



Coffees with certification seals in marketing places of Perpignan-France and Piracicaba-Brazil

Cafés con sellos de certificación en puntos de comercialización de Perpiñán-Francia y Piracicaba-Brasil

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ABSTRACT

The certification seals build a relationship of trust between producer and consumer, creating opportunities for products and sustainability in the field. However, there is a need to understand the profiles of the main coffee certification seals used in the coffee marketing places. Therefore, the study monitored the profile of coffee with certification seals displayed on the shelves in marketing places, located in Piracicaba/Brazil, and Perpignan/France. This study monitored the profile of coffee certification seals in marketing places located in Brazil (Piracicaba, São Paulo region) and France (Perpignan, Occitania region) between 2022 and 2023. In both countries, data on coffee displayed on the shelves was monitored in the marketing places (supermarkets, hypermarkets, and wholesalers). Results showed that in Perpignan/France, there was a higher variety of coffees with certification seals in hypermarkets, compared with Piracicaba/Brazil. In Perpignan/France, part of the coffee displayed on the shelves was produced in Brazil (17.9%), Colombia (17.9%), Ethiopia (14.3%), and Peru (14.7%). While the coffee found on the shelves in Piracicaba/Brazil, was produced in Brazil, without coffee derived from another country. Environmental seals were most frequently found on coffee displayed on the shelves, in approximately 43% of the products. In Perpignan/France, there was an increase in value of 26% between traditional coffee without a seal and coffee with a seal, and an increase of 133% between traditional coffee without a seal and organic coffee. In Piracicaba/Brazil, there was an increase in value of 34% between traditional coffee without a seal and coffee with a seal. Based on the results concluded that coffee certification seals promote the coffee price with an increase of coffee varieties displayed on the shelves in marketing places located in Brazil and Perpignan/France.

Key Words: Coffee certification, *coffea arabica*, retail marketing, price premium, sustainable labeling.

RESUMEN

Los sellos de certificación fomentan la confianza entre productores y consumidores, al tiempo que promueven la sostenibilidad de los sistemas agroalimentarios. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo caracterizar los perfiles de los sellos de certificación en los productos de café comercializados en Piracicaba (Brasil) y Perpignan (Francia) entre 2022 y 2023. La recogida de datos consistió en la observación directa y el registro fotográfico de los envases de café expuestos en supermercados, hipermercados y mayoristas, centrándose en la presencia, el tipo y el número de sellos de certificación, así como en el origen y el precio del producto. Los resultados revelaron una mayor variedad de cafés certificados en Perpiñán, incluidos productos de Brasil (17,9%), Colombia (17,9%), Etiopía (14,3%) y Perú (14,7%). En cambio, todos los cafés de Piracicaba eran de origen nacional. Los sellos medioambientales fueron los más frecuentes, apareciendo en aproximadamente el 43% de los productos certificados. En Perpiñán, los cafés certificados tenían un precio un 26% superior al de los cafés tradicionales no certificados, mientras que los cafés con certificación ecológica mostraban un aumento de precio del 133%. En Piracicaba, el precio de los cafés certificados fue un 34% superior al de los no certificados. Estos resultados sugieren que los sellos de certificación no sólo contribuyen a la diferenciación y trazabilidad del producto, sino que también aumentan el valor de mercado y la visibilidad. Se concluye que los sellos de certificación promueven primas en los precios y aumentan la diversidad de los productos de café disponibles en los lugares de comercialización, tanto en Brasil como en Francia, lo que refleja una creciente demanda de los consumidores de productos sostenibles y diferenciados.

Palabras clave: Certificación del café, *coffea arabica*, comercialización al por menor, prima de precio, etiquetado sostenible.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been an increase in food production and consumption focused on sustainability with environmental, economic, and social responsibility. Understanding the dynamics of production/consumption, as well as the benefits and differences between production methods, can help to monitor the impact on agriculture and food marketing.

In the world, Brazil is considered the main producer and exporter of coffee, with a total production area of 2.25 million hectares and a production of 55.7 million sacks in 2025. Brazil is also considered the second-largest consumer of the beverage. In Brazil, the southeast region is considered the main producing region, representing 89% of the total cultivation area (CONAB, 2025). Given the diversity of climatic conditions in the Brazilian territory, coffee is present in 15 different regions with different climates, altitudes, and soil types, promoting different standards of quality and aromas (Coêlho, 2023).

