Agriculture Standards
Benchmark Study **2009**

SAI PLATFORM

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Study commissioned by Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform

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Long before the recent surge in food prices, three of the largest food producers in the world, Danone, Nestlé and Unilever, recognized that sustainability is critical to secure a constant, growing, and safe supply of agricultural raw materials. The companies came together in 2002 to found The Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform—a non-profit organization dedicated to actively supporting the develop-ment of sustainable global agriculture practices involving all stakeholders of the food supply chain.

The SAI Platform today includes 21 corporate members, with estimated sales of USD 300 billion, which actively work to promote sustainable agriculture as a productive, competitive and efficient way of producing agricultural products, while at the same time protecting and improving the natural environment and social/economic conditions of local communities.

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Intertek Sustainability Solutions (ISS) works with businesses to seamlessly integrate CSR and Sustainability with their brand and operations. We are proficient in delivering solutions dealing with immediate environmental and social concerns, but our ultimate value for clients has proven to be our ability to develop a portfolio of initiatives that align social and environmental performance with business imperatives for maximum Return on Sustainability Investment (RSI).

Specifically, we:
- Design sustainability strategy, tailored to client needs and utilizing a variety of techniques – such as corporate risk/opportunity profiling, benchmarking, gap analysis and assessment of sustainability reporting and communications efficacy.
- Deploy cost-effective and materially-relevant sustainability programs for our clients, including audits and inspections of client and supplier facilities, certifications of compliance with a variety sustainability schemes and standards, as well as training, capacity building, remediation and continuous improvement programs.
- Provide key industry-leading CSR/Sustainability solutions and tools

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INTRODUCTION

The Agriculture Standards Benchmark Study was commissioned by SAI Platform with the aim of investigating and comparing some of the most influential agricultural production standards worldwide. The objective of the study is to give SAI Platform members further insight into the various agriculture schemes in order to facilitate sustainable sourcing. This study can be utilized in a procurement context as a tool for answering initial questions that arise as one seeks the best and most appropriate method to ensure sustainably produced agricultural raw materials.

- **DEMONSTRATION OF GOOD GOVERNANCE:** How does each standard compare in terms of their development in an inclusive basis and the degree to which they are properly managed and controlled?

     Some standards are more transparent than others with regard to the Governance and Regulation criteria evaluated for this study. Having a proper level of public transparency in this area provides a solid foundation for demonstrating effectiveness and longevity in support of the growing need for first-rate agriculture standard programs.

- **DEMONSTRATION OF GOOD PRACTICES:** How does each standard compare in employing good practical elements that work to enhance the performance of the farm?

     The Systems Enhancement Criteria evaluated in this study are based solely against the criteria laid out in the standards themselves. It does not include every aspect or encompass the entire range or broad intentions of offerings that may be available through each scheme.

- **EQUITABLE STANDARDS:** How does each standard relate to the framework of the SAI Platform Principles?

     The SAI Platform Principles Comparison is based on the principles/criteria that compose the content of each of the standards. It is directly related to the guidelines or requirements laid out for the suppliers to adhere to.

- **AVAILABLE MODELS:** Is the agriculture standard a certification or verification scheme, or simply a framework?

     The different schemes compared in the benchmark study have not been developed with the same intentions and with the same national / regional applicability. The different schemes address either whole farm approaches or crop-specific procedures; tackle mainly issues of food safety or even particular production schemes such as organic. The rationale for including a wide variety of scheme types is that many suppliers participate in multiple programs, none of which covers the full SAI Platform scope in itself. Since suppliers have to work with a combination of various modules, it is useful to compare the different types of standards amongst each other.

The first part of this study utilizes color coding to provide the reader with a high level graphic overview of the criteria evaluated. It gives the user a chance to assess each of the standards at a glance. This is followed by a more in-depth written analysis of each of the standards, further explaining why the standard was judged in the corresponding manner.

The research approach for this study was divided into two phases.

- PHASE 1 *Desk Research*: research was restricted to the discovery of evidence in the public domain. This includes public websites and published documents that outline the content of each of the standard's main principles and criteria. An initial report was issued in March 2009.

- PHASE 2 *Field Research*: all of the scheme owners were contacted for comments and an opportunity to address any information unable to verify during the desk research phase. Further evidence was collected in May 2009 through electronic correspondence and/or phone calls with the following schemes.

