

The Better Coffee Standard

English Abstract

The Better Coffee Documents

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Full version: thebettercoffee.org/the-standard



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Explore

The Better Coffee Standard

Shared language for coffee people;
Future-ready and ethical coffee.

The **Better Coffee** is an idea, The Endeavour, and a language of action. It is for you.

It grows from the lived experience of the coffee market you know—its price pressures, inequalities, and narratives of quality separated from working conditions.

The Better Coffee proposes another way to organize this reality: one where coffee has a future and the dignity of coffee people stands at the center.

It is a space for cooperation, education, and quality evaluation grounded in responsibility. It speaks of **“better”** coffee as coffee that is ethical and able to endure in its relationships with people and the environment. It offers 20 living values that reorder the inefficient logic of the coffee market and provides a language to name experience and make decisions aligned with what truly matters.

Why The Standard exists?

The Better Coffee Standard exists to give structure to this way of working and make it shared. It defines the system, stabilizes its key terms, and describes its mechanisms of action—from education and forms of cooperation to quality evaluation.

The Standard connects thinking with practice. It enables the creation of initiatives, projects, and structures grounded in coherent values. It establishes a point of reference that allows for consistent action, even under market pressure and constant change.

The Better Coffee Endeavour as a Field of Shared Action

The Better Coffee Endeavour is the shared field of action formed by individuals and entities who organize their practice within this orientation.

It includes formal structures—such as The Places, The Curriculum, and The Ranking Method—as well as the everyday

decisions made in working with coffee.

Participation begins with action. Each decision aligned with the language and direction of The Better Coffee strengthens the shared space. In this way, The Endeavour builds real collective capacity—through cooperation, knowledge exchange, and responsibility for the present and future of coffee.

Paths of Participation

The Better Coffee begins with a decision. With how you buy, roast, teach, ferment, sell, and speak about coffee. Structure comes later. Direction comes first.

You can begin today. It takes only one area of your work grounded in The Better Coffee Standard. Then quality stops being a slogan and becomes responsibility. Language stops being decoration and starts shaping relationships and prices. Every decision builds a specific market model — even when it appears neutral.

If you want more — there are three paths.

Path A — The Places

The Places are where values begin to operate economically. Your farm. Your roastery. Your café. Your lab. Any entity and any individual can become The Place — including as an employee.

You enter a network of relationships and a real circulation of cooperation. You retain autonomy while gaining a shared framework of action and a collective in which responsibility circulates among participants.

A license opens access to consultations, tools, and exchange within the system. The Places form a collective coffee market grounded in the values of The Standard.

You can sell more steadily. Build stronger trade relationships. Strengthen your position without losing coherence. At the beginning, you receive three years of unlimited consultations with The Trainers and the support of other The Places.

Path B – The Curriculum

The Curriculum increases your agency. It combines science, practice, and critical thinking about coffee as a system. You learn to see process, power, costs, and dependencies. You learn to act beyond ready-made formulas and myths that sustain harmful arrangements.

Ten courses. A multidisciplinary approach. From perception and sensory science to economics, power, and ethics. Knowledge translates into decisions. Decisions translate into economic resilience.

You can join a course, co-organize one locally, or become The Trainer. Access mechanisms support different financial capacities.

Details:
thebettercoffee.org

Path C – The Ranking Method

TRM evaluates a specific lot of green coffee and ends with a formal report used in trade, improvement, and strategic partnerships.

Two dimensions are assessed together: Sensory Analysis and Practice Review. Flavor and production conditions – employment, economics, safety, environment – form one picture of quality.

The result is one of three thresholds: Below the Red Line, Essential, High-End. Each defines next steps: stabilizing conditions, improving a selected area, or protecting achieved quality and relationships. Around it, we organize cooperation and support.

Producers, importers, roasteries, or partners can initiate TRM. The Better Coffee Office leads the process, and authorized The Trainers conduct the evaluation through a coded procedure safeguarding impartiality and credibility.

The report increases transparency, clarifies relationships, and links price to documented practices and sensory profile. For some, it supports more stable sales and stronger negotiating power.

Projects and Cooperation

The Better Coffee has its own cooperation infrastructure: Matrix + Element (M+E) – endeavour.thebettercoffee.org.

Projects, conversations, coordination, and consultations take place there. The server remains under our collective control. Communication operates without commercial tracking.

Together, we build a practice capable of shifting the paradigm – toward a model in which coffee and the people working with it have a future grounded in dignity, agency, and durability.

You choose the level of involvement. The direction and values remains shared.

The Better Coffee

20 Core Values

Do not count how many stand beside you;
ask whether you have acted justly toward others.

Twenty Core Values form the core of The Better Coffee. They set the direction and serve as the ethical compass on which The Standard and The Endeavour rest.

