



16th of April 2019

ECOCERT and Soil Association Certification announce formal partnership

ECOCERT and Soil Association Certification, the leading French and UK Organic Certification Bodies, have announced a formal partnership.

The partnership will identify and facilitate the sharing of existing schemes, and the development, marketing and delivery of integrity-based schemes and services focused around three key areas: organic food and farming, land use and sustainability.

At a time of huge global uncertainty and growing environmental challenge, the two organisations, who already work together in international organic groupings, including IFOAM, EOCC and Cosmos, hope to show that international cooperation, mutual respect and a shared vision for organic and sustainability can drive positive change across international boundaries.

In that context, Soil Association Certification has granted ECOCERT preferred rights (outside of the UK) to audit according to the highly respected Soil Association organic standards. ECOCERT clients in more than 130 countries worldwide will now be able to access the Soil Association symbol by meeting Soil Association's standards requirements.

In conjunction, ECOCERT has given Soil Association Certification preferred access in the UK to a large recognised portfolio of organic and sustainability certification schemes, providing the most complete range of trusted certification services for sustainable practices.

This means that UK-based Soil Association Certification's producers and processors will also now have access to international markets with the use of ECOCERT's certification accreditation for countries such as USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, Korea.

Further developments in the partnership will be announced in the coming months as the two organisations build on these early and highly market beneficial arrangements.

Philippe Thomazo, Chief Executive, ECOCERT Group, said:

“Soil Association Certification and ECOCERT share common ground as pioneers in organic certification in the UK and France, respectively. Enriched by our strong commitment to developing Organic worldwide, we are pleased to strengthen our links, initiated long ago, by building a formal partnership. This is a great opportunity for both of us to continue providing our clients all around the world with highly demanding standards. Throughout our range of Ecocert trustworthy certifications, we pursue our goal to guarantee organic and sustainable practices across all industries willing to drive a positive environmental and social impact.”



Martin Sawyer, Chief Executive, Soil Association Certification, said:

“ *This partnership reinforces the shared values and vision for organic agriculture domestically and abroad between Soil Association Certification and ECOCERT Group, and will allow us both to better face future opportunities and challenges for the global organic sector. It is an exciting first step in what we hope will be a fruitful and mutually beneficial relationship. By extending our international reach, we hope that Soil Association's higher organic standards can be accessed by a broader range of organic producers and processors, increasing their impact and promoting the Soil Association Organic symbol as a globally recognised and trusted sign for organic.* **”**

About the global organic market

Organic market worldwide continues to grow reaching over 80 billion with more than 57.8 million hectares of organic agricultural land. The leading food market consumption markets are USA, followed by Germany and France. With over 65% market share in France and a leading position in many other countries, Ecocert has become a key global player for organic certification worldwide.

About the UK's organic market

The UK's organic market is now worth a record £2.33 billion, after seven years of market growth, meaning £45 million is spent domestically each week on organic. The Soil Association symbol is found on 70% of organic products in the UK, from food and drink to organic beauty products and textiles.

About Ecocert

Ecocert certification: Offering around 150 standards, public and private, national and international, selected for their strict social and environmental criteria, Ecocert offers one of the largest range of demanding eco-labels certifications. In addition to its expertise in organic agriculture and cosmetics, other schemes are available in areas like sustainable agriculture and forestry (UTZ, PEFC, VCS, FSC,...), as well as fair trade (Fair For Life). The Ecocert brand is a global reference for organic and eco-labels in various sectors such as the food, cosmetic, textile, forestry and wood industries.

ECOCERT Group: Committed for nearly 30 years to the development of organic agriculture in France and all around the world, the ECOCERT Group is the global leader in organic agriculture and organic cosmetic certification. The Group operates in more than 130 countries through an international network of 26 subsidiaries and has more than 1,400 employees... In addition to its expertise in organic certification, ECOCERT encourages economic stakeholders to adopt more environmentally friendly and responsible practices by offering them a series of environmental and ethical standards, which are both recognised and demanding, as well as consulting and training services. **To find out more visit www.ecocert.com**



About the Soil Association

The **Soil Association** was founded in 1946 by farmers, scientists, doctors and nutritionists to promote the connection between the health of the soil, food, animals, people and the environment. Today the Soil Association is the UK's leading membership charity campaigning for healthy, humane and sustainable food, farming and land use. Its Chief Executive is Helen Browning, and Chair of Trustees is Gabriel Scally.

Soil Association Certification is a wholly owned subsidiary which certifies over 70% of all organic products sold in the UK. Certifying organic food and farming since 1973, and more recently, organic textiles, health and beauty products, the team has built up extensive practical experience and provides unrivalled support before, during and after certification. It also audits other schemes within catering and forestry, including the Food for Life Served Here, and the FSC and PEFC forestry standards internationally, delivering assurances of quality and provenance that industry and consumers can trust. Its Chief Executive is Martin Sawyer and its independent board is chaired by Nick Buckland.

To find out more visit www.soilassociation.org

Press contact- Ecocert Group

Anna BEAUCHAMP, Press Officer

a.beauchamp@giesbert-mandin.fr

+33 6 88 94 44 42