4C	AFS	Basel Criteria	BRC	Canada EFP
EISA	EU Organic Scheme	Fairtrade	Food Alliance	GlobalGAP
IOBC	LEAF	OFFS	Protected Harvest	Rainforest Alliance
RTRS	SCS 001	SQF Code	UTZ Certified	

Participation in the field research phase does not constitute any endorsement from the scheme on the contents of this study. Note that some schemes have several different standards or sets of tools which should also be taken into consideration by the user in their decision making process. This study only covers the specific standards listed in the master document of standards reviewed.

The final list of twenty-four schemes reviewed in this study was formulated by mutual discussion within a volunteer SAI Platform members work group. Procurement officers may have different views of what are the most important standards for their organization, and we acknowledge that at a local or regional level there certainly may be more influential and appropriate standards.

NOTE: This benchmark study is not an endorsement of any standard. It is meant only to help members through the myriad of available agriculture schemes and provide some guidance for mutual recognition and convergence.

		NAME	COUNTRY	WEBSITE(S)
WHOLE FARM SUSTAINABILITY	1	Assured Food Standards (AFS)	U.K.	www.redtractor.org/uk ; www.assuredproduce.co.uk
	2	European Initiative for Sustainable Development in Agriculture(EISA)	Belgium	www.sustainable-agriculture.org
	3	Environmental Farm Plan Program (Canada EFP)	Canada	http://www.ccse-swcc.nb.ca/index2.cfm?title=10a&lg=en
	4	Fairtrade Standards (FLO)	The Netherlands	www.fairtrade.org www.fairtrade.net/ **www.flo-cert.net**
	5	Food Alliance	U.S.A.	www.foodalliance.org
	6	Global G.A.P.	Germany	www.globalgap.org
	7	IOBC Guidelines for Integrated Production	Switzerland	www.iobc.ch/
	8	Leaf Marque	U.K.	www.leafmarque.com/leafuk/ www.leafaudit.org
	9	Protected Harvest	U.S.A.	www.protectedharvest.org ; www.sureharvest.com
	10	Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard (SAN)	U.S.A.	www.rainforest-alliance.org/agriculture.cfm?id=san http://sustainablefarmcert.com/
	11	Sustainable Agriculture Practice Standard (SCS 001)	U.S.A.	**www.scscertified.com** www.leonardoacademy.org
CROP SPECIFIC	12	Basel Criteria for Responsible Soy Production	Switzerland	www.proforest.net
	13	Common Code for the Coffee Community (4C)	Germany	www.4c-coffeeassociation.org
	14	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)	Malaysia	www.rspo.org
	15	Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS)	Argentina	www.responsiblesoy.org
	16	UTZ Certified (coffee)	The Netherlands	www.utzcertified.org
ORGANIC	17	EU Organic Scheme (EU 834/2007)	Belgium	http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/organic/home_en http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2007:189:0001:0023:EN:PDF http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2008:250:0001:0084:EN:PDF
	18	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)	Germany	www.ifoam.org
	19	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)	U.S.A.	http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/ams.fetchTemplateData.do?template=TemplateA&navID=NationalOrganicProgram&leftNav=NationalOrganicProgram&page=NOPNationalOrganicProgramHome&acct=nop http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?type=simple;c=ecfr;cc=ecfr;sid=4163ddc3518c1ffdc539675aed8efe33;region=DIV1;q1=national%20organic%20program;rgn=div5;view=text;idno=7;node=7%3A3.1.1.9.31
FOOD SAFETY	20	BRC Global Standard - Food - Issue 5	U.K.	www.brcstandards.com
	21	CanadaGAP (OFFS)	Canada	www.hortcouncil.ca/FSHome.htm / www.canadagap.ca
	22	International Food Standard (IFS)	France	www.ciesnet.com
	23	QS System	Germany	www.q-s.info
	24	Safe Quality Food (SQF 2000 Code)	Global/US	**www.sqfi.com**