Each shapes decisions, relationships, and the organization of work. Together they form one coherent framework for the future of coffee and coffee people.

What follows is a concise orientation in which each value appears in a distilled, operative form.

- **Dignity** – Life and work with personhood and agency.
- **Meet Needs** – Needs as the condition of shared life.
- **Well-being** – Health, comfort, and balance in everyday life.
- **Radical Equality** – Equal value and equal access.
- **Radical Democracy** – Everyone has a voice.
- **Naming Power** – Power named becomes visible.

- **Freedom from Authority** – Freedom from external coercion and imposed will.
- **Refusal** – Conscious refusal to participate in harmful orders.
- **Cooperation** – Acting together without domination.
- **Mutual Aid** – Reciprocal support among equals.
- **Economic Self-Defense** – Defense against the economic violence of the system.
- **Labor and Collective** – Protection of workers through collective action.
- **Efficiency** – Effectiveness in shifting the paradigm.
- **Shared Knowledge** – Knowledge as a commons.
- **Sensory Justice** – Honest language of sensory analysis.
- **Truth-Seeking** – Reaching toward truth and real conditions of action.
- **Planetary Care** – Living within planetary limits.

- **Cultural Plurality** – Diversity as a value.
- **Non-harm** – Do not harm; care for others.
- **Sufficiency** – Enough instead of accumulation.

Full definitions are available in Chapter 5 of The Better Coffee Standard.

Language Shapes Action

In The Better Coffee, language is not a neutral tool of description. It is an infrastructure of action. It determines what can be named, evaluated, questioned, or ignored. For this reason, we treat definition as an act of responsibility for meaning – a shared reference point that enables cooperation and disagreement within The Standard.

The word **better** ceases to signify a hierarchical “better than.” It denotes an ethical direction and an orientation toward the future. **Quality** is no longer solely a sensory category; it unites flavor with the conditions of

production. **Efficiency** refers to action that produces a real effect in the world of coffee people. **Implementation** is a process of continuous alignment of practice with values, rather than a declaration of compliance. **Formula** names the fixed mental shortcuts that replace inquiry with repetition and shield existing habits from scrutiny, while **Specialty** reveals itself as a label produced by the system to elevate selected fragments and obscure structural injustice.

Red ink. provides language for articulating experiences of unfreedom. **Coffee people** includes all those whose lives and work are intertwined with coffee – together with their real economic and social context.

Full definitions of these terms are available in The Better Coffee Standard. Here we signal one essential point: language is an area of responsibility, and the way we name things co-creates the future in which we act.

The Better Coffee

Practice and Benefits

Without The Better Coffee, we only reproduce the practices that cause suffering and deny coffee people a future.

The Better Coffee is a system of action for coffee people that connects ethical orientation with concrete market practice. It is at once an idea and an ideology, an ethical compass, a paradigm-shift hypothesis, a system and its structures, a method of work, a set of values, The Endeavour, a body of good practices, a language of responsibility, an act of refusal, a form of political action, an

open space, and an orientation that relates directly to your work.

Anyone who acts in alignment with The Better Coffee Standard is part of The Endeavour – a shared field of action that, through collective practice, works to improve the lives of coffee people here and now while building a better future for coffee and for the people connected to it.

Structures of The Better Coffee Endeavour

The Better Coffee Endeavour operates through its formal structures. Each fulfills a distinct role; together they form a coherent system of action.

The Places invite you to join a network of mutual relationships grounded in the 20 Core Values and operating in a real economic dimension. They support trade, production, and the building of stable partnerships. You benefit from the presence of others, and others benefit from yours. The Places are not a club, but a living cooperative of independent companies and individuals co-creating a shared market rooted in responsibility.

The Curriculum offers education aligned with real needs, where knowledge is the goal rather than a certificate on the wall. Participating in and co-organizing courses strengthens your agency and the development of other coffee people.

The Ranking Method is a method of coffee quality evaluation. It combines sensory analysis with an assessment of production conditions – ethical, ecological, economic, and organizational.

Defining your product's threshold initiates further action: strengthening areas that require improvement and protecting what already functions well. It also initiates structured sales support – both within The Places and beyond the system.

The Trainers lead courses within The Curriculum and participate in evaluations under The Ranking Method. They bring competence, experience, and responsibility for the quality of both the educational process and the assessment. For two of the ten courses, prior teaching experience is not required, so you may apply now.

The Better Coffee Office coordinates the entire The Endeavour.

It safeguards the coherence of language, procedures, and relationships, and supports participants in using The Standard and the system's structures. It also conducts dialogue with investors in production, trade, and infrastructure initiatives, as well as with sponsors of solidarity actions, strengthening the stability and development of the whole system.

