



**Leading Harvest Farmland  
Management Program 2025  
Pasture and Livestock**



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# SECTION 1

LEADING HARVEST  
FARMLAND MANAGEMENT  
PROGRAM 2025 –  
PASTURE AND LIVESTOCK



## Introduction

### What the Leading Harvest Standard Does

The *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard – Pasture and Livestock (Leading Harvest Standard<sup>1</sup>)* identifies sustainable farming practices based on 14 Principles, 14 *Objectives*, 37 *Performance Measures* and 96 *Indicators*. It addresses economic, environmental, social and governance issues and includes measures to efficiently use water, *agricultural chemicals* and energy to grow *crops* for useful *agricultural products*; *minimize* waste; and conserve soils, water resources and *biodiversity*. It also takes into consideration the well-being of tenants/lessees of *pasture and farmland*, employees, *contract management company* employees, contract farm labour and local communities. Conformance to the *Leading Harvest Standard* requires awareness and *appropriate* use of *agricultural best management practices* to advance sustainable agriculture.

### What is addressed by the Leading Harvest Standard?

The *Leading Harvest Standard* applies to any organization that owns or has management authority for *pasture or farmland (Standard User)* and the *farmland* that it chooses to enrol. This standard applies to animal agriculture operations. *Objectives* 1 and 7 through 13 apply to the *Standard User* and the management system it uses to manage enrolled *farmland*, except for *indicators* 7.2.3, 7.3.1 and 9.4.1. *Objectives* 2 through 6 and *indicators* 7.2.3, 7.3.1 and 9.4.1 apply to all *farmland* enrolled under the *Leading Harvest Standard*. The activities of *farmland tenants/lessees* may contribute to the performance of the *Standard User* for *Objectives* 2 through 6, 14 and *indicators* 7.2.3, 7.3.1 and 9.4.1, but the *Standard User* is responsible for conformance to these *Objectives*, *Performance Measures* and *Indicators*. *Indicator* 13.1.4 applies to all *farmland tenants/lessees* of leased *farmland* enrolled under the *Leading Harvest Standard*.

### Geographic Application of the Leading Harvest Standard

This standard is applicable worldwide through licensing with Leading Harvest.

### Leased Farmland under the Leading Harvest Standard

The *Standard user* can credibly conclude that tenant/lessee operations are in conformance with the *Leading Harvest Standard* where inspection of leased *farmland* and other supporting evidence can demonstrate that lessor operations are within the scope of *Objectives* 2 through 6, 14 and *indicators* 7.2.3, 7.3.1 and 9.4.1 of the *Leading Harvest Standard*. *Inspections*, annual interviews, and desk audits may be permissible for verifying whether *pasture or farmland tenant* operations are within the scope of the *Leading Harvest Standard* when used to the scope and scale of the lessor's operations. For *pasture or farmland* leased and operated by tenants/lessees, *Objectives* 1 and 8 through 13 (except for *indicators* 7.2.3, 7.3.1 and 9.4.1) apply to the *Standard User* and the management system it uses to manage *pasture or farmland*.

### Impact of Scope, Scale, and Size under the Leading Harvest Standard

The *Leading Harvest Standard* can be applied to farms and farmlands of any size. All *Standard Users* are held to the same *Leading Harvest Standard*, but the expectation of evidence of conformance may vary with the scope (i.e., type of *crop*, type of operation, geographical regions) and scale of the *Standard User* as well as the size of enrolled farmlands, because these parameters influence the risk of adverse impacts to society and the environment from agricultural operations. *Standard Users* managing large acreage areas may need a greater level of conformance evidence than those managing modest acreage areas in order to demonstrate risk management sufficient to meet the requirements of the *Leading Harvest Standard*.

### References

This standard incorporates, by dated or undated reference, provisions from other publications. For dated and undated references, the latest edition of the publication applies.

<sup>1</sup>All terms in italics are defined in the glossary.

### Normative References

- Leading Harvest Certification Body Administration
- Leading Harvest Standards Management
- Leading Harvest Standard Interpretations
- Leading Harvest Group Certification Module
- Relevant Leading Harvest glossaries
- Core Conventions of the ILO

### Informative References

- ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems — Specification with guidance for use.
- ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015 Conformity assessment — Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems.