CONTROL DOCUMENTS
2008 Assured Produce Generic Protocol Standards Issue No 1/2008 final
European Integrated Farming Framework A European Definition and Characterisation of Integrated Farming as Guideline for Sustainable Development of Agriculture Sept 2006
Environmental Farm Plan for New Brunswick Version 1.1
Generic Fairtrade Standards for Small Farmers' Organizations; Version 17.12.2007
Food Alliance Certified Whole Farm/Ranch Inspection Tool
GLOBALG.A.P. (EUREPGAP) Control Points and Compliance Criteria Integrated Farm Assurance Introduction and All Farm Base V3.0-2 Sep07
GLOBALG.A.P. (EUREPGAP) Control Points and Compliance Criteria Integrated Farm Assurance Crops Base V3.0-2 Sep07
GLOBALG.A.P. (EUREPGAP) Control Points and Compliance Criteria Integrated Farm Assurance Fruit and Vegatables V3.0-2 Sep07
IOBC / WPRS Commission "IP-Guidelines and Endorsement" Integrated Production Principles and Technical Guidelines 3rd Edition, 2004
LEAF Marque Global Standard 2008; LEAFmarquestandard2008final.doc
WWF/WPVGA/UW Collaboration - Ecological Potato Standards for 2006
Sustainable Agriculture Standard_Sustainable Agriculture Network; Version February 2008
SCS-001 Sustainable Agriculture Practice Standard For Food, Fiber and Biofuel Crop Producers and Agricultural Product Handlers and Processors Draft National Standard for Trial Use April 2007
The Basel Criteria for Responsible Soy Production August 2004
4C Essentials; Version May 2009; Document4C_001_4C_Essentials_v1.0_en
RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production Including Indicators and Guidance October 2007
RTRS Principles and Criteria for Responsible Soy: Field Testing Version; 28 May 2009
UTZ Certified Good Inside Code of Conduct for Coffee Version January 2009
Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 of 28 June 2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Regulation (EEC) No 2092/91
The IFOAM Norms for organic production and processing Version 2005
National Organic Standards. Online access e-CFR Data current as of February 3, 2009
Global Standard for Food Safety issue 5 January 2008- BRC
Potato Producer and Packer On-farm Food Safety Manual Canadian Horticultural Council Version 5.1 2008
International Food Standard Standard for Auditing Retailer and Wholesaler Branded Food Products Version 5 August 2007
QS Animal and Plant Production - Company Audit - Guideline Version: 1 January 2008
QS- Qualitätssicherung > Stufenübergreifend General Regulation Guideline Version: 01.01.2009 (rev04)
SQF Institute SQF 2000 Code 6th Edition August 2008

The following outlines the methodology and audit protocol for undertaking the benchmark study.

I. CORE CRITERIA EVALUATION

A. GOVERNANCE & REGULATION OF THE SCHEME | Evaluate the rigorousness of how the scheme is run

1) **Multi-stakeholder Process** | Criteria: Scheme was developed via a transparent multi-stakeholder process which fully reflects the view of all interested stakeholders. Green coding is reserved for those schemes who are fully transparant with publically available documentation and stakeholder information.

   *Review of participants to confirm representation of interested stakeholders
   *Review of any documented evidence of stakeholder participation such as operating procedures, meeting information, draft revision notes
   *Review of any public consultation during the development of the standard and into the present

2) **Good Governance** | Criteria: Scheme is well maintained by a representative and transparent board. Green coding is reserved for those schemes who are fully transparant with publically available documentation and board member information.

   *Review of board member information to verify board representation in the management of the standard
   *Review of any documented evidence of good board management such as rules of participation, operating procedures, statututes and bylaws, meeting minutes or articles of association

3) **Conflict of Interest & Dispute Resolution** | Criteria: There is a clear and transparent process by which conflicts of interests and disputes can be resolved. Green coding is reserved for those schemes who are fully transparant with publically available documentation.

   * Review of documented conflict of interest and dispute resolution procedures in effect

4) **Accreditation** (if applicable) | Criteria: For certification schemes, the competency, authority and credibility of the Accreditation Body is reliable and meets the requirements of relevant ISO standards.

   *Review of any documented accreditation procedures and ISO Standard requirements
   *Review of training requirements for associated auditors

5) **Logos & Claims** (if applicable) | The Scheme has clear structure and rules for any claims made or the use of any logo

   *Review any documented evidence of rules about use of claims and logos

B. SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT CRITERIA | Evaluate the inclusion of criteria elements within the scheme that go beyond the standard principles to enhance the performance of the farm.

