

# **A Review of the Draft Standard for Trial Use**

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Opening Stakeholder Dialogue  
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# Presentation Overview



- Development of the Draft Standard
- Purpose and Structure
- Review of Requirements



# Development of the Draft Standard

# Brief SCS Background

Standards Development, Certification, Testing,  
Auditing, Training

- Sustainable Agriculture
- Sustainable Forest Management (FSC)
- Sustainable Fisheries Management (MSC)
- Life-Cycle Impact Assessment
- Environmental Product Claims Certification
- Sustainability Procurement Specifications

# Trends



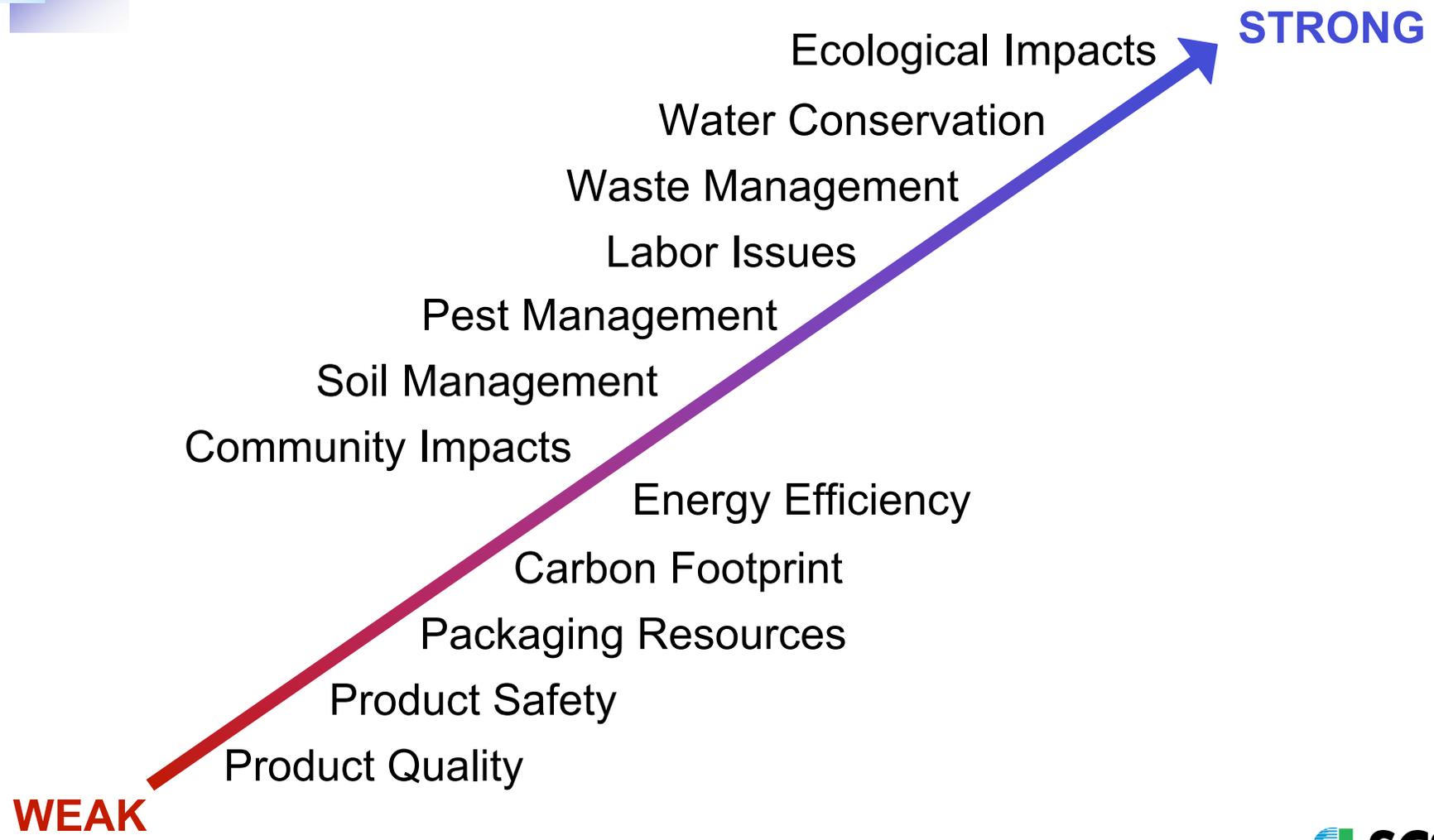
# Potential Common Denominators

- Child and Forced Labor
- Workplace Discrimination
- Health and Safety
- Wages
- Working Conditions
- Freedom of Association
- Community Engagement
- Product Safety and Purity
- Product Quality
- Land Management
- Crop Management
- Water Usage
- Energy Efficiency
- Resource Conservation
- Waste Management
- Reduced Carbon Footprint
- Company Ethics