## Leading Harvest Farmland Management Principles

*Standard Users* believe *pasture and farmland* owners and producers have a vital stewardship responsibility and commitment to society and future generations. They recognize the importance of maintaining viable commercial and family *pasture and farmland* and supporting an agricultural system that renews its ability to provide food and other *agricultural products* and sustains rural communities and natural resources. They seek to *appropriately* apply and improve *agricultural best management practices* on the *pasture and farmland* that they manage and promote such practices on other *farmland* to advance sustainable agriculture. Consistent with these responsibilities, the Leading Harvest Standard requires that *Standard Users* shall have a written *policy* (or policies) demonstrating their commitment to implement and achieve the following principles:

### Principle 1. Sustainable Agriculture

To practice sustainable agriculture to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This means practicing a *pasture and farmland* stewardship ethic that integrates profitable agricultural production with efficient use of inputs; the *conservation* of natural resources, including *farmland*; attention to *climate change* and land rights; and consideration for tenants/lessees, employees, contract workers, *Indigenous Peoples*, and local communities.

### Principle 2. Soil Health and Conservation

To maintain or enhance long-term *soil health* and *soil productivity* and to *protect soil* from *degradation*.

### Principle 3. Protection of Water Resources

To conserve and protect *groundwater and surface water resources* by *managing impacts from water use and runoff*.

### Principle 4. Protection of Crops

To ensure long-term *crop productivity* by applying *biosecurity* principles and *appropriate* use of *crop protectants* while protecting the environment.

### Principle 5. Energy Use, Air Quality and Climate Change

To increase use of *energy-efficient agricultural practices* and equipment and to *minimize* atmospheric emissions. To be resilient and prepared for adverse climatic and weather events.

### Principle 6. Waste and Material Management

To promote the efficient production of *agricultural products* and to *minimize* waste by seeking other uses of waste.

### Principle 7. Conservation of Biodiversity

To manage *pasture and farmland* in a manner that maintains agricultural production while conserving biological diversity—including animal and plant species, *Wildlife habitats* and natural or ecological community types—and avoids *habitat* conversion.

### Principle 8. Protection of Special sites

To manage *pasture and farmland* that is geologically or culturally important in a manner that considers its unique qualities.

### Principle 9. Local Communities

To contribute to the economy and well-being of rural communities through jobs, local purchases, other contributions, efforts to maintain community health and safety, and by respecting land and resource rights of local communities and *Indigenous Peoples*.

### Principle 10. Employees and Farm Labour

To provide a safe and respectful working environment, *fair compensation* and training for employees; *contract management company* employees; and farm labour necessary to improve the practice of sustainable agriculture.

### Principle 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

To comply with applicable national and *sub-national* laws, statutes, and regulations relating to agriculture.

### Principle 12. Management Review and Continual Improvement

To continually improve the practice of agricultural management and to monitor, measure and report performance in achieving the commitment to sustainable agriculture.

### **Principle 13. Leased Operations**

To promote the application of *agricultural best management practices* on tenant-operated/leased *pasture and farmland*, including share-farming arrangements.

### **Principle 14. Animal Well-Being**

To ensure the basic *physiological* and *behavioural* needs of animals are met; with a goal of avoiding unnecessary animal stress and prioritizing animal health and continual improvement in *animal husbandry* practices.

## Leading Harvest Standard Objectives

A summary of the *Leading Harvest Standard objectives* follows:

### Objective 1. Sustainable Agriculture Management

To practice sustainable agricultural stewardship to improve production and ensure long-term agricultural sustainability.

### Objective 2. Soil Health and Conservation

To maintain or enhance *soil health* to optimize yield and protect long-term *soil productivity on agricultural lands*.

### Objective 3. Water Resources

To protect water resources and manage water for efficient agricultural productivity.

### Objective 4. Crop, Pasture and Animal Health Protection

To achieve *crop, pasture and animal health protection* goals while protecting people and the environment.

### Objective 5. Energy Use, Air Quality and Climate Change

To conserve energy used by agriculture operations and *minimize* adverse impacts to the atmosphere and the global climate; and to be resilient and prepared for adverse climatic and weather events.

### Objective 6. Waste and Material Management

To manage food waste, *agricultural chemicals* and other materials from agricultural operations to *minimize* their adverse impacts to people and the environment.

