

Agricultural Commodities Sourcing Guide

Re&Source HUB — Hong Kong

Origin-direct sourcing for coffee, tea, grains, and agricultural products across Asia.

"Great agricultural sourcing depends on trusted origin relationships, consistent quality, and logistics that work without unnecessary complexity."

Who This Guide Is For

This guide is for importers, roasters, distributors, food brands, hospitality operators, and procurement teams sourcing coffee, tea, grains, spices, and other agricultural commodities from producing countries in Asia, Southeast Asia, and beyond. It is also relevant to buyers sourcing agricultural inputs or raw materials for food manufacturing.

Re&Source HUB works directly at origin — with co-operatives, estates, processors, and exporters — rather than through commodity brokers or trading intermediaries. This approach delivers better traceability, more consistent quality, and more competitive pricing.

Why Origin-Direct Sourcing Matters

The most significant quality and traceability risks in agricultural commodity procurement arise from multi-layered supply chains — where the product passes through several intermediaries between the farm and the buyer, and accountability diminishes at each step.

Re&Source HUB works as close to origin as possible, building direct relationships with producers and processors who can be visited, audited, and held accountable. Clients receive documentation trails from growing region to export container — not just a certificate and a shipping invoice.

What Re&Source HUB Covers for Agricultural Commodities

Service Area	What We Do
Origin Sourcing	Direct relationships with co-operatives, estates, and exporters at origin — no broker intermediaries
Quality Evaluation	Cupping, sensory evaluation, and physical grade assessment against client specifications
Certification Sourcing	Organic, Rainforest Alliance, Fair Trade, UTZ, and other certification verification
Price Negotiation	Direct commercial negotiations at origin, with forward agreement structuring for seasonal supply continuity
Pre-Shipment Inspection	Weight, grading, moisture, and packaging verification before loading

Service Area	What We Do
Documentation Management	Phytosanitary certificates, certificates of origin, health certificates, and trade certification
Container Loading Supervision	On-site supervision of container loading and fumigation where required
Logistics Coordination	Full export logistics from origin port to destination
Ongoing Programme Management	Season-by-season supply management for repeat buyers — harvest tracking, forward allocations, quality updates

Commodities We Source

Coffee:

- Green coffee — Arabica and Robusta, all processing methods (washed, natural, honey)
- Specialty and commercial grade lots
- Origin countries: Vietnam, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Yunnan (China), India

Tea:

- Green tea, white tea, black tea, oolong, pu-erh
- Origin countries: China (Yunnan, Zhejiang, Fujian, Anhui), Taiwan, Vietnam, India

Grains & Pulses:

- Rice (fragrant, jasmine, basmati), dried pulses, lentils
- Origin countries: Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, India

Spices & Botanicals:

- Black pepper, star anise, cinnamon, dried chilli, ginger, turmeric
- Origin countries: Vietnam, Indonesia, China, India

Other Agricultural Products:

- Sesame seeds, sunflower seeds, nuts, dried fruit
- Coconut products — desiccated, oil, milk
- Specific origin research available on request

Certifications We Source For

Certification	What It Covers
Organic (EU / USDA NOP)	Certified organic production methods, no synthetic inputs
Rainforest Alliance	Environmental, social, and economic farm standards
Fair Trade (FLO)	Minimum price guarantees and community investment for smallholder farmers

Certification	What It Covers
UTZ / Rainforest Alliance (merged)	Sustainable farming practices
4C (Common Code for the Coffee Community)	Baseline sustainability standard for mainstream coffee
Cup of Excellence / Q Grading	Specialty coffee quality certification
ISO 22000 / HACCP	Food safety management for processors and exporters

Certification requirements should be declared at the brief stage. Re&Source HUB verifies current certification validity directly with origin partners.

The Agricultural Sourcing Process — Step by Step

Step 1 — Sourcing Brief & Product Specification

Define commodity requirements — origin preferences, grade specifications, processing method, certifications, quantities, and target delivery period. Cupping or sensory standards should be shared where relevant.

