

UEBT™ certification

For sourcing with respect for people and biodiversity

Consumers increasingly demand that businesses demonstrate their genuine commitment to the ethical sourcing of ingredients from ecological diversity. [UEBT](#) (The Union for Ethical BioTrade) certifications confirm that ingredients from nature are sourced through systems that respect people and biodiversity.

Businesses that commit to the UEBT standard show they act according to ethical principles and meet strict requirements in their supply chains.

[UEBT certification](#) is based on independent audits. Preferred by Nature is an independent third-party certification body approved to check compliance against the standards set by UEBT.

The following certification programmes are offered:

- [Ethical Sourcing System Certification](#) – for businesses that source ingredients from biodiversity through a system that respects people and nature;
- [Ingredient Certification](#) – the certification evaluates whether an ingredient is sourced with respect for people and biodiversity. This applies to a specific ingredient, including flowers, fruits, herbs, algae, seeds, stems, nuts, spices, roots, leaves, resins, beeswax and barks; and
- [Herbs and Spices Programme](#) combines requirements from Rainforest Alliance and UEBT standards and applies to all ingredients for herbal and fruit infusions (including rooibos) and other herbs and spices, including vanilla cinnamon, chili or pepper (the scope covers both cultivation and wild collection).



UEBT member companies with a certified ethical sourcing system are permitted to use the UEBT certification mark on products and packaging according to the [UEBT Claims and Labelling Policy](#).



With UEBT ingredient certification:

- Farms, cooperatives, local and international processing companies may use the UEBT certification label on their certified ingredient packaging (B2B)
- Brands and final manufacturers that also hold UEBT certification for their ethical sourcing system may use the UEBT certification label for ingredients on final products (B2C).



All ingredients certified under the new UEBT/Rainforest Alliance Herbs & Spices Programme will be able to carry the Rainforest Alliance certified seal. For labelling and claims, the [Rainforest Alliance Labelling and Trademarks Policy](#) applies.

UEBT certification is a powerful way for businesses to demonstrate impact to consumers, governments and other supply chain actors. It allows all of us to choose brands, products and ingredients that are contributing to a world in which all people and biodiversity thrive. Join a growing movement of brands committed to the ethical sourcing of ingredients from biodiversity.



Certification process in brief

All organisations seeking UEBT (or UEBT/Rainforest Alliance) certification **must become UEBT members**, with membership adjusted to different types of organisations. Learn more on membership requirements linked to certification [here](#). You can learn more about UEBT's membership on [UEBT's website](#).

Here are the **steps to become certified**:



Upon your contacting UEBT, you receive an **application form**. Once both sides sign it, we proceed with the service request form. Based on the information shared, we will provide a **pricing proposal**. Following its approval, we will assign a contact person to follow up and arrange the audits.



After accepting the proposal and signing the [Service Agreement](#), you need to **prepare for certification** by ensuring compliance with all the certification requirements, which involves developing and implementing a requirements-based system. This includes assigning responsibilities, developing procedures and training relevant staff.



An auditor prepares the audit plan and shares it with the potential certificate holder (CH). Once all relevant details and audit dates are agreed upon, we will conduct an **audit** to check if your system functions well. This is done through document reviews, field observation and interviews with your staff.



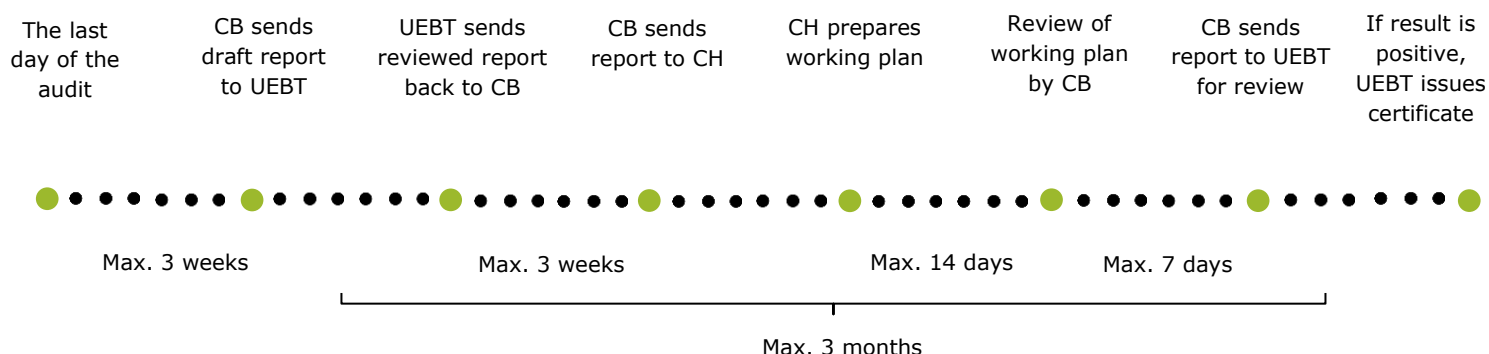
When the audit is completed, we will prepare a written **report** describing the audit results and compliance with the critical control points of the certification checklist.

The draft report will be submitted to UEBT for review **no later than three weeks after the last day of the audit**. UEBT reviews it and sends feedback to the certification body (CB) and afterward, the CB will send the report to the CH. The CH must receive the report **no later than after six weeks from the last day of the audit**. The client (CH) has **14 days** to prepare a **working plan** addressing the main findings and non-conformities reported by the auditor and to submit it to the CB for final review (it takes **seven days from the moment the working plan is sent to the CB**).



