



HOW TO CERTIFY TO THE SFI STANDARDS

Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Inc. is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sustainable forest management. We work with conservation groups, local communities, resource professionals, landowners and countless other organizations and individuals who share our passion for responsible forest management.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR CERTIFICATION?

The SFI program involves organizations across the supply chain — from forest managers to manufacturers to distributors to printers. Once certified, they can apply to use SFI on- product labels, which are globally recognized and show customers products are from responsible and legal sources.

- **SFI forest management certification** is open to any organization that owns or manages forestland in the United States or Canada and meets the forest management certification requirements in the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard. A copy of the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard can be downloaded [here](#).
- **SFI fiber sourcing certification**, allows organizations to show the raw material in their supply chain comes from legal and responsible sources. Organizations certified to the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard demonstrate their support of broadening the practice of biodiversity, using forestry best management practices to protect water quality, providing outreach to landowners and utilizing the services of forest

management and harvesting professionals for fiber from uncertified lands in the United States and Canada. A copy of the SFI 2015-2019 Standard can be downloaded [here](#).

SFI chain-of-custody certification is an accounting system that tracks forest fiber content through production and manufacturing to the end product. Certification to the SFI 2015-2019 Chain of Custody Standard is open to companies with processes in place to track content from certified forests, certified sourcing and recycled material through production and manufacturing to the end product. A copy of the SFI 2015-2019 Chain-of-Custody Standard can be downloaded [here](#).

BENEFITS OF SFI CERTIFICATION?

Certified SFI program participants are eligible to use SFI labels, which demonstrate their corporate social responsibility by showing their customers they care about forest management, and help them meet the growing demand for forest products from certified sourcing.

- Through SFI forest certification, forest managers or owners who certify their lands to the rigorous performance measures and indicators in the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard can claim wood fiber from these lands is from certified forestland.
- The SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard distinguishes SFI from all other forest certification programs in that it governs how SFI Program Participants procure fiber from non-certified forest land

encouraging the spread of responsible forestry practices. Certification to this standard allows companies to make claims that their product meets the requirements of certified sourcing.

- Through SFI 2015-2019 Chain of Custody Standard certification, companies can make claims about how much of their product comes from certified lands, certified sourcing and/or recycled content.

By supporting the SFI program, participants and consumers alike can strengthen forest practices in the United States and Canada and fiber sourcing globally. SFI-labeled products must avoid fiber from controversial sources — such as illegal logging and fiber sourced from areas without effective social laws.

→ HOW TO CERTIFY TO THE SFI 2015-2019 FOREST MANAGEMENT STANDARD

Any organization that owns or manages forestland in the United States or Canada is eligible to apply for SFI forest management certification. This includes industrial and family forest owners, universities, conservation groups, public agencies, timber investment management organizations and real estate investment trusts. To achieve SFI forest management certification, an organization must implement all relevant requirements set out in the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard.

STEP 1: Complete and submit an application (posted [here](#)) for participation in the SFI program.

STEP 2: Once SFI Inc. approves the application, the organization contacts an accredited certification body (a list is posted [here](#).)

STEP 3: Implement the [SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard](#).

Once the certification body approves the certification, it prepares a public summary document that the participant submits to SFI Inc. to post on the SFI website. To view public audit report summaries of certified companies please go [here](#).

STEP 4: The certification body completes an on-site audit to verify operations meet the requirements of the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard

- The audit involves a team of experienced trained auditors including a lead auditor, technical experts in areas such as plant and wildlife ecology, conservation, forestry and hydrology, as well as knowledge of a region's socio-demographics and cultural issues, and other expertise.
- The team performs a forest audit verifying requirements are being performed on the ground and a desk audit verifying required plans and documentation are in place.

STEP 5: Certified program participants must complete surveillance audits every 12 months to verify ongoing conformance to the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard, with a full re-certification every five years.

Program participants pay an annual fee to SFI Inc., which supports activities such as conservation projects, program outreach and standard development and they must support SFI Implementation Committees in the state(s), province(s) or region(s) where they operate. They are responsible for the cost of the audit and any improvements needed to meet the SFI Standard requirements. For information about annual fees, please contact SFI at info@sfiprogram.org or 202-596-3450.

HOW TO CERTIFY TO THE SFI 2015-2019 FIBER SOURCING STANDARD

SFI sourcing addresses the fact that 90 percent of the world's forests are not certified. It shows that forest content in a product comes from a responsible and legal source, whether forests are certified or not. SFI certified sourcing labels do not make claims about certified content.

The SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard defines two types of producers — primary and secondary.

- **Primary producer** – At least half (by weight) of the wood-based raw materials used by primary producers comes directly from the forest.
- **Secondary producer** – At least half (by weight) of the wood-based raw materials used by secondary producers has gone through a manufacturing process — such as semi-finished solid wood, paper, market pulp, recycled wood fiber, or composite products.

Since primary producers have a more direct link to the forest, they must meet the Objectives in the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard. Once issued their certificates, primary producers are eligible to apply to use the SFI certified sourcing label.