### Objective 7. Conservation of Biodiversity

To manage *pasture* and farmland in a manner that maintains agricultural production while conserving *biodiversity* where *appropriate* or legally required.

### Objective 8. Protection of Special Sites

To manage *special sites* on *pasture* and *farmland* that are geologically or culturally important in a manner that recognizes and respects their unique qualities.

### Objective 9. Local Communities

To operate safely and responsibly; contribute to the economic well-being, social networks and health of local communities; and recognize and respect the rights of local communities and *Indigenous Peoples* in regions of agricultural operations.

### Objective 10. Personnel and Farm Labour

To provide a safe and healthy working environment, *fair compensation* and training for *Standard User* personnel, *contract management company* employees, and *contract farm labour* necessary to improve the practice of sustainable agriculture.

### Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

To comply with applicable national and sub-national laws, statutes, and regulations relating to agriculture.

### Objective 12. Management Review and Continual Improvement

To promote *continual improvement* in the practice of sustainable agriculture by conducting management reviews and monitoring performance.

### Objective 13. Tenant/Leased Operations

To promote the use of *agricultural best management practices* on leased *farmland* or *share-farming* arrangements to broaden the practice of sustainable agriculture and to promote the efficient use of agricultural inputs and the management of environmental impacts.

### Objective 14. Animal Well-Being

To ensure people responsible for animals have the required competencies to perform their responsibilities in such a manner that ensures the *basic physiological* and *behavioural* needs of animals are met; with a goal of avoiding unnecessary animal stress and prioritising animal health and continual improvement in animal *husbandry* practices.



## Objective 1. Sustainable Agriculture Management

To practice sustainable agricultural stewardship to improve production and ensure long-term agricultural sustainability.

**Performance Measure 1.1 Sustainable Agricultural Stewardship:** *Standard Users* shall demonstrate their commitment to sustainable agricultural stewardship of *farmland*.

*Indicator 1.1.1 Farmland Stewardship Commitment:* A written commitment statement and list of goals that describe the sustainable agricultural stewardship of *farmland*.

*Indicator 1.1.2 Farmland Stewardship:* Demonstration of the management of major synergies and tradeoffs between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable agricultural stewardship of *farmland* while ensuring long-term profitability and sustainability.

*Indicator 1.1.3 Farmland Conservation:* Demonstration that measures are in place and implemented to *minimize* conversion of *prime farmland*.

### Performance Measure 1.2 Critical External Factors:

*Standard Users* shall manage for potential impacts of *critical external factors* to help ensure long-term profitability and sustainability of each farm or farm management unit by the *Standard User*.

*Indicator 1.2.1 Adapting to Critical External Factors:* A process for periodically identifying *critical external factors* and adapting to their impacts to ensure the long-term profitability and sustainability of agricultural production of a farm or farm management unit.

## Objective 2. Soil Health and Conservation

To maintain or enhance *soil health* to optimize yield and protect long-term *soil productivity* on *agricultural lands*.

**Performance Measure 2.1 Soil Health:** *Standard Users* manage nutrients and apply practices to achieve *crop yield*, pasture production and maintain or enhance *soil health* of *farmland*.

*Indicator 2.1.1 Soil Quality:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* (e.g., tillage systems, cover cropping, addition of *soil amendments*, pasture cover, appropriate *rest periods*) to maintain or enhance *soil fertility* and physical and biological characteristics of soil.

*Indicator 2.1.2 Soil Health Monitoring:* Monitoring of *soil health* characteristics, including nutrients from different sources necessary to maintain or enhance *appropriate* nutrient balance and *soil health*.

*Indicator 2.1.3 Nutrient Management Program:* Demonstration of the implementation of an up-to-date *nutrient management program* that efficiently uses nutrient inputs and nutrients in the soil and *crops* or *pastures* to create optimum conditions for *crop* and *pasture* production and nutrient utilization and avoids nutrient loss to water and air.

*Indicator 2.1.4 Crop Residues:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* to use *crop residues* to maintain or improve *soil health* and long-term *soil productivity* where *appropriate*.

*Indicator 2.1.5 Effluent Application:* Manage the effect of *effluent addition* to land where *appropriate*, to *minimize degradation* of soil structure, salinization, waterlogging, chemical contamination or erosion, and to instead utilize the nutrient benefit of effluent application to land by following *best management practices* (e.g. *nutrient budgeting*) and soil and *effluent* testing advice.