# From Cut Flowers and Potted Plants to Draft Sustainable Ag Standard

- 2003** SCS asked to examine existing sustainable flower labeling programs and provide a Gap Analysis comparing and contrasting these initiatives, including relative strengths and limitations.
- 2004** Need for a unified, non-proprietary standard for North American market identified. ANSI option identified. VeriFlora draft standard developed for flowers and plants. Pilot projects initiated, and stakeholder input sought.
- 2005** VeriFlora publicly launched on World Environment Day, with announcement that the standard would be moved to public domain through ANSI process.
- Work on provisions for broader sector application ensued. Survey of existing and emerging standards and initiatives conducted, and further expert input sought.
- 2007** Publication of Draft Standard for Trial Use (SCS-001) announced by ANSI. Draft standard contains cut flower and potted plant annexes.

# Correlating Initiatives



# Factors Considered in Development of the Draft Standard

- Coalesce existing standards, based on goal of attaining significant environmental and social benefits
- Provide clear benchmarks of performance
- Apply a life-cycle lens to avoid hidden trade-offs
- Ensure that requirements are auditable
- Meet public / community expectations
- Set the stage for continuing improvement, whether the standard is used for internal benchmarking, supply chain systems, or certification of public claims

# Environmental, Social and Quality Benefits Observed to Date

## *Example: Certification of Cut Flowers*

- Increased searches for pest management alternatives, and intensified search for and use of biological control methods (e.g., beneficial insects and fungi).
- Reductions in the use of agrochemicals, resulting in cost savings.
- Increased worker protection (e.g., through ban of WHO 1a and 1b).
- Worker satisfaction resulting in quantifiable reductions in employee turnover.
- Increased worker training (e.g., alternative pest management methods, worker safety).
- Improvements in water management and soil erosion control.
- Increased application of cold-chain management principles and practices to improve product quality.



# Purpose, Structure, Intended Uses, Scope and Goals

# Purpose

*“Establish a comprehensive framework and common set of environmental, social, and quality requirements by which to demonstrate that an agricultural product has been produced and handled in a sustainable manner, from soil preparation and seed planting through production, harvest, post-harvest handling, and distribution for sale.”*

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- Intended for food, fiber, floral and fuel crops.
- Does not address livestock, dairy, or wild crops.

# Sustainable Agriculture Framework

## CATEGORIES

Environmental  
Sustainability

Social / Economic  
Responsibility

Product  
Integrity

## ELEMENTS

Sustainable Crop Production  
Ecosystem Protection  
Resource Conservation & Energy Efficiency  
Integrated Waste Management

Fair Labor Practices  
Community Benefits

Product Quality  
Product Safety / Purity

# Basic Structure



1. Normative references (Section 4) and definitions (Section 5)
2. Core Standard (cross-sectoral)
  - Prerequisites (Section 6)
  - Environmental, Social and Product Integrity Requirements  
Addresses producers (Section 7-14), handlers (Section 15-18), and processors (Section 19)
3. Sector-Specific Annexes
4. Two-tiered approach to provide incentive for improvement
  - Tier 1: Minimum sustainability performance
  - Tier 2: Best practices
5. Certification Appendix

# Conformity Requirements

## *Section 3*

### **Tier 1**

All “critical requirements” + 90% of remaining requirements.

### **Tier 2**

Tier 1 conformity + 80% of Tier 2 requirements.

Can apply to an entire Agricultural Production Operation or Handling Operation or a portion of that operation.

# Intended Uses

- Guide internal benchmarking and improvement
- Support supply chain management / scorecards
- Support public claims through certification
- Establish a reference benchmark

# Scope:

## Establish practices that...

- Build and maintain a healthy agro-ecosystem, based on healthy soil structure and functioning.
- Preferentially employ biological, mechanical, and cultural methods to control pest and disease vectors.
- Phase out use of agrochemicals that pose acute or chronic health risks or ecotoxic risks, moving toward organic practices.
- Establish minimum acceptable benchmarks to protect edible crops from food pathogens.
- Yield products with high nutritional value and meet national organic standards for purity in terms of pesticide residues /contaminants.