Coffee production involves small and medium families with a large amount of labor in production from the field to the commercial process (MAPA, 2025). In the world, coffee is the most widely traded tropical product, with up to 25 million farming households accounting for 80 percent of the world's output. Many coffee producers live in poverty and manage agroecosystems in culturally and biologically diverse regions (FAO, 2025). In these small and medium farms, there is a movement to produce coffee characterized as specialty coffee, focusing on a new type of coffee consumer, often called "coffee lovers" and characterized as "third-wavers" (Santos et al., 2020). In Brazil, there is an estimation that around 5% to 10% of the consumption is related to special coffees which are sold in coffee shops, restaurants, hotels, on internet channels, and supermarkets (MAPA, 2025).

Specialty coffee presents distinct sensory attributes, free of impurities and defects, and with a balanced acidity and sweetness. In addition, the special coffees must be produced in sustainable systems with a focus on sustainability (environmental, economic, and

social responsibility) with adequate certifications or "certification seals" (BSCA, 2023). In the world, there is a diversity of certification seals with a focus on environmental preservation, respect for animal welfare, protection of know-how, guarantees regarding the processes and methods of manufacturing a product, and guarantees regarding the remuneration of producers (Corre, 2021; Hardt et al., 2015). According to Santos et al. (2020), certification seals can influence consumers' perceptions and serve as an important differentiator for valuing the products of small and medium-sized rural enterprises. Bravo-Monroy et al. (2016) also showed that the drivers that influence the farmer's decisions for adopting organic coffee management practices are social identity, coffee institutions, and attitudes.

Based on these perspectives, the certification seals build a relationship of trust between producer and consumer, creating opportunities for products and sustainability in the field. However, there is a need to understand the profiles of the main coffee certification seals used in the coffee market. Therefore, the study monitored the profile of coffee with certification seals displayed on the shelves in marketing places, located in Piracicaba/Brazil, and Perpignan/France.

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

Study Characterization

This study monitored the profile of coffees, displayed on the shelves in marketing places, and coffee certification seals, in marketing places located in Brazil (Piracicaba, São Paulo region) and France (Perpignan, Occitania region), between 2022 and 2023 (Figure 1).

Perpignan is a city located in the Pyrénées-Orientales department in the Occitanie region in southeastern France. Perpignan has an estimated population of 120,996 inhabitants, with a population density of 1,806 inhabitants/km², and a human development index of approximately 0.9. Perpignan places 13th position among the municipalities in the state (INSEE, 2025).

Piracicaba is located in the interior of São Paulo, in the Southeast region of Brazil. Piracicaba has an

estimated population of 423,323 inhabitants, with a population density of 307,19 inhabitants/km², and a human development index of approximately 0.8. Piracicaba is also located in a region of great importance to the economy of São Paulo (IBGE, 2025).

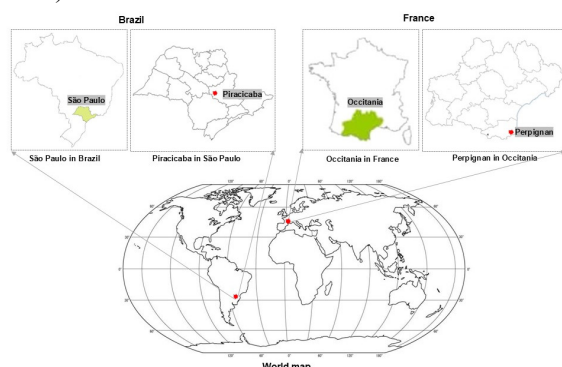


Figure 1. Marketing places located in Brazil (Piracicaba, São Paulo region) and France (Perpignan, Occitania region).

Data collecting and analysis

In both countries, data on coffee displayed on the shelves was monitored in the marketing places (supermarkets, hypermarkets, and wholesalers), located in Piracicaba and Perpignan. Marketing places were classified by large commercial distribution chains belonging to great groups, established in each country. A total of 16 marketing places were visited during the study in 2022 and 2023.

