Sustainable Agriculture Standard Gets a New Number

For Immediate Release

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Madison, WI, May 24, 2010 – The Sustainable Agriculture Standard development process received a new number from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), LEO-4000, which replaces the previous number LEO-SCS-001. When standard developers initiate the development process for a standard, ANSI assigns a number to be the identifier for that standard development process and for the standard developed.

Michael Arny, President of Leonardo Academy, said, “We asked ANSI to update the number for this standard development process to reflect the fact the Leonardo Academy is fully responsible for developing this standard and to match the numbering systems for the other standards we are developing. People who want to get involved in this standard development process can now find us on the Web by searching for the new number LEO-4000, as well as the old number. We invite people to visit our website to learn more, sign up to participate, and donate to support the development of this standard.”

The Sustainable Agriculture Standard will provide guidance to agricultural product producers on how to increase the sustainability of their products and metrics to measure their sustainability achievements. This will provide a simplified language of commerce that makes it very practical for producers to document the sustainability of their products and very practical for buyers, like manufacturers, retailers and consumers, to specify and buy sustainably-produced agricultural products.

Michael Arny said, “The development of a standard for sustainable agriculture is key part of addressing many global issues including climate change, energy, water, food supply and loss of
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arable land.”

Initially, Scientific Certification Systems contracted with Leonardo Academy, a charitable nonprofit organization, to provide ANSI process services for the development of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard. Since that time this process has evolved to where Leonardo Academy is now fully responsible for developing this standard, with financial support from a number of organizations and individuals, including Scientific Certification Systems.

Michael Arny also said, “I want to recognize and thank all the participants in this process for their ongoing commitment to developing this standard by donating their time, expenses and financial support to the process. This commitment was most recently demonstrated at the Standards Committee meeting in April, hosted by the Gap at its headquarters in San Francisco. Looking back to the beginning, I want to thank Scientific Certification Systems for kicking off this standard development process and for providing ongoing support through its participation and financial support.”

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To make a tax deductible donation to support the Sustainable Agriculture Standard development, go to http://www.leonardoacademy.org/programs/standards/agstandard/donate.html.

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/.

Leonardo Academy, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing sustainability, is the ANSI-accredited standards development organization that is managing the development of the Sustainable Agriculture standard development process.

To make a tax deductible donation to support the Sustainable Agriculture Standard development process, go to http://www.leonardoacademy.org/programs/standards/agstandard/donate.html

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, 608-280-0255, or visit 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
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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.

About Leonardo Academy

Mission Statement  Leonardo Academy is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing sustainability by leveraging innovative tools and information to motivate the competitive market. By utilizing an interdisciplinary approach to sustainability strategies, education and implementation, we strive to make sustainability practical for everyone.  We develop integrative sustainability solutions designed to enhance the environmental stewardship, social responsibility and economic prosperity of organizations, corporations and individuals. We see a world filled with sustainable opportunities that can transform the way we live today and ensure the prosperity of future generations.

Programs and Services
Leonardo Academy works on a broad range of sustainability issues and provides 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; event emissions footprints, sustainability assessments and implementation; sustainable event certification through our Cleaner and Greener® Program; LEED® assessments, implementation and certification application preparation; sustainable land management; sustainability training; and sustainability standards development.

Join Our Work

Individuals, organizations and companies are invited to join in Leonardo Academy’s work on advancing sustainability. One important way to join in our work is by making a charitable donation to support these efforts. Online donations can be made at: www.leonardoacademy.org

For More Information about Leonardo Academy
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