



For Immediate Release

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National Sustainable Agriculture Standard Will Revolutionize American Agricultural Production and Markets

Madison, WI – May 20, 2008 – What could be the first national standard for sustainable agriculture in the United States—the *Sustainable Agriculture Practice Standard for Food, Fiber, and Biofuel Crop Producers and Agricultural Product Handlers and Processors (SCS-001)* Draft Standard for Trial Use—was re-announced in the May 16, 2008 edition of *ANSI Standards Action* (http://www.ansi.org/news_publications/periodicals/standards_action/standards_action.aspx?menuid=7). This comprehensive standard for sustainable agriculture addresses the sustainability impacts of agricultural production and encompasses the entire agricultural product supply chain, including suppliers, seed providers, growers, processors, distributors, retailers, and end-users. As such, key objectives of the standard development process will be to establish best practices in sustainable crop production and handling and to develop a set of metrics that encourages continued improvement of the environmental, social, and economic sustainability impacts of agricultural products, at all levels of the supply chain.

With such an integrated scope as this, *SCS-001* has the potential to revolutionize agriculture in the United States. Michael Arny, president of Leonardo Academy said: “Sustainability standards have a positive impact on markets because they create an easy-to-use common language for sustainability commerce. When the hard work of developing an ANSI-approved sustainable agriculture standard is completed by the Standards Committee, the final standard will make it easy for sellers to communicate the sustainability of the products they produce and deliver and easy for buyers to specify and identify the sustainability of the products they want to purchase. The US Green Building Council’s LEED® standard for sustainable buildings has revolutionized the ‘green’ building industry and serves as a model of how this sustainability standard for agricultural products—when finalized—will revolutionize the market for sustainable agricultural products.”

Due to its potential to transform American agriculture, Leonardo Academy has re-announced the DSTU for this standard to ensure that all materially affected and interested parties are aware of this draft standard for sustainable agriculture practices and the opportunity to participate in the standard development process. Awareness of the DSTU also gives materially affected interests the opportunity, if they so choose, to challenge the decision to register this DSTU with the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). In conjunction with the DSTU re-announcement, the deadline for applications to participate on the Standards Committee and advisory subcommittees has been re-extended to July 7, 2008 to allow everyone interested in participating in the process additional time to apply. Standards Committee members will be announced July 28, and the first meeting of the Standards Committee will be held on September 10.

To facilitate the process of developing this standard, Leonardo Academy has also updated its ANSI standard development constitution, which is currently under review for ANSI approval.

Since September 2007, Leonardo Academy has conducted extensive outreach to increase awareness of this DSTU and has developed a contact list of 1400 interested and potentially affected parties. To date, 70 applications have been submitted to participate on the Standards Committee or advisory subcommittees. All interested and materially affected stakeholders—such as growers, farm organizations, food processors, food service companies, retailers, government representatives, consumer groups, environmental organizations,



NGOs, labor groups and representatives, and other interested parties—have a role to play in shaping the final standard that will be submitted to ANSI for approval and are encouraged to apply.

The Draft Standard for Trial Use, committee application form, information on the time commitment for committee members and frequency/location of committee meetings, as well as more information about this initiative, can be found at: <http://www.leonardoacademy.org/Projects/SustainAgStdDevelopment.htm>. Applications for participation should be submitted no later than **Monday, July 7, 2008**. Applications will be reviewed in full in order to achieve a balanced dispersion of qualifications and expertise on the Standards Committee. All applicants will be informed of their committee status no later than **Monday, July 28, 2008**.

For Additional Information

Please visit the Sustainable Agriculture Practice Draft Standard for Trial Use web page:
<http://www.leonardoacademy.org/Projects/SustainAgStdDevelopment.htm>.

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