In each marketing place, data on prices were monitored considering their classification groups and physical form (ground coffee or coffee beans). The data was classified by the presence of certification (with/without), number of certifications, and types of certifications. Photographic records of packaging were also monitored during the study. Coffee was classified as traditional (with and without certification seal) and organic. Traditional, without a seal, was considered as 100% of value and compared with others. We did not monitor coffee in the form of capsules, instant coffees, “drip coffees”, and similar.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Coffee certification seal profile

In Perpignan/France, there was a higher variety of

coffee with certification seals, totaling 5 kinds of seals (described as Agriculture biologique, Fairtrade, Indicação geográfica protegida, Rainforest Alliance, and UTZ). While in Piracicaba/Brazil, there were 3 kinds of certification seals (described as ABIC, Orgânicos do Brasil, and Rainforest Alliance) (Table 1).

Table 1. Certification seals of coffees sold in marketing places, located in Perpignan/France, and Piracicaba/Brazil, between October and November 2022.

Coffee seals	Use	Focus on sustainability
Coffees in France		
Agriculture biologique	France/UE	Organic agriculture
Fairtrade	Global	Social and environmental justice
Indicação geográfica protegida	Global	Geographical indications
Rainforest Alliance	Global	Environmental, social, and economic
UTZ	Coffee/ Global	Environmental, social, and economic
Coffees in Brazil		
ABIC	Coffee/Brazil	Quality
Orgânicos do Brasil	Brazil/Latin America	Environmental
Rainforest Alliance	Global	Environmental, social, and economic

ABIC = Brazilian Coffee Industry Association.

In Perpignan/France, the coffee certification seals were focused on global use (Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, and UTZ), while in Brazil, there was just the Rainforest Alliance with the global use (Table 1). These results were expected because Brazil is the main coffee producer in the world, with a significant local consumption (CONAB, 2025), which does not require global certification to access this market. However, there were local certification seals that were commonly found in Brazil, as demonstrated in the study.

In Perpignan/France, part of the coffee displayed on the shelves was produced in Brazil (17.9%), Colombia (17.9%), Ethiopia (14.3%), and Peru (14.7%). While the coffee found in Piracicaba/Brazil was produced in Brazil, without coffee derived from another country (Figure 2). The Latin American countries are considered important coffee producers in the world, explaining the results found (FAO, 2025). In Colombia, Bravo-Monroy et al. (2016) showed that organic certifications have become an alternative for conventional coffee growers and an

option to let consumers know of a product's attributes and the nature of its production. In Brazil, Hardt et al. (2015) showed that certified farms contributed to gains of biodiversity and conservation in coffee areas of the Cerrado.

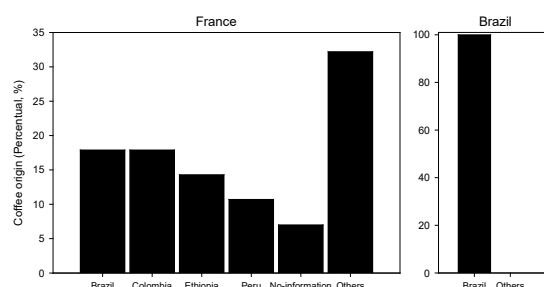


Figure 2. Origin of coffee displayed on the shelves in marketing places in Perpignan/France, and Piracicaba/Brazil, between October and November 2022.

Certification seals, known as Agriculture biologique (in Perpignan/France) and Orgânicos do Brasil (Piracicaba/Brazil), are classified as environmental seals (Figure 3). The certification seals are local and supported by local institutions in each country for the coffee producers or distributors. These seals certify the aspect of environmental protection and ensure the adequacy of agricultural practices within the production system. They include in their guidelines the preservation of biodiversity, protection of the climate and the environment, the implementation of soil conservation practices, the absence of the use of chemical and synthetic products in crop management, as well as the absence of genetic modification (GMO-free) (BRASIL, 2025 and Agriculture biologique, 2025).

In Perpignan/France, environmental seals were most frequently used, in approximately 43% of the coffee displayed on the shelves in marketing places, ensuring that the food or product in question comes from a production method following organic agricultural standards and practices. In Brazil, to obtain the Orgânicos do Brasil seal, the production unit must be audited by a participatory certification or be linked to a social control organization, regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA, 2025).

Local use



Global use



Figure 3. Certifications of coffees displayed on the shelves in marketing places in Perpignan/France, and Piracicaba/Brazil, between October and November 2022.

In Perpignan/France, a geographic identification seal was also found on coffees displayed on the shelves in marketing places, with 14% of the products using this type of certification (Figure 3). The geographic identification seal indicates that the coffee presents specific characteristics, and the quality of the drink is associated with the region where the coffee was produced.

