



For Immediate Release

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**Call for Applications:
Open Seats on Sustainable Agriculture Standards Committee,
User Interest Category**

Madison, WI – October 28, 2008 – Leonardo Academy announces a call for applications for three open seats on the SCS-001 Standards Committee within the ‘User’ Interest Category. Anyone who uses agricultural products—including retailers and restaurants, food service companies, product handlers, processors, distributors and manufacturers—and has an interest in sustainable agriculture is encouraged to apply.

The SCS-001 Standards Committee has been charged with working together to develop a national standard for sustainable agriculture that will be submitted for approval by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Leonardo Academy, a nonprofit organization that works to advance sustainability, based in Madison, Wisconsin, is leading the standard development process.

The current Standards Committee consists of a diverse, experienced membership representing a wide range of perspectives from across all areas of agriculture. Representatives of conventional agriculture, organic agriculture, food retailers, agricultural processors, environmental institutions, labor organizations, industry trade associations, as well as government agencies, academics, regulators, and certifiers came together at the Committee’s first meeting in September to discuss the key issues likely to dominate the discussions in the process ahead. The Committee also agreed on a number of positive actions, including the development of six task groups that will work over the next several months to define the need for and vision of the sustainability standard, to outline outreach opportunities to engage involvement from additional stakeholders and to gather supplementary data and resources for guiding the work ahead. The Committee further voted to set aside and recognize the Draft Standard for Trial Use (SCS-001), published by Scientific Certification Systems (SCS) as a vehicle for initiating the broader standard-setting dialogue, as one of several reference documents expected to be used in its future standards development deliberations.

Developing a Standard for Sustainable Agriculture Practice

A national standard for Sustainable Agriculture Practice is being developed in response to rising interest in practicing, defining, standardizing, and certifying sustainable agriculture. Working within an open consensus process, this initiative is intended to provide a forum for discussing and vetting differences over what sustainability means across the multitude of agricultural sectors and to capture the collective wisdom of pioneering individuals and organizations in the realm of sustainable agriculture.

Establishing a national standard for sustainable agriculture practices has the opportunity to serve many purposes, including:

- Defining sustainability practices and indicators throughout the supply chain on a life-cycle basis
- Distinguishing best practices in crop production and handling
- Guiding producers and handlers through stages of incremental improvement



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- Providing a common set of metrics to gauge sustainability progress—whether in a private supply chain, an industry sector, or on a state/regional/national scale
 - Setting a reference benchmark for private sustainability efforts

How to Apply

To receive an application for the Standards Committee, please contact Amanda Raster at Leonardo Academy (Tel: 608-280-0255, Email: amanda@leonardoacademy.org). **PLEASE NOTE** that only applications for the User Interest Category will be considered at this time.

Applications should be submitted by **12:00 pm (CDT) on Monday, November 24, 2008**. All applicants will be notified of their committee status by **Monday, December 8, 2008**.

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Leonardo Academy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to advancing sustainability and putting the competitive market to work on improving the environment. We are a Think and Do Tank. On the Thinking side, we develop new sustainability strategies, metrics, tool, and standards. On the Doing side, we help 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.