



Photo © Sean Hawkey.



## THE CASHEW JOURNEY

What are the steps that Equal Exchange cashews from small-scale farmers go through before ending up in your hand? **LET'S FIND OUT.**



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## **STEP 1**

Cashew trees are large evergreens that thrive in tropical climates.



## **STEP 2**

The tree flowers and a small fruit begins to grow at the bottom of the flower. Attached to the bottom of the fruit is the cashew nut. The nut is not in fact a true tree nut, but is really the fruit of the tree, since it contains the seed for future germination. For this reason, the cashew fruit is often called the false or accessory fruit.



### **STEP 3**

The fruit can be yellow, orange, or red.



#### **STEP 4**

When the cashew fruit falls to the ground, the farmers remove the nuts and gather them into 50-lb. sacks.



## **STEP 5**

The nuts are dried for three days in the sun to eliminate unwanted moisture.



## **STEP 6**

The nuts are then brought to the processing plant.

A close-up photograph of cashews being sorted through a corrugated metal drum. The drum's surface is covered in a grid of circular perforations. The cashews are piled on the surface, and some are visible through the holes. The lighting is bright, highlighting the metallic texture of the drum and the natural color of the cashews. A red and white graphic element is present in the top right corner.

## **STEP 7**

The cashews are sorted by size through a corrugated drum.

## **STEP 8**

To loosen the shell the nuts are put into a steamer for about 50 minutes.





## **STEP 9**

The cashews cool overnight. The shell is then carefully cracked open (to keep it whole) and the nut is removed.



## **STEP 10**

Next the cashews are placed on trays and baked in an oven. This oven is solar-powered and the nuts bake for 12 hours.



## **STEP 11**

The nuts still have an outer film that must be removed.



## **STEP 12**

The outer layer of film is removed and the cashews are polished one at a time. The nuts are sorted into piles of wholes, halves, and pieces.



### **STEP 13**

The cashews are put into aluminum bags and vacuum-sealed to keep their freshness.



## STEP 14

Finally, the vacuum-sealed bags are placed in boxes and delivered to port to be shipped to the U.S. and ultimately to you!





**FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
[equalexchange.coop/growtogether](http://equalexchange.coop/growtogether)**