**Performance Measure 2.2 Soil Conservation:** *Standard Users* shall implement *agricultural practices* to *minimize soil erosion* and avoid *degradation* of *agricultural lands*.

*Indicator 2.2.1 Cropland Soil Management:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* to *minimize soil erosion* and physical damage (e.g., compaction) of *cropland* and restore *soil health* where *appropriate*.

*Indicator 2.2.2 Pastureland Soil Management:* Apply a process of *grazing* management that includes agricultural best management practices to maximize ground cover and *minimize soil erosion* and physical damage (e.g., compaction) of *pastureland*.

*Indicator 2.2.3 Degradation of Agricultural Lands:* A process to avoid the widespread loss of *agricultural lands* to *soil mismanagement* (e.g., failure to prevent extensive *soil erosion*, acidification, salinization, compaction, pugging, overgrazing and accumulation of other adverse compounds).

### Objective 3. Water Resources

To protect water resources and manage water for efficient agricultural productivity.

**Performance Measure 3.1 Water Use:** *Standard Users* shall conserve water resources and manage water use to avoid long-term depletion and maintain *crop* and *pasture* productivity.

*Indicator 3.1.1 Agricultural Water Withdrawal:* A process for avoiding the depletion of available *groundwater* resources beyond the recharge capacity of the watershed or catchment and by direct withdrawal where *groundwater depletion* is an issue as determined by a *groundwater regulatory agency*.

*Indicator 3.1.2 Regional Water Conservation:* Participation individually or collaboratively in regional *water conservation programs* where *appropriate* to help foster responsible use and *conservation* of *groundwater* and *surface water* used for agriculture.

*Indicator 3.1.3 Water Conservation:* A water management *program* that uses *appropriate* technology (including washdown and irrigation system design) and applies *agricultural best management practices* to utilize water efficiently; to provide water tailored to plant needs; and to control *pests*, pathogens, salinization and accumulation of other adverse compounds.

**Performance Measure 3.2 Water Quality:** *Standard Users* shall apply a *program* to properly manage the use of *fertilizers* and other *soil amendments*, *crop protectants*, and other inputs, and impacts of livestock on waterways, to avoid release of sediment, nutrients or faecal contamination from *agricultural lands* into *groundwater* and *surface water*.

*Indicator 3.2.1 Input Application on Agricultural Lands:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* when applying *fertilizers* and other *soil amendments*, *crop protectants*, and other agricultural inputs to avoid and control infiltration of nutrients, *crop protectants* and pathogens into *groundwater* and *surface water*.

*Indicator 3.2.2 Water Quality Protection:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* to manage water and *effluent runoff* from *farmland* into *surface water* and protect wetlands, riparian areas and *water quality* of *groundwater* and *surface water*.

*Indicator 3.2.3 Water Quality Protection from Livestock:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* to protect *surface water*, *wetlands*, and *riparian areas* from the impacts of livestock.

### Objective 4. Crop and Pasture Protection

To achieve *crop and pasture protection objectives* while protecting people and the environment.

**Performance Measure 4.1 Integrated Pest and Disease Management:** *Standard Users* shall protect *crops* and *pasture* against *pests* and *disease* by implementing an *Integrated Pest Management program* that uses *appropriate biosecurity* and *best management practices* to achieve *plant protection objectives*.

*Indicator 4.1.1 Pest and Disease Monitoring:* Monitoring of *pests* and *disease* to prevent excessive loss and economic injury to *crop* plants and animals.

*Indicator 4.1.2 Plant Protection:* Implementation of a process for preventing excessive *crop* or *pasture* loss from *pests*, *crop* or *pasture protectant* resistance and buildup and spread of *pests*.

*Indicator 4.1.3 Pest Control Practices:* Prioritization of the use of *lowest risk*, *most selective treatment options* to achieve *plant protection* goals.

*Indicator 4.1.4 Withholding Periods:* Application of a process to ensure all *withholding periods* are met following application of inputs to *crop* or *pasture* including *crop* and *pasture protectants* and *effluent* as per relevant legislation and guidelines to meet *animal and human health* objectives.

**Performance Measure 4.2 Plant Protectant Management:** *Standard Users* shall select, use, and store *plant protectants* in accordance with label instructions and regulatory requirements.

