New National Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee Members Announced

Madison, WI, April 22, 2010 – Leonardo Academy announces the appointment of two new members to the National Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee, within the Environmentalist and General Interest categories.

Michelle Wander, representing the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS), brings nearly 30 years of experience in soil science, agroecology, and farming systems research. She serves on the SWCS Policy Committee and also directs the Agroecology and Sustainable Agriculture Program at the University of Illinois. Her current research includes the influence of tillage and cover-cropping, climate change, crop diversity, production of bioenergy crops, and organic management on soils and soil processes. Ms. Wander is actively engaged in the review of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) tools for conservation programs and is experienced in the analysis of soil-related metrics used in standards and conservation models.

Jody Endres, Senior Regulatory Associate at the University of Illinois Energy Biosciences Institute (EBI), contributes a background in agriculture and over a decade of expertise in agricultural, environmental, and food law. Her current research focuses on sustainability standards for agriculture, particularly biomass. She has also conducted extensive research on laws affecting direct farm businesses. Ms. Endres serves on the Executive Committee of the EBI, as well as the Council on Sustainable Biomass Production (CSBP), where she is engaged in an effort to develop sustainability standards for biomass growers and bioenergy producers. In addition, she is the EBI’s representative to the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels and has been nominated by EBI to serve on the EPA Agricultural Advisory Committee. Through her work, Ms. Endres maintains strong alliances with the farming community and will bring valuable insights from biomass stakeholders in particular to the Sustainable Agriculture Standard development process.

Ms. Wander and Ms. Endres will be filling seats vacated by Andrew Manale of the Soil and Water Conservation Society and Timothy Mahoney of Oxfam America.

About the Sustainable Agriculture Standard
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.

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.

About the Standards Committee
The 58-member Standards Committee is developing the National Standard for Sustainable Agriculture under the rules of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The Committee consists of a skilled, diverse membership representing a broad range of perspectives from across all areas of agriculture, including commodity producers, specialty crop producers, agricultural product processors, food distributors, food retailers, environmental organizations, labor organizations, and industry trade associations, as well as government representatives, academics, regulators, and certifiers. Leonardo Academy is the ANSI-accredited standards development organization that is providing facilitation and process support for the Sustainable Agriculture Standard development initiative.

About Leonardo Academy
Leonardo Academy is a charitable nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing sustainability by leveraging innovative tools and information to motivate the competitive market. We develop integrative sustainability solutions designed to enhance the environmental stewardship, social responsibility and economic prosperity of organizations, corporations and individuals. By utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to sustainability education and implementation, we strive to make sustainability practical for everyone.