# Scope:

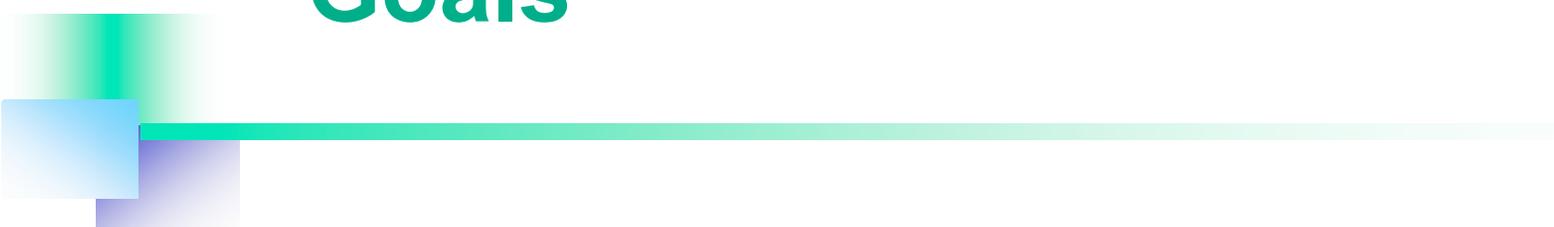
## Establish practices that...

- Protect the surrounding ecology, including high ecological value habitats/species, waterways, riparian/wetland habitats.
- Minimize overall packaging while maintaining the quality and appearance of the product.
- Progress toward the most energy efficient methods for growing, transporting and handling crops.
- Attain maximum carbon storage level per hectare while retaining overall productivity and yields.
- Establish a safe, equitable workplace, and establish productive engagement with the surrounding community.
- Minimize packaging resource use through reducing, recycling, and re-use of packaging materials.

# Goals

- Provide a uniform standard and assessment matrix for evaluating sustainability performance.
- Encourage the agricultural sector to implement best practices in terms of environmental, social and quality performance.
- Stimulate continuing improvement and innovation in agricultural production practices.
- Enhance agro-ecosystem structure and functioning, leading to increased terrestrial carbon sequestration in soils by up to 25% over the next 25 years.
- Increase the overall energy efficiency of agricultural systems by up to 30% by 2025.
- Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural systems, including production, distribution and sales, by up to 30% by 2025.

# Goals



- Encourage and increase local bioregional production and consumption of agricultural products.
- Encourage an optimal balance in the use of arable lands for the production of food, fiber and biofuel crops.
- Raise public awareness about the significant sustainability issues and solutions associated with agricultural crop production, and to stimulate consumer purchases that reinforce sustainable agricultural production and handling.



# Review of Requirements

# Prerequisites (Producers)

## Compliance with Country Regulations

### Agricultural Production Plan

- Crop information
- Farm information
- Prior land use
- Production steps
- Pest/disease management
- Agroecosystem health
- Ecosystem management
- Carbon sequestration
- Energy use
- Quality Management
- Traceability practices
- Recordkeeping

### Traceability / Chain-of-custody

- Registry conformant products
- Product identification
- Shipment tracking records
- Physical separation
- Prohibition of filling orders with non-conformant products

# Prerequisites (Handlers)

## Compliance with Country Regulations

### Handling Plan

- Process steps
- Pest/disease management
- Quality Management
- Traceability practices
- Recordkeeping

### Traceability / Chain-of-custody

- Registry conformant products
- Order taking and filling
- Lot number on shipping docs
- Product ID and shipment tracking records
- Physical separation
- Prohibition of filling orders
- Mass balance of conformant products
- Product List

# Sustainable Crop Management

## **Pest/Disease Management**

- Apply least toxic pest and disease management and control systems.
- Ban WHO 1a and 1b pesticides.
- Simplified procedures for certified organic companies.
- Integrate organic practices as proven practical, with organic conversion timeframes determined per crop/ region.
- Phase out use of synthetic/botanical pesticides with known health/eco-toxic risks, based on risk assessment matrix.

