



For Immediate Release

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ANSI Rules in Favor of Leonardo Academy on USDA Appeal
National Sustainable Agriculture Standard Process
Continues With Robust Participation

Madison, WI – January 16, 2009 – The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has ruled in favor of Leonardo Academy on the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA) appeal of Leonardo’s status as an ANSI-Accredited Standards Developer. The appeal focused on Leonardo Academy’s management of the standard development process for the “*Sustainable Agriculture Practice Standard for Food, Fiber and Biofuel Producers and Agricultural Product Handlers and Processors*” (“SCS-001”). USDA and Leonardo Academy presented their cases to the ANSI Executive Standards Council (ExSC) during a December 17, 2008 hearing. The ExSC issued its ruling on January 13th, citing that Leonardo Academy has been appropriately following its ANSI-accredited procedures in its administration of the process to develop a national standard for sustainable agriculture.

The process to create voluntary standards is guided by ANSI’s cardinal principles of consensus, due process and openness. An essential element of the ANSI standards-setting process is the appeals procedure, which gives persons the right to appeal if they have been affected by any action or inaction within a given standard development process. “We consider appeals to be a vital part of the ANSI standards-setting process,” says Michael Army, President of Leonardo. “The appeals process demonstrates the important role of ANSI in reviewing procedural concerns, providing process improvement suggestions and ensuring an open and fair process.”

Meanwhile, the development of the national standard for sustainable agriculture is moving forward vigorously. Standards Committee members and interested observers are currently engaged in six Task Forces that are working to 1) gather relevant data and resources that will be used to guide the further development of the sustainable agriculture standard and 2) engage additional stakeholder involvement. The Task Forces will report their findings and recommendations to the full Standards Committee in May 2009.

To ensure openness and transparency in the standard development process, observers are invited to participate in the Task Forces, where they will have the opportunity to interact fully on all aspects of the



work being undertaken. “We are pleased by the range of stakeholder participation, including the active involvement of the USDA in the Task Force discussions,” says Mr. Army.

Leonardo Academy is currently seeking charitable contributions to fund its work on this standard development initiative and to support active participation by the full range of stakeholders in the process.

For more information on participating as an observer, or to make a donation to help support this process, contact Amanda Raster at Leonardo Academy (amanda@leonardoacademy.org, 608-280-0255).

To review the ANSI ExSC decision to deny the USDA appeal, visit <http://www.leonardoacademy.org/Projects/SustainAgStdDevelopment.htm>.

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Leonardo Academy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization founded in 1997 with a vision of advancing sustainability and putting the competitive market to work on improving the environment. Leonardo Academy is a Think and Do Tank that develops and distributes strategies, guidance, metrics, standards, and education focused on increasing sustainability. Leonardo Academy helps companies, organizations, families, and individuals successfully promote, encourage, and implement environmental improvement through a wide range of sustainability services, including sustainability assessments and strategy development, LEED® and LEED-EB implementation and certification, emissions footprint analysis and emission reduction and offset strategies, sustainable land management, sustainability education and training.