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***For Immediate Release***

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## **Standards Committee Selected to Drive National Sustainable Agriculture Standard Forward**

**Madison, WI – July 29, 2008** – Following a 15-month public outreach period to inform stakeholders and interested parties about the opportunity to participate in the development process of the *Sustainable Agriculture Practice Standard for Food, Fiber and Biofuel Crop Producers and Agricultural Product Handlers and Processors (SCS-001)*, the Standards Committee that will drive the standard forward for ANSI approval has been selected.

Leonardo Academy—the neutral, third-party ANSI-accredited organization facilitating the development process of SCS-001—received 175 applications from individuals and organizations interested in serving on the voting body for the standard. Applications were submitted from all stakeholder categories (i.e., producers, users, environmentalists, and general interest) and across all sectors of agriculture, demonstrating the wide range of interests and levels of engagement among stakeholders in the standard development process moving forward. Due to this overwhelming response, the size of the Standards Committee was increased from 40 members to 58 members to ensure that the voting body is broadly representative of the many, diverse sectors of agriculture represented under the current draft standard. The list of applicants selected to serve on the Standards Committee is posted at <http://www.leonardoacademy.org/Projects/SustainAgStdDevelopment.htm>.

“Leonardo Academy was very pleased to see the quality and diversity of applications submitted,” said Michael Arny, president of Leonardo Academy. “We had to make tough decisions, since there were many more qualified applicants than seats to fill on the voting committee. Fortunately, the Standards Committee represents only one avenue for participation. Everyone who applied will be able to stay involved in the development process through active participation on the subcommittees that will be working on the content of the final standard.”

Criteria that were considered for selection included the applicant’s 1) interest and experience in the draft standard subject area, 2) technical expertise as applied to the goals, issues, and overall scope of the standard, 3) standards writing experience, 4) experience working on multi-stakeholder committees and in consensus-building initiatives, 5) sector representation and 6) sustainability affiliations.

The next step in the standard development process for SCS-001 will be the first Standards Committee meeting, to be held September 10, 2008 (location to be announced). One of the first orders of business for the Committee will be to form the issue-specific and sector-specific subcommittees based on stakeholder input to date. Individuals interested in participating at the subcommittee level are encouraged to continue submitting applications, indicating their interest areas and thereby providing guidance to the Standards Committee in its initial deliberations on subcommittee identification.

### **For Additional Information**

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