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Brief Introduction to Bird Friendly® Coffee Certification



1. Bird Friendly® Coffee:


- ❖ Is a program and label established by the **Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center** (SMBC) in Washington DC
- ❖ Aims at protecting coffee plantations with high, dense and diverse **shade tree canopies**, because these plantations provide a **habitat** for many species of migratory and native birds
- ❖ Has a growing **market** especially in the USA. But also in Japan and Europe, coffee importers and roasters are starting to be interested in Bird Friendly® coffee.
- ❖ Please visit <https://global.si.edu/success-stories/smithsonian-migratory-bird-center%E2%80%99s-bird-friendly%C2%AE-coffee-program-protects-migratory> to find more information about the program, including addresses of roasters and distributors, who might be interested in your Bird Friendly® coffee.

2. Basic requirements:

- ✓ As a pre-requisite, the coffee plantation or coffee producer group needs to be certified **organic**, according to the EU Regulation on organic farming or NOP.
- ✓ The shade canopy must be dense, with **at least 40% shade** cover.
- ✓ The shade canopy should have structural diversity: this means that tree canopies should be composed of **different layers** ("strata").
- ✓ The main canopy layer ("stratum") must be at least **12 m high**.
- ✓ There must be at least **11 different tree** species composing the shade canopy.
- ✓ The **predominating tree species** shouldn't make up more than 60% of the total canopy, and shouldn't be an exotic species.
- ✓ Bird Friendly® coffee must be **clearly separated** from all other coffee (organic or conventional), at all stages of harvest, post harvest, processing and trade.

3. Steps to follow for Bird Friendly® certification:

- ✓ If you believe, that your farm, plantation or producer group complies with the Bird Friendly® requirements, you can **apply** to CERES for certification and sign a contract.
- ✓ It is also possible that only **part** of your farm or part of your farmer group are selected for Bird Friendly® certification, if not all the land or all the farmers comply with the criteria.
- ✓ In case that CERES is also your organic certifier, the Bird Friendly® inspection will be **combined with your annual organic inspection**. This helps to reduce costs. Otherwise, we will schedule a separate inspection.
- ✓ An inspector approved by SMBC will visit your farm or farmer group, and **assess compliance** with the above-mentioned criteria. (Plus a number of more detailed criteria, please see the complete "BF Criteria" published by SMBC; those mentioned above, however, are the essential ones).
- ✓ The inspection **report** will be submitted to the CERES headquarter, for evaluation. In case of compliance with the criteria, a Bird Friendly® **certificate** will be issued. Copies of the inspection report and certificate will be sent to SMBC.

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- ✓ In case of **smallholder groups** with an internal control system (ICS), the **internal inspectors** must also cover the additional Bird Friendly® criteria during their visits to the farms. The internal inspectors must receive special training for this purpose.
- ✓ After completing internal inspections to all farms, the ICS must perform a **pre-assessment** of compliance of their members. As mentioned above, a subgroup of farmers complying with the criteria can be established– as long as separate handling of their coffee is assured.
- ✓ The CERES inspector will then re-inspect a **sample** of the farmers, to evaluate the performance of the ICS.
- The Bird Friendly® certificate will be **valid for three years**, provided that the producer holds a valid and updated organic certificate. The three-year validity does not apply in case there are significant changes, like e.g. new fields or new farmers being included, or a significant reduction of the coffee production. Traceability of Bird Friendly® coffee must be checked annually during the routine organic inspection.