Madison, WI, January 19, 2010 – After a two month application submission and review period, Leonardo Academy announces the appointment of seven new members to the SCS-001 Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee:

1. Steve Flick, Show Me Energy Cooperative (Producer)
2. Bill Norman, National Cotton Council (User)
3. Kindley Walsh Lawlor, Gap Inc. (User)
4. Andrew Manale, Soil and Water Conservation Society/ USEPA (Environmentalist)
5. LaRhea Pepper, Organic Exchange (Environmentalist)
6. Dr. John Fagan, Earth Open Source/Global ID Group Inc. (Environmentalist)
7. Douglas Constance, Sam Houston State University (General Interest)

These individuals will be filling seats vacated by Hans Brand of B&H Flowers, Frans Wielemaker of Dole Fresh Fruit International, Colleen Kohlsaat of Levi Strauss & Company, Suzy Friedman of Environmental Defense Fund, Ron Strochlic of the California Institute of Rural Studies, David Pimentel of Cornell University and John Kukoly of QAI-SAI Global.

Leonardo Academy received 20 new applications for this round of Committee selections, bringing the total applicant pool to 140. “With each round of Committee openings,” Leonardo Academy President, Michael Arny, said, “the experience and expertise among the applicants with regard to sustainable agriculture issues becomes more and more pronounced, as does the overlap in stakeholder interests. Above all, our objective is always to maintain a balance of interests across the four stakeholder categories, as well as a diversity of perspectives, expertise and sector representation within each category.”

“While seats on the Standards Committee are coveted,” Arny continued, “the importance of subcommittee and observer participation cannot be overestimated. The contribution of non-Committee members has been incredibly valuable to both the Subcommittee work and previous Task Force work and will continue to play a critical role for the duration of the process.”

The objective of the National Sustainable Agriculture Standard initiative is to establish a comprehensive, continual improvement framework and common set of economic, environmental and social metrics by which to determine whether an agricultural crop has been produced in a sustainable manner. With participation from a broad diversity of stakeholders
from across the entire agricultural supply chain, this historic effort has the potential to strengthen all types of agricultural production in the U.S., in addition to rural communities and the ability of those communities to positively impact the environment, through science-based, performance-oriented criteria that meet the goals of sustainability.

Amanda Raster, Sustainable Agriculture Standard Project Manager, said, “As we move into the next phase of the standards-setting process, which will focus primarily on criteria development and indicator and metrics identification, expertise and input outside of the Committee will be essential. We encourage all process participants to reach out to their constituents and continue to engage them in this important work.”

To sign up for the subcommittees, apply for observer status, learn more about participating in the public review and comment process or to join the Sustainable Agriculture Standard email list, contact Amanda Raster at Leonardo Academy: amanda@leonardoacademy.org, (608) 280-0255.