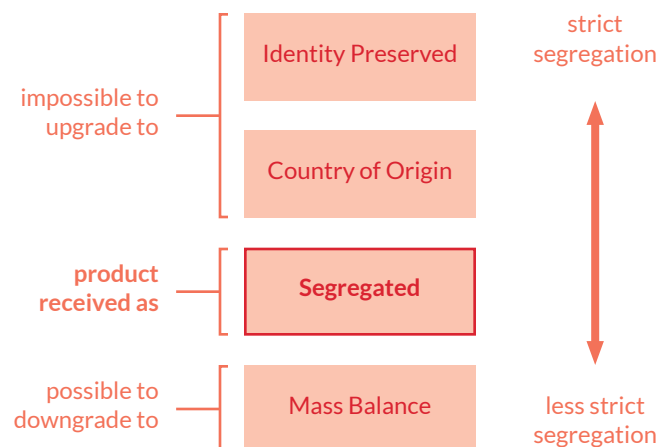


Figure 1. Downgrading of product traceability type

(Identity Preserved) or Traceable back to the country of origin.

It is not possible to “upgrade” from one traceability type to another. For example, it is not possible to generate an Output Product in Marketplace with traceability type “origin” when the input was “segregated”. However, it is permitted to “downgrade” from a higher traceability type to a lower one. For example, it is permitted to sell an Output Product with a traceability type of “segregated” when the input was either “origin” or “certificate holder.”

Note: inputs received can be downgraded partially. This means that a partial amount in an incoming segregated TC can be sold as mass balance, while the rest of the amount can remain and be sold later with its original traceability type.

For more information and training on Output Products and Traceability Types, please go to the Training and Downloads section in Marketplace or contact [rac@ra.org](mailto:rac@ra.org). For more on how traceability types relate to claims can be found in the [ISEAL Alliance's Claims Good Practice Guide](#).

## 6. SPECIFIC TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR BANANA

- 6.1 Fresh bananas sold as RAC require TC in the system. Purée or other derivatives are not yet expected to be reported on Marketplace.
- 6.2 An Excel upload function is available in Marketplace to producers to facilitate the upload of large number of transactions.

## 7. SPECIFIC TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR COCOA

- 7.1 Cocoa beans, liquor, mass, butter or cake and chocolate finished products TCs can be declared in Marketplace for traceability.
- 7.2 Incoming TCs are mandatory up to the final product manufacturer. It is optional for the final product manufacturers to submit a final TC.
- 7.3 Volume reconciliations at the final product manufacturer level will be carried out according to the Rainforest Alliance Chain of Custody policy.
- 7.4 Standardized conversion ratios apply for cocoa:

Standard Rate	Ratio	Range Allowed
cocoa beans to cocoa liquor	1 : 0.82	78% to 86%
cocoa liquor to cocoa powder	1 : 0.5	43% to 51%
cocoa liquor to cocoa butter	1 : 0.5	49% to 57%

## 8. SPECIFIC TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR COCONUT OIL

- 8.1 Sales of coconut and copra products can be declared in Marketplace for traceability.
- 8.2 Incoming TC are mandatory up to the producer of refined coconut oil.
- 8.3 Standardized conversion ratios apply for the declaration of coconut oil:

Standard Rate	Ratio	Range Allowed
coconut to copra	1 : 0.25	21% to 29%
copra to crude coconut oil	1 : 0.62	58% to 66%
crude coconut oil to refined coconut oil (RBD)	1 : 0.96	92% to 99%
crude coconut oil to refined coconut oil (hydrogenated)	1 : 0.96	92% to 99%

## 9. SPECIFIC TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR COFFEE

- 9.1 Parchment, green coffee beans, roasted, instant and decaf coffee can be declared on TCs in Marketplace for traceability.
- 9.2 Incoming TCs are mandatory up to the roaster level and it is optional for the roaster to submit TCs to their clients, including private-label (own-label) brand owners.
- 9.3 Volume reconciliation at the roaster level will be made according to the Rainforest Alliance Chain of Custody policy.
- 9.4 Standardized conversion ratios for coffee are as follows:

Standard Rate	Ratio	Range Allowed
parchment to green bean	1 : 0.80	79% to 83%
green beans to roasted beans	1 : 0.84	83% to 87%
green beans to instant	1 : 0.38	37% to 49%
green beans to decaffeinated	1 : 0.95	94% to 98%