6) **Management Systems** | Criteria: The standard's principles/criteria encourages or provides guidelines on the elements of an internal management system and its implementation, and discusses relevant policies and procedures involved.

   *Review content of Standards or Guidelines for information on management systems

7) **Continuous Improvement** | Criteria: The standard's principles/criteria encourages or gives guidance to the user, through either internal audits or process benchmarking, in setting objectives and monitoring the results through which performance can be constantly improved over time.

   *Review content of Standards or Guidelines for information on continuous improvement

8) **Capacity Building/Training** | Criteria: The standard's principles/criteria encourages or gives guidance to the user to the process of equipping employees with the understanding, skills and access to information, knowledge and training that enables them to perform more effectively in meeting the standards of the scheme.

   *Review content of Standards or Guidelines for information on capacity building or training elements

9) **Stakeholder engagement** | The standard's principles/criteria encourages or gives guidance to the user to engage external stakeholders such as nearby communities, non-governmental organizations, local government, etc through community or farm activities and proactive external communication.

*Review content of Standards or Guidelines for information stakeholder engagement

Legend:
~Overview chart 🟢 : Criteria element is fully met with rigorous detail
~Overview chart 🟠 : Criteria element is partially met and/or lacking in in-depth public information
~Overview chart 🔴 : Criteria element is not met
~Overview chart ⚪ : Criteria element is not applicable to the scheme

II. ANALYSIS OF STANDARD CONTENT | Evaluate the rigour of the element of the standards against the SAI Platform Principles.

SAI PLATFORM PRINCIPLES | Review details of each standard element to ascertain level of coverage and rigour as compared to the SAI Platform Principles. Level of Rigour is defined as to the detail of the intention of the element, guidance included and what "must" be done vs. what is "recommended" to be done.

Refer to the published document "SAI Platform Sustainable Potato and Vegetable Principles and Practices. Working Document. 06/07/05" for a detailed view of the SAI Platform Principles

Sustainable farming system
1) Site selection and management | Elements: site history; risk assessment of surrounding area; soil mapping
2) Planting material | Elements: variety, seed quality, crop husbandry, genetically modified plants
3) Integrated Crop Management | Elements: Rotation practices; cultivation techniques; nutrient management; fertilizers; sludge; integrated pest management; agrochemicals
4) Sustainability management system | Elements: continuous improvement; management responsibilities; record keeping; training
5) Access to information and support services | Elements: regular advice from experts

Economic Sustainability
6) Safety, quality and transparency | Elements: safety, quality, post-harvest treatment, residue levels, stocking maintenance
7) Financial structure | Elements: long-term financial stability, cost-benefit structure
8) Relation to the market | Elements: Trading channels, negotiations, marketing
9) Diversification | Elements: Diversifying into other crops or non-farming activities

Social Sustainability
10) Labour conditions | Elements: ILO Conventions; worker safety, wages, working hours, discrimination, forced labor, freedom of association, child labor
11) Training | Elements: training of workers
12) Strengthening local economy | Elements: contributing to livelihood of producers and local communities

Environmental Sustainability
13) Soil conservation | Elements: cultivation techniques; soil structure and fertility
14) Water conservation | Elements: water use/quality management; irrigation; wastewater management
15) Biodiversity conservation | Elements: endangered species; diversity of flora/fauna; protection; restoration
16) Integrated waste and crop by-product management | Elements: use of crop by-products; waste recycling
17) Energy conservation | Elements: renewable sources of energy; reduce air pollution; global warming; fuel usage
18) Air conservation | Elements: preserving/improving quality of air

Legend:
~ Overview chart 🔵 : Standard element is aligned with the intent of the SAI Platform Principle
~ Overview chart 🟡 : Standard element is less rigorous than the SAI Platform Principle
~ Overview chart ⚫ : Standard does not contain the SAI Platform Principle

SYSTEMS ENHANCEMENT CRITERIA

GOVERNANCE & REGULATION OF THE SCHEME

Legend:
- 🟢 Green — Criteria element is fully met with rigorous detail
- 🟡 Yellow — Criteria element is partially met and/or lacking in in-depth public information
- 🔴 Red — Criteria element is not met
- ⚪ Grey — Criteria element is not applicable to the scheme