Collective Stability and Economic Independence

Through these structures, you build stability, relationships, and economic activity rooted in values. You act within a collective based on mutual aid and shared responsibility, where long-term orientation replaces short-term gain.

Common goals grow from sufficiency, meeting real needs, well-being, and the protection of people working with coffee – not from domination or accumulation. Step by step, you build greater

independence from a market that too often extracts your labor and resources, capturing value while erasing values.

Access and Solidarity Mechanisms

Access to the structures of The Better Coffee is strengthened by two systemic mechanisms that organize solidarity and materially increase accessibility.

The first is Pay-It-Forward – The Better Coffee solidarity fund, supported through donations, sponsorship, and the Three-Tier Pricing mechanism.

Many products and services within The Endeavour operate on three pricing levels: Sustainable – reflecting the real, fair value of the work; Supporter – including an additional contribution to Pay-It-Forward; and Solidarity – reduced for individuals and entities whose current situation does not allow them to cover the Sustainable price. In justified cases, this

may also include free access or the provision of a product as a donation.

Access to The Better Coffee Endeavour itself remains informal and free of charge. It begins with familiarity with The Better Coffee Standard and a decision: “I want to work with coffee in this way.” From that moment, you act within a shared orientation. For ongoing contact and cooperation, you may join our communication infrastructure on Matrix + Element.

Licensing, Access, and Economic Responsibility

Access to the structures is paid or license-based. This protects the integrity of The Better Coffee and enables identification, coordination, alignment, and real cooperation.

It orders the relationship between the autonomy of participants and shared action within the system.

The mechanisms of Pay-It-Forward and Three-Tier Pricing operate

throughout. You may choose the level at which you support others, or draw on the support offered by the community. The aim is to keep these solutions among the most accessible for coffee people, in proportion to the real value of the tools and benefits they provide.

The Curriculum consists of paid courses. Prices vary depending on location, trainer, and scope. The fee covers participation and the learning process – the value lies in knowledge and the development of competence. You may also generate income through The Curriculum by organizing courses locally or by becoming a The Trainer.

Licenses for The Places and The Trainers may be obtained via thebettercoffee.org or directly through The Better Coffee Office. The onboarding process introduces you to the system’s structures and opens access to the full range of benefits.

You receive ongoing support from The Better Coffee Office and from other The Places and The Trainers.

We build teams that operate collectively – without hierarchy and without relations of subordination.

The Ranking Method is a paid service, as it includes two advanced analyses and coordination of the entire process. In relation to the value of the assessed product, it represents a fraction of its price – an investment that strengthens future sales and trade relationships.

Within the process, you receive support for transparency in your production and work, post-evaluation consultations, assistance in communicating results, and the option of renewable audits. The Ranking Method structures quality in a way that translates into trust, stability, and long-term partnerships.

Licenses define the scope of commitments, access to tools, consultations, and networks of cooperation, as well as the use of The Better Coffee language and designations –

including the use of “The Place” in your brand communication or “The Trainer” in reference to your professional role.

Participation remains voluntary and reversible. Licenses are valid for 2-3 years, providing stability of cooperation and periodic renewal of shared orientation with other participants in The Better Coffee Endeavour.

How to Read

The Better Coffee Standard

Reading is the beginning.
Action gives direction.

The full version of The Better Coffee Standard spans 112 pages and consists of 13 chapters.

It presents the complete architecture of the system: from purpose and orientation, through language and definitions, Core Values, and operational structures, to principles of coordination, implementation, and the formal scope of the document.

The current official version can always be downloaded in full at **thebettercoffee.org**.

You may read The Standard linearly – from the first page to the last – or in sections, returning to selected chapters depending on your present needs.

Chapter 2 (Language, Definitions, and Communication) plays a particular role and is worth revisiting regularly. The definitions function as

operative tools – including in texts published on **redinkcoffee.com**. The document may be read individually, discussed within a team, translated for personal understanding, or analyzed using digital tools, including working with the PDF in AI systems. The Standard is designed as a text for real practice, not a one-time reading.

Caution: Both The Better Coffee Standard and this Abstract are made available under the Creative Commons CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 license. You may copy and redistribute them in full, without modification and without commercial use, provided proper attribution is given. Openness serves to allow the language and orientation of The Better Coffee to travel further – while preserving the integrity of the document.

This Abstract is one language version among others. Additional versions are published at thebettercoffee.org and may expand according to

organizational capacity. In case of doubt or interpretative discrepancies, the full official version of The Better Coffee Standard remains the reference point.

For project work, coordination, and dialogue, use the infrastructure at **endeavour.thebettercoffee.org** (Matrix + Element). For reflection, commentary, and development of The Better Coffee language, visit redinkcoffee.com.

Ring the bell.



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