## **Agro-Ecosystem Health: Soil Fertility, Soil Conservation and Erosion Control, and Soil Quality and Functional Biodiversity**

- Maintain or improve functional biodiversity, as well as the physical, chemical, and biological condition of the soil, in a manner that minimizes soil erosion, and does not contribute to contamination of crops, soil, or water by plant nutrients, pathogens, heavy metals, or residues.
- Conversion over time to organic soil enhancement and fertility practices to enhance soil fertility, conservation and erosion control, biodiversity protection, and plant nutrition.

## **Crop Mgmt: Varieties, Cultivars, Seedstocks, Planting Patterns**

- Optimize the use of varieties, cultivars and seedstocks, without compromising other aspects of conformance.

# Ecosystem Protection

## Habitat Management/Protection

- Establish practices that minimize effects on natural ecosystems, protecting regional habitats and species through measures such as the institution of adequate buffer zones and use of native plants.
- Avoid adding any contaminant substances to the environment that could affect natural ecological processes, with appropriate monitoring systems in place.

## Mitigation and Set-asides

- Ameliorate or remediate any ecological damage caused — for example, as a result of clearing land for cultivation or development of infrastructural or other operational support mechanisms— either through habitat restoration or other forms of remediation, or through off-site” compensatory actions as land set-asides.

# Resource Conservation and Energy Efficiency

## Water Resource Management

Conserve water through use of:

- Effective water delivery systems
- Conservation and monitoring methods and technologies
- Institution of water quality management practices

## Energy Resource Management

- Monitor energy consumption
- Pursue increased energy efficiency in the production, handling and transport of agricultural products
- Calculate the energy / greenhouse gases per agricultural production unit
- Institute practices over time that improve energy efficiency, increase carbon storage and reduce greenhouse gases

## Packaging Resources

Minimize the resources used for product packaging, and associated impacts, without compromising product integrity, such as through:

- Reduction of packaging components
- Use of packaging materials made with recycled content
- Reuse of packaging materials
- Sourcing of packaging materials from sustainable sources

# Integrated Waste Management

## **Management of Agrochemical and Other Hazardous Chemicals and Wastes**

Implement pollution prevention practices/procedures that:

- Prevent agrochemical and other hazardous chemical run-off or contamination from agricultural production sites into environment.
- Minimize effects to human health and the environment from agrochemical use and other hazardous materials.
- Ensure proper disposal or recycling of hazardous chemicals and their containers.

## **Crop Residue, Product Waste and Other Non-Chemical Waste Management**

Minimize crop residues, product waste and other non-chemical wastes through practices such as:

- Recycling.
- Composting.
- Institution of second harvest programs for edible crops.

# Fair Labor Practices

## Hiring and Employment Practices

- Hiring, wages and non-discrimination.
- Working hours and overtime.
- Freedom of association, right to organize and collective bargaining.
- Vacation and sick leave.
- Prohibition of child and forced labor.

## Workplace Conditions

- Access to housing, potable water and sanitary facilities.
- Worker training.
- Occupational health and safety.
- Human resources management.

## Worker and Worker Family Access to Services

- Access to education.
- Access to health services.
- Access to transportation.

# Community Benefits

## **Addressing Local and Regional Community Impacts**

- Assess impacts the surrounding community.
- Seek cooperative strategies for minimizing such impacts.

## **Providing Local and Regional Community Support**

- Develop policies to benefit the surrounding community in terms of local hiring, procurement, and infrastructure maintenance.

## **Economic Viability**

- Demonstrate financial viability.

# Product Quality

## Quality, Appearance and Grade

- Adhere to recognized appearance and grading criteria.
- Institute storage and shipping practices to protect quality.

## Product Loss

- Monitor the extent of product losses in production, storage, and shipment.
- Take quality assurance measures to minimize such losses.

# Product Safety / Purity

## Food Safety (Edible Crops Only)

- Written food safety management procedures
- Undergo third-party GAP/GMP food safety management audits, meeting minimum score of 80 on 0-100 scale.
- Written emergency procedures for product quarantine, recall, client notification, confirmation testing, source investigation, correction action steps.

## Contaminant Residue Management

For Edible crops, ensure that:

- Residues of any pesticide registered for use do not exceed the levels permitted under the USDA NOP (5% of US EPA tolerances).
- Residues of any metals, industrial chemical contaminants, drug and chemical residues and natural toxins conform to US FDA standards.

For Non-Edible crops, ensure that:

- At the time of product shipment or handling, no topical residues at levels that could cause a health risk from dermal transfer.

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