In Piracicaba/Brazil, 92.5% of coffee presented the ABIC seal, classified as a quality seal for Brazilian coffee (Figure 3). The ABIC seal is a certification of the Purity and Quality Program in Brazil (ABIC, 2025). Coffees without certification seals were observed on only 7.5% of the coffees, reinforcing the idea that certifications are used in domestic and foreign consumer markets.

Another certification system observed on packaging was the Fairtrade seal, present on 29% of the coffees in Perpignan/France. In Brazil, there was no coffee with this certification (Figure 3). This type of seal certifies that the coffee production method complies with social, economic, and environmental standards. In addition, the Fairtrade seal certifies the promotion of ethical business practices through the establishment of partnerships between producers and consumers with a fair trade (FAIRTRADE, 2025). Valkila et al. (2010) described Fairtrade as having the goals to support democratic producer organizations, provide premiums for social development, improve labor

rights, and facilitate long-term trading relationships. The Rainforest Alliance seal was also another certification found in coffee, displayed on the shelves in marketing places, in Perpignan/France, and Piracicaba/Brazil. The Rainforest Alliance seal was monitored on 19% of the coffees in marketing places of Perpignan/France (Figure 3). This seal has the mission of assuring consumers that the product purchased was produced by farmers and/or companies that work to establish processes in which people and nature can thrive in harmony and a sustainable manner. Barham and Weber (2012) described the Rainforest Alliance as an alternative to certified coffee in the agroecosystems based on the standards of sustainable agriculture.

The UTZ seal was also observed on some packaging in Perpignan/France, and Piracicaba/Brazil (Figure 3). This certification is part of the Rainforest Alliance after its merger in 2018, certifying productions that take environmental and human aspects into account. The Rainforest Alliance and UTZ seals certified that the product was produced using methods that support the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic, and environmental (RFA, 2024).

Coffee Price in Perpignan/France and Piracicaba/Brazil

In Perpignan/France, there was an increase in price for certified coffees displayed on the shelves in marketing places. Certified coffees with a seal presented a price 26% higher compared to traditional coffee without a seal. The increase was higher for certified organic coffee, with the price 133% higher than traditional coffee without a seal (Figure 4).

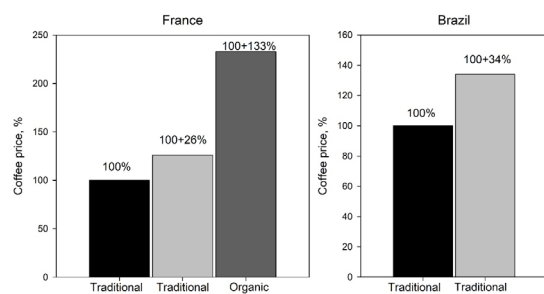


Figure 4. Percentual value of coffee displayed on the shelves in marketing places in Perpignan/France, and Piracicaba/Brazil, between October and November 2022. Coffee was

classified as traditional (with and without certification seal) and organic. Traditional, without a seal, was considered as 100% of value and compared with others.

In Piracicaba/Brazil, there was also an increase in price for certified coffees displayed on the shelves in marketing places. Certified coffees with a seal presented a price 34% higher compared to traditional coffee without a seal (Figure 4). These results illustrate the advantages of seals, including the importance of coffee differentiation and specialization. FAO (2018) also demonstrated that the adoption of seals increases between 20% and 50% in the final value of the products. In Nicaragua, Valkila et al. (2010) also showed that coffee certification seals promoted the coffee price and opportunities for the farmers, with a larger share of the retail prices remaining in the consuming country relative to conventional coffee trade. In Colombia, Bravo-Monroy et al. (2016) also showed similar opportunities for the coffee producers.

IV. CONCLUSION

Coffee certification seals promote the coffee price and varieties displayed on the shelves in marketing places located in Piracicaba/Brazil, and Perpignan/France, turning a strategy of coffee differentiation and specialization in food agroecosystems focused on sustainability with environmental, economic, and social responsibility. Certified coffees with a seal presented a price ranging from 26% to 34% higher compared to traditional coffee without a seal. The increase in coffee price is higher for certified organic coffees, considered 133% higher than traditional coffee without a seal. In Perpignan/France, part of the coffee was produced in other countries (Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, and Peru. While the coffee found in Brazil was produced in Brazil, it was not derived from another country. Based on the results concluded that coffee certification seals promote the coffee price with an increase in coffee varieties, differentiation, and specialization.

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