

# FSC<sup>®</sup> and COC:

What They Are and Why They Matter for Converters.

## Summary

Sustainable labeling and packaging are on the rise, driven by eco-conscious consumers, government initiatives to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and landfill waste, and increasingly stringent state and local regulations. In fact, according to a report by Global Industry Analysts (GIA), the global market for sustainable packaging is forecast to reach \$412.7 billion by the year 2027.

As a result, today's converters are under pressure to both provide and use recycled materials and renewable resources. While Avery Dennison offers a new North American Forest Stewardship Council-certified (FSC) portfolio of sustainable label materials, converters need Chain-of-Custody (COC) certification to represent the materials as certified and/or print the FSC logo on the final product. FSC, whose mission is to promote environmentally sound, socially beneficial and economically prosperous management of the world's forests, has earned a reputation as the most rigorous, credible forest certification system available.

## What is Chain-of-Custody?

According to FSC, COC is the path taken by raw materials harvested from an FSC-certified source as they move through processing, manufacturing, distribution, and printing until they are a final product ready for sale to the end consumer.

## About COC Certification

COC certification is an accreditation process conducted by independent, third party auditors. The certification allows companies manufacturing and marketing forest products to label them with the FSC logo, assuring their customers of their social and environmental responsibility. Avery Dennison is one of more than 3,700 FSC COC-certified companies in the U.S.



## The COC Certification Process

While accredited certifiers assess companies based on FSC's policies for COC, each certifier uses his or her own evaluative process, auditing systems to track certified material as it relates to each client's business. Once a company has received its COC certification, its handling of certified materials is reviewed annually by a certifier. In turn, FSC conducts annual audits of each accredited certifier to make sure he is following established policy guidelines.

## Obtaining COC Certification

Obtaining COC Certification is a five-step process.

1. Contact an FSC-accredited certifier. A list is available at [www.fscus.org/certifiers](http://www.fscus.org/certifiers).
2. Ask for and complete an application for certification. This will allow the certifier to determine if COC certification makes sense for your company.
3. Go through an on-site audit with the certifier. The certifier will come to your facility and determine whether the appropriate systems are in place to keep records of certified inventory. After completing the audit, the certifier will send you an assessment report for review.
4. Sign a certification contract. Should the certifier grant a COC certification, you will then sign a contract agreeing to the terms of the assessment.
5. Expect to be audited annually. Your certifier will conduct an on-site audit annually to make sure the terms of the certification agreement are being followed. Certifiers can also conduct short-notice inspections of your facilities and records.

## Transfer System

Avery Dennison, along with most fsc-certified companies use the transfer system. This means that we purchase FSC-certified products with a specific FSC claim and then sell that product along with its FSC claim to our customers.

## And if I Don't Get Certified?

Then the line of certification – and the chain of custody – end with Avery Dennison. You will be unable to represent the labeling and packaging materials as certified and will not be able to print the FSC logo on the finished products.

## Do My Customers Have to be Certified too?

As long as your customers are applying the label and not changing, altering, or remanufacturing the label, there is no need for them to be COC certified in order for the label to carry the FSC certification and logo. Companies along the supply chain that take legal ownership of FSC-certified forest products and wish to make an FSC claim through sales and delivery documents about their products, or label products with the FSC on-product label, must be Chain of Custody certified. CoC certification is required for companies that have legal ownership and want to do one of the following:

1. Pass on an FSC claim to customers through sales and delivery documents.
2. Apply the FSC on-product label.
3. Process or transform FSC certified products and materials.

## About Avery Dennison's New Price-Neutral FSC-Certified Label Portfolio

Reflecting our commitment to innovations that contribute to the environmental health of our planet, our new North American FSC-certified portfolio contains more than 500 specifications and five coated paper facestocks designed to improve sustainability options for converters as well as brand owners.

For more information about the Avery Dennison FSC-certified label portfolio, visit [label.averydennison.com/sustainability](http://label.averydennison.com/sustainability).



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