See page 6 for full benchmark content and coverage protocol

Color codes used in table below: G = Green (fully met), Y = Yellow (partially met), R = Red (not met), — = Grey (not applicable)

	STANDARDS	Multi-Stakeholder Process	Good Governance	Conflict of Interest & Dispute Resolution	Accreditation	Logos & Claims	Management Systems	Continuous Improvement	Capacity Building/Training	Stakeholder Engagement
WHOLE FARM SUSTAINABILITY	Assured Food Standards (AFS)	Y	Y	Y	G	G	Y	G	G	Y
	European Initiative for Sustainable Development in Agriculture (EISA)	Y	Y	Y	—	—	G	G	G	G
	Environmental Farm Plan Program (Canada EFP)	Y	Y	R	—	—	R	G	R	Y
	Fairtrade Standards (FLO)	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
	Food Alliance	Y	Y	Y	G	G	R	Y	G	R
	Global G.A.P.	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
	IOBC Guidelines for Integrated Production	R	R	R	—	—	R	Y	Y	Y
	LEAF Marque	G	G	G	G	G	Y	Y	Y	G
	Protected Harvest	Y	Y	Y	G	G	R	R	R	R
	Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard (SAN)	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
	Sustainable Agriculture Practice Standard (SCS 001)	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
CROP SPECIFIC	Basel Criteria for Responsible Soy Production	R	R	R	—	—	R	G	G	Y
	Common Code for the Coffee Community (4C)	G	G	G	G	—	Y	G	G	G
	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G
	Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS)	G	G	G	—	—	R	G	G	G
	UTZ Certified (coffee)	Y	Y	G	G	G	G	G	G	R
ORGANIC	EU Organic Scheme (EU 834/2007)	G	G	Y	G	G	Y	R	R	R
	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)	G	G	G	G	G	Y	R	R	R
	USDA National Organic Program (NOP)	G	G	G	G	G	G	R	R	R
FOOD SAFETY	BRC Global Standard - Food - Issue 5	Y	Y	G	G	G	G	G	G	R
	CanadaGAP (OFFS)	G	Y	Y	G	G	Y	G	G	R
	International Food Standard (IFS)	G	G	Y	G	G	G	G	G	R
	QS System	R	Y	G	G	G	Y	Y	G	R
	Safe Quality Food (SQF 2000 Code)	Y	Y	Y	G	G	G	G	G	R

SAI PLATFORM PRINCIPLES COMPARISON

Legend:
- 🔵 Standard element is aligned with the intent of the SAI Platform Principle
- 🟡 Standard element is less rigorous than the SAI Platform Principle
- ⚫ Standard does not contain the SAI Platform Principle

See page 6 for full benchmark content and coverage protocol

Benchmark matrix of standards against SAI Platform Principles, grouped under: Sustainable Farming System (Site Selection and Management, Planting Material, Integrated Crop Management, Sustainability Management System, Access to Information and Support Services); Economic Sustainability (Safety, Quality and Transparency, Financial Structure, Relation to the Market, Diversification); Social Sustainability (Labour Conditions, Training, Strengthening Local Economy); Environmental Sustainability (Soil Conservation, Water Conservation, Biodiversity Conservation, Integrated Waste and Crop By-Product Management, Energy Conservation, Air Conservation).

STANDARDS

WHOLE FARM SUSTAINABILITY
- Assured Food Standards (AFS)
- European Initiative for Sustainable Development in Agriculture (EISA)
- Environmental Farm Plan Program (Canada EFP)
- Fairtrade Standards (FLO)
- Food Alliance
- Global G.A.P.
- IOBC Guidelines for Integrated Production
- LEAF Marque
- Protected Harvest
- Rainforest Alliance Sustainable Agriculture Standard (SAN)
- Sustainable Agriculture Practice Standard (SCS 001)

CROP SPECIFIC
- Basel Criteria for Responsible Soy Production
- Common Code for the Coffee Community (4C)
- Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)
- Roundtable on Responsible Soy (RTRS)
- UTZ Certified (coffee)

ORGANIC
- EU Organic Scheme (EU 834/2007)
- International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)
- USDA National Organic Program (NOP)

FOOD SAFETY
- BRC Global Standard - Food - Issue 5
- CanadaGAP (OFFS)
- International Food Standard (IFS)
- QS System
- Safe Quality Food (SQF 2000 Code)