## 10. SPECIFIC TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ORANGE JUICE PRODUCTS<sup>2</sup>

- 10.1 TC are required for Fresh Oranges, Frozen Concentrated Orange Juice (FCOJ) and Not-from Concentrate (NFC) orange products. Frozen cells, peel, seeds, essence oils are excluded from traceability at this stage.
- 10.2 Segregated fresh fruit TCs are required from certified farm to first orange processor.
- 10.3 From the first processor, traceability for orange products is based on the volumes of Soluble Solids (SS) at 100° Brix, recorded via TCs for every sale transaction in the supply chain.
- 10.3.1 For the conversion of fresh oranges to SS, first processors must use the convert function in the inventory using the actual industrial production yields for RAC oranges for the period.
- 10.3.2 This yield is expressed in the number of 40.8-Kg boxes necessary to produce one ton of FCOJ 66 Brix equivalent (FCOJ 66 Brix equivalent); including pulp and core wash but excluding frozen cells.
- 10.3.3 The conversion from incoming boxes of oranges (fresh fruit) to SS requires the creation of inventories for both fresh fruit and for SS.
- 10.3.4 The convert function in Marketplace will then calculate the amount of SS from fresh fruit using the industrial yields as follows:

$$\text{Kg of SS} = (X \text{ Boxes of fresh fruit} / Y \text{ Boxes per ton of FCOJ at 66 Brix}) \times 1000 \times 66\%$$

- 10.4 The processor will then issue a TC in Kg of soluble solids to the importer of NFC and FCOJ declaring the corrected Brix values (w/w) alongside the product description.
- 10.5 Actual Brix values are declared as recorded in the actual invoice. In the case of a range being allowed in the specification then the higher brix value is recorded in the system.
- 10.6 Transactions of processed products from Importer/First Buyers to Blender/Bottler are all recorded on the basis of SS calculated from the specified Brix in the product using the following formulas/ratios:

$$X \text{ kg of FCOJ at } Y \text{ Brix} = XY / 100$$

For example:

- 1000 Kg (1 metric ton) of FCOJ at 66 Brix = 660 Kg of solids
  - 1000 Kg (1 metric ton) of NFC at 11.2 Brix = 112 Kg of solids
- 10.7 Incoming TCs of soluble solids are mandatory up to the bottler or final product manufacturer.
- 10.8 From that point, bottlers or final product manufacturers may declare outgoing TCs to wholesalers or retailers in either Kg of Solids or in finished product units (Kg, Litres, Boxes) applying their relevant conversion ratios for each chosen unit and product.
- 10.9 Retailers do not need to report ongoing sales in the system but rather need to ensure that their suppliers are issuing TCs with accurate volumes to them on a quarterly basis.
- 10.10 Corrected Brix need reporting for each transaction and calculated according to relevant country directives or as define in the European Fruit Juice Association (AIJN) code of Practice.

## 11. SPECIFIC TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PALM OIL

- 11.1 Sales of palm kernels can be declared in Marketplace for traceability.
- 11.2 Incoming TC are mandatory up to the producer of refined palm oil.
- 11.3 Standardized conversion ratios apply for the declaration of palm oil:

Standard Rate	Ratio
fresh fruit bunches (FFB) to crude palm oil	100 : 20
fresh fruit bunches (FFB) to palm kernels	100 : 5
crude palm oil to refined palm oil	100 : 95
crude palm oil to PFAD	100 : 5
palm kernels to palm kernel oil	100 : 45
palm kernels to palm kernel expeller	100 : 55
palm oil to olein	100 : 80
palm oil to stearin	100 : 20
olein to double fraction olein	100 : 65
olein to mid fraction stearin	100 : 35
stearin to mid fraction olein	100 : 65

<sup>2</sup> Once Orange Juice traceability functionality is available in Marketplace

Standard Rate	Ratio
stearin to double fraction stearin	100 : 35
palm kernel oil to refined palm kernel oil	100 : 95
palm kernel oil to PKFAD	100 : 5
refined palm kernel oil to PK olein	100 : 65
refined palm kernel oil to PK stearin	100 : 35

*Oleochemical derivative products are excluded from the scope of MB at this time*

## 12. SPECIFIC TRACEABILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR TEA

- 12.1 Tea leaves, made tea, tea extract (powder) can be declared on TCs in Marketplace for traceability.<sup>3</sup>
- 12.2 Incoming TCs are mandatory up to the final processor, which is often also the packer.

<sup>3</sup> Once Tea traceability functionality is available in Marketplace

12.3 Final processors will declare outgoing volumes with the amount of RAC product used in each blend and linked to a brand.

12.4 Standardized conversion ratios for tea are as follows:

Standard Rate	Ratio	Range Allowed
fresh leaf to made tea	1 : 0.265	15% to 28%
made tea to instant	1 : 0.25	15% to 35%
fresh leaf to instant	1 : 0.25	no range available

## 13. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE OR TRAINING ON TRACEABILITY OR MARKETPLACE

For more guidance or training on Traceability or Marketplace please contact the Rainforest Alliance at [RAC@ra.org](mailto:RAC@ra.org). 





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