Secondary producers who wish to make a certified sourcing claim must certify to Appendix 1 Rules for Use of the SFI Certified Sourcing Label. They also must verify that at least two-thirds of their supply comes from primary producers that are certified to the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard, and that none of their supply comes from controversial sources.

Primary producers pay an annual fee to SFI Inc. and they must support SFI Implementation Committees in the state(s), province(s) or region(s) where they operate. They are responsible for the cost of the audit and any improvements needed to meet the standard requirements.

Note: In order to use the SFI certified sourcing label:

- A primary producer that owns forestland must certify its forests to the SFI 2015-2019 Forest Management Standard.



Steps for primary producers to achieve SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard:

STEP 1: Complete and submit an application for participation in the SFI program. The application is posted [here](#).

STEP 2: Implement the relevant requirements of the [SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard](#).

STEP 3: Once SFI Inc. approves the application; the participant contacts an accredited certification body (a list is posted [here](#)).

STEP 4: The certification body completes an on-site audit to verify the operations meet the requirements of the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard.

- The audit involves a team of trained auditors including a lead auditor and technical experts.
- The team performs a desk audit verifying the required plans and documentation are in place, and an audit of the organization's wood procurement system verifying requirements are being met.

STEP 5: Once the certification body approves the certification, the participant submits a copy of its public summary report to post on the SFI website.

STEP 6: Program participants must complete annual surveillance audits to verify ongoing implementation of the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard, with a full re-certification every five years.

Once a company receives a certificate from an accredited certification body and meets the requirements in the Rules for SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks, it can apply to the SFI Office of Label use and Licensing (SFILabels@sfiprogram.org) to use the SFI on-product label. A copy of the Rules for SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks can be downloaded [here](#).

There is no fee paid to SFI Inc. for the use of the Certified Sourcing label. Companies are responsible for the cost of the audit. For cost estimates, please contact an SFI-accredited certification body.

HOW TO CERTIFY TO THE SFI 2015-2019 CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARD

Any organization that processes or trades SFI-certified forest products is eligible to seek SFI chain of custody certification. This includes manufacturers of forest products, paper merchants, converters, wood dealers, wood yards, wholesalers, brokers and printers. To achieve SFI chain of custody certification, the organization must have processes in place to track the source of its raw materials, such as inventory control, employee training, reporting and invoicing, and meet the requirements in the SFI 2015-2019 Chain of Custody Standard.

Organizations with SFI chain of custody certification are eligible to use SFI chain of custody on-product labels once they meet the [Rules for Use of SFI On-Product Labels and Off-Product Marks](#) and their request is approved by the [SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing](#).

Once certified, companies can make claims about how much of their product content comes from certified lands, certified sourcing and how much contains recycled content. Companies using the average percentage method of tracking fiber must communicate the actual percentage of certified forest content on the label, and this must be at least 10 percent.

When the volume credit method is used, companies must use the “Promoting Sustainable Forestry” label. All SFI chain-of-custody labels can include a Mobius loop stating the percentage of recycled content in the product.

Note: Before seeking SFI chain-of-custody certification, primary producers must certify their procurement system to the SFI 2015-2019 Fiber Sourcing Standard. Primary producers source at least half (by weight) of their wood-based raw materials directly from the forest.

Once a company receives a SFI chain of custody certificate from an accredited certification body and meets the requirements in the Rules for SFI On-Product Labels, it can apply to the Office of Label Use and Licensing SFILabels@sfiprogram.org to use the SFI on-product label.



STEPS TO ACHIEVE SFI 2015-2019 CHAIN OF CUSTODY STANDARD

STEP 1: Review the [SFI 2015-2019 Chain of Custody Standard](#) to see if the company can meet the requirements or contact [Gregor Macintosh](#).

STEP 2: Implement the SFI 2015-2019 Chain of Custody Standard

STEP 3: Contact an accredited certification body (a list is posted [here](#)) to schedule an audit.

STEP 4: The certification body will complete an on-site audit. If the operation meets the SFI 2015-2019 Chain of Custody Standard requirements, the company will receive a certificate from the certification body.

STEP 5: Once the company is certified and meets the [Rules for Use of SFI On-Product Labels](#), it can seek approval from the SFI Office of Label Use and Licensing to use appropriate SFI on-product labels [e\(SFILabels@sfiprogram.org\)](mailto:e(SFILabels@sfiprogram.org)).

STEP 6: SFI Inc. will send the certified company a welcome kit with marketing materials so it can promote its new certification and art- work for SFI on-product labels.

STEP 7: The certification body will send a completed report to SFI Inc. so the certified company can be registered and its name posted on the SFI website.

STEP 8: An audit is needed every 12 months to maintain the SFI chain of custody certification.

There is no fee paid to SFI Inc. for chain-of-custody certification. Companies are responsible for the cost of the audit. For cost estimates, please contact an SFI-accredited certification body.

VISIT THE SFI WEBSITE FOR INFORMATION

- [Guide to the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules](#)
- [Major Enhancements to the SFI 2015-2019 Standards and Rules](#)
- [Application for Participation](#)
- [List of Certification Bodies](#)