New Members of National Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee Announced

Madison, WI, March 29, 2011 – Leonardo Academy announces the appointment of three new members to the National Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee in the Producers category: Fred Fleming, Lazy YJ Farms and Shepherd’s Grain; Kristine Ellor, Phillips Mushroom Farms; and Yvette Speziani, Sunburst Farms.

Fred Fleming, farmer, agronomist and founder of Lazy YJ Farms and Inland Empire Oilseeds, and co-founder of Reardan/Ritzville Seed Company, Columbia Plateau Producers and Shepherd’s Grain, brings more than 35 years of experience to the Standards Committee. His wide range of experience includes large-scale, dry land wheat barley production and hog to finished product farming operations; the founding of and involvement in the production, sourcing and testing of multi-genetic seed varieties, oilseed processing and refining, managing the direct marketing of milled grain into packaged flour through the value chain while maintaining profitable pricing. He will bring together partners and colleagues in and outside the committee for diverse solutions in sustainability. A business man and a true American farmer, he is a long-standing member of Washington Wheat Growers; Washington Farm Bureau; Genetic Marketing Group, LLC; Washington State Grange and serves as president of the board for the Washington Crop Improvement Association.

Kristine Ellor of the fourth-generation Phillips Mushroom Farms located in Pennsylvania is the largest producer of specialty mushrooms in the United States. Kristine has a life-long legacy of farming in dairy, livestock and specialty crops. Spending her entire professional career in mycology and technical agriculture, she has a background in botany, plant pathology and biology. She is currently involved in the Keystone Agricultural Innovation Board; Pennsylvania Farm Bureau; American Mushroom Institute; Organic Materials Review Institute; National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture; and Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, to name a few. The operation was the first of its kind to be certified by the USDA for Good Agricultural Practice and has excelled in numerous food-safety audits by third-party auditing organizations. The operation has diversified with a successful processing arm and was a leading instrument in bringing crimini and portabella mushrooms to mainstream markets. She will contribute to the development process her expertise in advanced ligno-cellulosic composting solutions, creative use of grey water and various conservation methods, multi-application solutions for greenhouse sustainability practice while expanding profitability.

Yvette Speziani, Director of Marketing and Product Development and Quality Assurance Manager at Sunburst Farms, has 22 years of experience in the flower industry. She will represent the Floriculture sector and bring examples of marketable sustainability models from seed to shelf. She is responsible for making choices about which standards her company should pursue, and has chosen the Sustainable Agriculture Standards development process in
addition to Florverde, The Rainforest Alliance and product grade standards with AFIF. Her prior work at Dole Food Company in the floral division kept her involved in environmental social certifications. She is currently working on becoming a Whole Trade partner with Whole Foods, represented by a current member of the Standards Committee in the Users category. Her involvement in standard development processes such as the Produce Marketing Association’s Technology and Standards Committee for the development of the G10 in floral and her company’s recent acquisitions of the Rainforest Certification, Florverde and ISO 14001 will undoubtedly be an asset to the drafting process.

About the Sustainable Agriculture Standard and the Standards Committee
There are 58 seats on the Standards Committee to accommodate a broad range of perspectives. The Standards Committee is working to develop a national standard for sustainable agriculture under the rules of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The Standards Committee consists of a skilled, diverse membership representing a broad range of perspectives from across all areas of agriculture, including commodity and specialty crop producers; agricultural product processors and distributors; food retailers; environmental, labor, and development organizations; NGOs; trade associations; government representatives; academics; regulators and certifiers.

Supporting the Standards Committee are six subcommittees that have been working since July 2009 to develop the structure of the standard; draft economic, environmental, and social criteria for possible inclusion in the standard; develop communications materials for process stakeholders; and collect resources to include in the Sustainable Agriculture Standard Reference Library. For more information on the subcommittee work, visit:  [https://sites.google.com/site/sustainableagstandards/](https://sites.google.com/site/sustainableagstandards/)

Leonardo Academy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing sustainability, is providing facilitation and process support for the Sustainable Agriculture Standard development initiative.

How to Apply for Standards Committee Membership
To receive an application for membership on the Standards Committee, contact Jennifer Trucks at Leonardo Academy: [jennifer@leonardoacademy.org](mailto:jennifer@leonardoacademy.org) or (608) 280-0255, or visit [http://www.leonardoacademy.org/programs/standards/agstandard/development.html](http://www.leonardoacademy.org/programs/standards/agstandard/development.html).
Beyond the Standards Committee – How to Get Involved
In addition to applying for Standards Committee membership, stakeholders are also invited to participate in the Sustainable Agriculture Standard development process as a subcommittee member, observer or reviewer of the draft standard once it is opened up for public comment.

Subcommittees – Subcommittees are open to membership by all interested parties. Six subcommittees — 1) Economic Criteria Development, 2) Environmental Criteria Development, 3) Social Criteria Development, 4) Structure and Process, 5) Reference Library and Information and 6) Fundraising and Communications — are currently developing the structure of the standard, along with draft criteria, indicators and metrics; supporting Leonardo Academy’s outreach and fundraising efforts related to the standard; continuing to acquire resources for the Sustainable Agriculture Standard Reference Library; and providing additional recommendations and guidance to the Standards Committee.

Observers – Observers are invited to participate in the standard development process. Observers may attend in-person Standards Committee meetings on a first-come, first-serve basis, subject to the availability of space, and may also participate in all Standards Committee and Subcommittee teleconferences.

Public Review and Comment – Once the Standards Committee reaches agreement on a draft Sustainable Agriculture Standard, it will be posted for public comment. The public review and comment period provides all stakeholders with an additional opportunity to participate in the standard development process. At the end of the public comment period, the Standards Committee will address all of the comments received prior to submitting the final standard to ANSI for approval as an American National Standard.

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 Jennifer Trucks at Leonardo Academy: jennifer@leonardoacademy.org, (608) 280-0255.