Madison, WI — The National Sustainable Agriculture Standard process is now progressing from principle development to content development. The new content being developed by the Subcommittees will be reviewed by the Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee at its next meeting, hosted by the GAP in the San Francisco Bay Area January 13-14, 2010. All interested parties are invited to submit applications to participate in the upcoming Subcommittee conference calls and to attend the Standards Committee meeting. New officers for the Standards Committee will be announced next week, as well as new Committee openings, and interested parties are encouraged to apply.

Leonardo Academy's American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved standard development process provides the balance needed across all interest categories for successfully developing a national Sustainable Agriculture Standard. This balance is accomplished through these four ANSI-approved interest categories of Producers, Users, Environmentalists and General Interest.

Michael Arny, president of Leonardo Academy, also addressed the resignation of 11 committee members on Monday of this week. “I am personally saddened by these resignations. The Leonardo Academy standards development staff and I have enjoyed working with these individuals and their participating organizations over the past two years. I will personally thank all of those who have resigned for their service on the Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee and let them know that they are welcome to rejoin this process in the future.”

Reasoning given by the individuals resigning was that they believe there is an inappropriate balance of membership on the Standards Committee. Leonardo Academy’s response is that we recognize their perspective but we disagree with their assessment. As noted above: Leonardo Academy's American National Standards Institute (ANSI) approved standard development process provides the balance across interest categories needed for developing a Sustainable Agriculture Standard that will be widely implemented and successful in the marketplace.

The Sustainable Agriculture Standard developed through the Leonardo Academy process will
reduce the pressures for the proliferation of purchasing company-specific and interest-group-specific sustainability standards, purchasing requirements and information.

About Leonardo Academy
Leonardo Academy is the ANSI-accredited standards development organization that is facilitating the Sustainable Agriculture Standard development process. Leonardo Academy is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing sustainability by leveraging innovative tools and information to motivate the competitive market. We work on a broad range of sustainability issues and provide comprehensive sustainability programs and services to help companies, organizations, families and individuals implement sustainability. Our programs and services include: organizational sustainability assessments and implementation; emissions footprints, reduction strategies and offsets; LEED® assessments, implementation and certification application preparation; sustainable land management; sustainability training; and sustainability standards development. http://www.leonardoacademy.org