(Madison, WI, March 8, 2012) – A narrative draft of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard (LEO-4000) was prepared by the working group who met at Leonardo Academy in Madison, Wisconsin on March 5-7, 2012. The draft standard was significantly refined during the intensive work sessions. The new draft is being finalized for review by the Sustainable Agriculture Standard Committee at its upcoming April meeting in Washington, DC.

Brian McElroy of Driscoll's Strawberry Associates and Chair of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard Committee said, “I am impressed with the volume of work that was completed by the participants at this event. Committee members have compiled substantial reference documentation and drafted a clear set of standards that identify metrics and define performance levels. While this draft is still technically up for review by the Standard Committee, the process is open to the public and anyone can start to review it. Anyone that is interested in what a U.S. national sustainable agriculture standard should address or require in the near future should join this process now.”

**April Standard Committee Meeting in Washington, DC**
The Annual Sustainable Agriculture Standard Committee meeting will be held on April 24-25, 2012 in Washington DC. The national committee will convene to review and vote on the draft standard work. All stakeholders, process participants and newly interested persons are encouraged to attend all or part of this pivotal Standard Committee meeting as observers. Those who are not yet participants or registered observers of the LEO-4000 process and would like to attend the April meeting are encouraged to apply now by contacting jennifer@leonardoa cademy.org.

**Public Comment Process** When the committee approves the release of the draft standard for public comment, the public comment period will be announced in the American National Standards Institute publication Standards Action. After the public comment period is completed, the Standard Committee will review all comments and decide how to address each of the comments received. Once the Standard Committee has addressed all of the public comments, the draft standard will be submitted to ANSI for promulgation as an American National Standard. [http://www.sustainableagstandard.org/](http://www.sustainableagstandard.org/)

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Opportunities to Participate in Developing the Sustainable Agriculture Standard

There are currently openings for the subcommittees and the voting Standard Committee. Those who are interested can participate at the subcommittee and standard committee levels. Leonardo Academy is seeking producers, manufacturers, retailers, consumers and end-user representatives to participate while there is still time to participate in writing and reviewing the draft standard. To receive an application for membership on the Standard Committee, a subcommittee, or for observer status, contact Jennifer Trucks at Leonardo Academy: jennifer@leonardoacademy.org (608) 280-0255, or visit http://www.sustainableagstandard.org/

The Standards Committee

There are 60 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.

Donations

The development of the Sustainable Agriculture Standard is funded through donations and grants. Please consider making a donation to support Leonardo Academy’s work on developing this standard. Your support will help advance the sustainability through the development of this standard which will provide a framework for improving the social, economic and environmental sustainability in U.S. agriculture. To make a tax deductible donation to support the development process, go to http://www.leonardoacademy.org/programs/standards/agstandard/donate.html.

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](http://www.leonardoacademy.org).

**For More Information about Leonardo Academy**
Web: [www.leonardoacademy.org](http://www.leonardoacademy.org)
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