UEBT does a final review and if there are no additional requirements/suggestions, the UEBT secretariat staff issues the **certificate**.

The entire process referred to above should be completed **within a max. of three months from the last day of the audit**.



If the procedures and rules are disrespected, some **penalties** can be imposed on CHs. It can be either the first-level sanction, which is a **certificate suspension** (up to 3 months) or a higher-level penalty, i.e. permanent **termination of the certificate**. Please check the [UEBT website](#) for details.

Trust experience and expertise

[Preferred by Nature](#) is an international non-profit organisation focusing on practical solutions to drive positive impacts in production landscapes and supply chains.

For nearly **30 years**, we have worked to support better land management and business practices that benefit people, nature and the climate in **100+ countries**. We have certified over **2 million** hectares of agriculture farms and over **800,000 farmers** worldwide against international sustainability standards.

Our team is well-equipped to provide services to large international corporations with global supply chains in agricultural and forest products, as well as engage with smallholders and community enterprises that are essential drivers of impact on the ground.

Credible social and environmental standards

As a subscriber to the [ISEAL Alliance](#), we are committed to creating credible social and environmental standards. Our work with certification systems extends far beyond auditing.

With our expertise in conducting **5,000+** audits annually worldwide, we actively engage with eco-labelling schemes to advocate for ongoing improvement and increase credibility and impact.

We are a certification body approved to conduct audits for several certification programmes, including agricultural schemes such as **GLOBALG.A.P.** and [Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture](#).

As, despite the growth of different tools to improve production and sourcing practices, the market was missing a common framework, with clear indicators, that everyone could use, we have developed the [Sustainability Framework](#) – a universal set of principles and criteria representing the core aspects of sustainability across all commodities and supply chains.

We are mission-driven, which is reflected in our focus on delivering our services with integrity and professionalism.

Contact us

[Get in touch us](#) with to learn more about the service.



The **Union for Ethical BioTrade (UEBT)** is a non-profit association that promotes sourcing with respect. It is internationally recognised for its efforts in advancing business contributions to sustainable development goals: working to regenerate nature and secure a better future for people through ethical sourcing of ingredients from biodiversity. UEBT sets good practices for how companies and their suppliers source specialty ingredients for the beauty, food, natural pharmaceuticals, flavours & fragrances, herbs and spices sectors, among others.

Preferred by Nature is an independent third-party certification body approved to conduct evaluations against the requirements of the UEBT Certification for organisations worldwide.

1,003
supply chains*
in which UEBT members are
improving sourcing practices

316
ingredients*
from biodiversity UEBT-
verified or certified

85
countries*
which UEBT members are
sourcing from

93
UEBT members**
globally

Source: UEBT website
* As of December 2020 ** As of March 2022

UEBT & UEBT/Rainforest Alliance Certification Q&As

What certification programme applies to my company?

The **Ethical Sourcing System Certification** is based on the [UEBT Standard](#), focusing on topics such as regenerating biodiversity, reducing agrochemicals, improving soil, respecting workers, supporting local development and more.

The **Ingredient Certification** applies to a specific ingredient and is granted once independent audits verify compliance with the Ethical BioTrade Standard (the [UEBT Standard](#)) in the regions where ingredients from biodiversity are sourced. Traceability throughout the area of collection or cultivation is always required.

In the **UEBT/Rainforest Alliance Herbs & Spices Programme**, the following standards apply:

- For ingredient certification (for farms or companies sourcing herbs & spices), the [UEBT/Rainforest Alliance requirements](#) apply. There are several exceptions when farms cultivating herbs & spices will be certified against the [Rainforest Alliance 2020 Sustainable Agriculture Standard](#) instead.
- For supply chain actors sourcing certified products from the Herbs & Spices Programme, but are not certificate holders: the new [Rainforest Alliance 2020](#)

[Sustainable Agriculture Standard's Supply Chain Requirements](#) apply. For more information, please check [Which Standard Applies To You](#).

Please click [here](#) for more details on UEBT/Rainforest Alliance requirements and exceptions.

What is the cost structure?

The auditing fee depends on the **size** and **complexity** of the verified company. Upon evaluating these aspects, your local Preferred by Nature contact person will provide you with a proposal specifying the cost structure.

What about confidentiality and quality assurance?

Preferred by Nature's Quality Management System includes several [policies](#) that allow our organisation to provide assurance services credibly in compliance with accreditation requirements. These include the [Impartiality Policy](#), which ensures impartiality, transparency and independence in all of our activities, and the [Confidentiality Policy](#), describing our rigorous approach to safeguarding confidential data and information provided by our clients.

What are the rights and duties of applicants and clients?

Clients' rights and duties are described in the [Service Agreement](#).

What is the procedure for complaints?

All complaints will be processed using the [Preferred by Nature's Dispute Resolution Policy](#) for complaints management.

What information is provided to third parties?

Auditors and certification scheme owners will need access to confidential information to check the organisation's compliance with the standards set in certification schemes, including the UEBT certification. Please check the [Service Agreement](#) for details on the information provided to third parties.



Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth. The air you breathe, the food you eat, and your access to clean water all depend on biodiversity. Biodiversity is vital and without it, we humans cannot survive.

Every year, UEBT researches people's awareness of biodiversity, what they expect from companies and what this means for how they buy things.

www.uebt.org/biodiversity