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*For Immediate Release*

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## **National Sustainable Agriculture Standard – Last Call for Standards Committee Applications – Deadline: July 7, 2008**

**Madison, WI – July 1, 2008** – This week marks the final opportunity to submit applications to serve on the Standards Committee that will finalize a national standard for sustainable agriculture under the auspices of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Applications are due on Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, following an unprecedented 15-month public outreach period to inform stakeholders of the opportunity to participate in the development process of this landmark standard.

The goals of establishing a national standard for sustainable agriculture practice include: 1) defining sustainability practices and indicators throughout the agricultural supply chain on a life-cycle basis, 2) distinguishing best practices in crop production and handling, 3) guiding producers and handlers through stages of incremental improvement, 4) providing a common set of metrics to gauge sustainability progress and 5) setting a reference benchmark for private sustainability efforts. Working within ANSI's open consensus process, this national standardization initiative will provide a forum for discussing and vetting differences over what sustainability means within the agricultural sector.

### **Role of the Standards Committee**

Although there are a limited number of seats available on the Standards Committee—the voting body for the standard—all applicants will be able to participate on subcommittees addressing the key issues outlined in the current draft, as well as other issues identified by stakeholders. The final draft standard will be subject to public review and comment prior to submission to ANSI. Ultimately, the Standards Committee will decide what is in the final standard that will be submitted for approval as an American National Standard. For this reason, all interested parties and stakeholders—such as growers, processors, food service organizations, retailers, government representatives, consumer groups, NGOs, labor groups and representatives, and other interested parties—are encouraged to apply. Stakeholders interested in working on specific advisory subcommittees are also encouraged to submit applications.

### **How to Apply**

Applications for participation should be submitted to the Leonardo Academy—a neutral third-party ANSI-accredited organization dedicated to advancing sustainability through the competitive market—no later than 5 pm on Monday, July 7<sup>th</sup>. Applications will be reviewed in full in order to achieve a balance dispersion of qualifications and expertise on the Standards Committee. Committee members will be announced on Monday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, and the first Standards Committee meeting will be held on September 10<sup>th</sup> (time and location to be announced). Applications and background information regarding the draft standard are available at <http://www.leonardoacademy.org/Projects/SustainAgStdDevelopment.htm>.

### **For Additional Information**

Contact Leonardo Academy:  
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