Step 2 — Origin Identification & Supplier Matching

Re&Source HUB identifies the most suitable supply partners — co-operatives, estates, exporters, or processors — aligned with origin, grade, and certification requirements.

Step 3 — Quality Evaluation & Sample Request

Physical samples or green lots are evaluated against specifications. Cupping sessions or sensory evaluations are arranged, and supply is confirmed to meet the required standard before commitment.

Step 4 — Price Negotiation & Commercial Terms

Pricing is negotiated directly with origin partners. For ongoing programmes, forward agreements are structured to provide seasonal price stability and supply continuity.

Step 5 — Order Confirmation & Export Preparation

The supply partner prepares the shipment — milling, grading, sorting, and bagging to specification. All export documentation requirements are confirmed.

Step 6 — Pre-Shipment Inspection & Certification

Inspection verifies weight, grading, moisture content, and packaging integrity. Phytosanitary certificates, certificate of origin, and trade certification documents are obtained and verified.

Step 7 — Container Loading Supervision & Export

Container loading is supervised to ensure correct bagging, stacking, and securing. Fumigation certificates and container inspection reports are completed where required.

Step 8 — Shipment & Transit Monitoring

The shipment is tracked from origin port to destination, with regular transit updates provided to the client.

Step 9 — Arrival Documentation & Customs Clearance Support

Complete documentation is prepared and ready for customs clearance at destination. Import broker queries are supported as needed.

Step 10 — Ongoing Supply Programme Management

For recurring buyers, the supply relationship is managed season by season — tracking harvest progress, communicating quality updates, and securing forward allocations.

What to Include in Your Brief

- Commodity type and variety
- Origin preference (country, region, or open to recommendation)
- Grade and quality specifications (screen size, moisture content, cupping score where applicable)
- Processing method preference (washed, natural, etc.)
- Required certifications
- Target quantity — initial order and annual forecast
- Destination port and any import regulatory requirements
- Target price (FOB origin or C&F destination)
- Required delivery period

Understanding Agricultural Pricing

Agricultural commodity pricing reflects a combination of:

- **Origin cost** — farm gate or co-operative price
- **Processing and milling** — wet and dry mill costs
- **Export preparation** — grading, sorting, bagging, fumigation
- **Certification fees** — third-party audit and certification costs
- **Freight** — ocean freight from origin port to destination
- **Re&Source HUB service fee** — disclosed transparently at quotation stage

For specialty lots and smaller origins, prices reflect the true cost of responsible sourcing — including fair farm gate returns and quality processing. Re&Source HUB does not negotiate farm gate prices to unsustainable levels; the goal is long-term supply relationships built on commercial fairness.

Typical Lead Times

Stage	Estimated Duration
Origin identification and sample request	1–3 weeks
Quality evaluation and approval	1–2 weeks
Price negotiation and order confirmation	1–2 weeks
Export preparation at origin	1–3 weeks
Pre-shipment inspection	1 week before loading
Ocean freight — Southeast Asia to Europe	3–5 weeks
Ocean freight — Southeast Asia to USA (West Coast)	2–3 weeks
Ocean freight — Southeast Asia to Middle East	2–3 weeks

For time-sensitive programmes, air freight is available for samples and small lots. Full container or LCL (less-than-container-load) options are available depending on volume.

Key Terminology

Term	Meaning
Green Coffee	Unroasted coffee beans — the traded commodity before roasting
FOB	Free On Board — price includes delivery to named port of export
C&F / CFR	Cost and Freight — FOB price plus ocean freight to destination
Screen Size	Physical grading measure for coffee beans; larger screens generally indicate larger, denser beans
Moisture Content	Water content percentage — critical quality parameter for shelf life and cup quality
Phytosanitary Certificate	Government-issued document certifying plant products are free from pests and disease
FCL	Full Container Load
LCL	Less Than Container Load — shared container for smaller shipments
Forward Agreement	Pre-agreed supply commitment for a future harvest or delivery period

Starting Your Project

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Deal with one trusted partner instead of a hundred factories.