

The Quick Guide to MSC for RETAIL COMPANIES



You can demonstrate your commitment to sustainable seafood and healthier oceans by displaying the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) ecolabel on seafood products. The ecolabel is an assurance that the seafood can be traced through the entire supply chain to a source that has been certified to the MSC's global standard for sustainable, well-managed fisheries.



There are three ways in which retailers can become involved in the MSC program. Your company can apply the MSC ecolabel to private label products, national brands or fresh seafood case items. Your company can pursue one or all of these options.

1. Private Label Products (Departments: frozen, pre-packaged, canned, health supplements)

If your company has a private label brand, it is easy to display the MSC ecolabel on products from MSC-certified fisheries. MSC Chain of Custody certification is not necessary if your supplier prepares the seafood product in final format.

WHAT TO DO

… STEP 1: Identifying MSC-certified products

Some of your current private label products may already come from MSC-certified fisheries. In other cases, you might consider adding MSC-certified seafood. To identify which fisheries are MSC-certified, see the list at www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/certified.

… STEP 2: MSC Chain of Custody certification—for your suppliers

Your private label supplier must hold MSC Chain of Custody certification for seafood traceability. Your MSC commercial contact can help you identify MSC Chain of Custody-certified suppliers, or search our supplier directory at www.msc.org/where-to-buy/find-a-supplier. MSC can also work with your current supplier to help them achieve MSC Chain of Custody certification.

… STEP 3: The MSC ecolabel

Next, ask your MSC-certified supplier to include the MSC ecolabel and claim on your private label packaging. In order to use the ecolabel, you or your supplier signs a logo licensing agreement with MSC. In most cases, the supplier holds the logo license agreement, but some retailers choose to be the logo license holder.

The logo license agreement allows a company to display the MSC ecolabel on its private label products. The logo license holder pays an annual fee and a volume royalty for use of this ecolabel, calculated at 0.5% of the sales of the products to consumers. The agreement also allows the logo license holder to use the MSC ecolabel on promotional materials about its MSC-certified products.

If the supplier is the logo license holder, MSC recommends that your company enter into a Marketing Undertaking Agreement that allows you to use the MSC ecolabel on promotional materials about your MSC-certified offerings. There is no fee for the Marketing Undertaking Agreement. Your company will also be asked to sign a Brand Owner Undertaking, which is a simple recognition of the MSC ecolabel's Trade Mark terms.

2. National Brands

(Departments: frozen, pre-packaged, canned, health supplements)

Sourcing MSC-certified national brand products is similar to sourcing MSC-certified private label products. It is likely that some of the national brand seafood products already sold in your store come from MSC-certified fisheries. MSC Chain of Custody certification is not necessary if your supplier prepares the seafood product in final format.

WHAT TO DO

... STEP 1: Identifying MSC-certified products

Some of your store's national brand seafood products may already come from MSC-certified fisheries or may even already display the MSC ecolabel. To identify these, see the list of MSC-certified fisheries at www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/certified and the list of MSC-certified seafood products at www.msc.org/where-to-buy.

... STEP 2: MSC Chain of Custody certification—for your suppliers

Your national brand supplier must have MSC Chain of Custody certification for seafood traceability, as well as a license to use the MSC ecolabel. Your MSC commercial contact can help you identify suppliers, or search our supplier directory at www.msc.org/where-to-buy/find-a-supplier. MSC can also work with your current supplier to help them achieve MSC Chain of Custody certification.

... STEP 3: The MSC ecolabel

Encourage your MSC-certified supplier to include the MSC ecolabel and claim on their national brand packaging. This use of the MSC ecolabel would be covered under the supplier's existing MSC Chain of Custody certification and MSC logo licensing agreement. The suppliers would be responsible for paying the MSC logo usage royalty fee on these seafood products, which is calculated at 0.5% of the sales of the product to your company.



3. Fresh Seafood Case

Providing MSC-certified seafood at your fresh counter is a signal to the public of your company's strong commitment to sustainable seafood, and it entails a few additional steps. Placing the MSC ecolabel on fresh counter seafood items requires MSC Chain of Custody certification for your company, as well as a logo license agreement.

WHAT TO DO

... STEP 1: Identifying MSC-certified products

Some of your current fresh seafood case products may already come from MSC-certified fisheries. You might also consider adding seafood products to your fresh case because they are MSC-certified. To identify which fisheries are MSC-certified, see www.msc.org/track-a-fishery/certified.

... STEP 2: MSC Chain of Custody certification—for your store

Chain of Custody certification is MSC's unique traceability assurance. Every company along the supply chain that physically handles or takes ownership of MSC-certified seafood must be Chain of Custody-certified in order for the final product to display the MSC ecolabel.

.... STEP 2: *continued*

A. Prepare your company's traceability system.

The MSC Chain of Custody audit will require your business to have systems in place that ensure MSC-certified seafood is kept separate from non-certified seafood and that adequate records are kept to demonstrate that your company uses these systems for every MSC-certified seafood product that passes through your business. In most cases this is straightforward, since companies already operate product identification and tracking systems for ISO 9000, recall programs or other tracking purposes.

MSC has prepared a detailed guide to help you prepare for the audit, called "MyMSC." You can find this document on the MSC website.

B. Hire a certifier.

In the MSC website's "Get Certified" pages (www.msc.org/get-certified) you will find a list of certifiers who conduct MSC Chain of Custody audits. These are all third-party certifiers accredited by Accreditation Services International. We suggest you request quotes and client references from at least two certifiers.

C. Conduct preliminary review.

In an initial conversation with the certifier you have hired, you may be asked questions about your current product identification and tracking systems to gauge them against the MSC Chain of Custody standard. This allows the certifier to advise you of any issues that may need to be addressed before certification can be granted. This preliminary review may be conducted over the phone or by email, or it may take place during the on-site audit. It helps to prepare you and the certifier for the on-site audit(s).

D. Undergo the on-site audit(s).

Retailers that have multiple stores will undergo audits at a sampling of its sites and at its head office. During each audit, the certifier you have hired will refer to responses you gave during the preliminary review to verify that these practices are in place within your company.

If the certifier verifies that you are meeting the requirements of the MSC Chain of Custody Standard, you will be awarded a Chain of Custody certificate.

Your Chain of Custody certification lasts for three years and requires regular surveillance audits. The frequency of these audits will be determined during the on-site audit, based on the traceability risk factors involved with the seafood your company sells. The standard audit frequency is once every 12 months.

.... STEP 3: **The MSC ecolabel**

After your company has become Chain of Custody-certified, contact your MSC commercial manager, who will send you a logo license agreement for your signature.

The logo license agreement entails an annual fee. Additionally, your company incurs a 0.5% royalty fee based on the volume of MSC-certified seafood it purchases for its fresh case.

After the agreement is signed, you may use the MSC ecolabel in your fresh case to identify MSC-certified species to your customers and to promote your commitment to sustainable seafood through partnership with the MSC.



TO LEARN MORE about how your retail company can demonstrate its commitment to sustainable seafood through Marine Stewardship Council, please contact your MSC commercial manager or visit www.msc.org