*Indicator 4.2.1 Application and Storage of Plant Protectants:* Application and storage of *plant protectants* according to label instructions and regulatory requirements and application of practices to protect employees, farm workers, public health, and the environment and avoid drift of *plant protectants* offsite.

### Objective 5. Energy Use, Air Quality, and Climate Change

To conserve energy used by agricultural operations and *minimize* adverse impacts to the atmosphere and the global climate; and to be resilient and prepared for adverse climatic and weather events.

**Performance Measure 5.1 Agricultural Energy Use**

**and Conservation:** *Standard Users* shall conserve energy resources, especially fossil fuels, used by agricultural operations.

*Indicator 5.1.1 Energy Conservation:* Use of technologies and application of *agricultural best management practices* to conserve energy where *appropriate*.

*Indicator 5.1.2 Renewable Energy:* Use of *renewable energy* technologies and application of *agricultural best management practices* where *appropriate*.

**Performance Measure 5.2 Air Quality:** *Standard Users* shall *minimize* adverse impacts to air quality from agricultural operations.

*Indicator 5.2.1 Air Emissions:* Use of *low-emission technologies and methane abatement practices* when compatible with *agricultural and animal welfare best management practices*.

*Indicator 5.2.2 Airborne Dust Control:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* to *minimize* airborne dust where and when it adversely affects human health and/or the environment.

*Indicator 5.2.3 Odour Management:* *Minimize* off-site nuisance or interference with amenity, such as odours associated with inappropriate or poorly operated waste treatment processes.

**Performance Measure 5.3 Climate-Smart Agriculture:**

*Standard Users* shall apply the principles of *climate-smart agriculture* and/or *carbon farming* to reduce adverse impacts on the global climate and adapt to *climate change*.

*Indicator 5.3.1 Greenhouse Gas Emissions:* Application of *climate-smart agricultural best management practices* that *minimize greenhouse gas* emissions from agricultural operations and *farmland* and/or sequester *greenhouse gases* that contribute to *climate change* where *appropriate*.

*Indicator 5.3.2 Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience:* Application of *climate-smart agricultural best management practices* to adapt to *climate change* impacts and enhance farm or management unit resilience where *appropriate*.

*Indicator 5.3.3 Preparedness for Severe Climate and Weather Events:* Application of *climate-smart agricultural best management practices* to prepare for and mitigate the impact of severe climate and weather events on the agricultural operation, including animal welfare.

**Objective 6. Waste and Material Management**

To manage waste, *agricultural chemicals*, and other materials from agricultural operations to *minimize* their adverse impacts to agriculture and the environment.

**Performance Measure 6.1 Management of Waste and Other Materials:**

*Standard users* shall *minimize solid waste* and *hazardous waste* from agricultural operations and manage waste and *agricultural chemicals* in compliance with applicable laws, statutes, regulations and best management practices and programs.

*Indicator 6.1.1 Waste Disposal:* Implementation of a *process* for properly handling and disposing of hazardous and *solid waste*, avoiding the burning of rubber, plastics, chemically treated materials, or other materials which produce excessive or noxious smoke, unless combustion results in usable energy or some other demonstrably beneficial byproduct, or where viable alternatives do not exist.

*Indicator 6.1.2 Resource Recovery:* Implementation of a *process* for properly handling waste to be re-used, re-purposed or recycled, or converted to energy, where *appropriate*.

*Indicator 6.1.3 Management of Agricultural Chemicals and Other Materials:* Management, use, and storage of *agricultural chemicals, animal health products* and equipment gases, fluids, and fuels according to regulatory requirements and application of practices to manage spills and protect employees, farm labour and the environment.

**Performance Measure 6.2 Food and Agricultural Surplus and Waste Resource Recovery:**

*Standard Users* shall ensure efficient handling and recovery of *agricultural products, surplus, and agricultural waste* and manage dairy effluent in line with relevant legislative and guideline requirements.

*Indicator 6.2.1 Food and Agricultural Product Waste:* Prevention of excessive loss of *food crops* and other *agricultural products* during harvest and on-farm storage.

*Indicator 6.2.2 Resource Recovery of Agricultural surplus and Waste:* Reuse, repurpose, and/or recycle *surplus product or crop residues, effluent, manure, other agricultural wastes and/ or agricultural inputs* (e.g., tailwater recovery) where *appropriate*, such as the integration of *cropping* and livestock systems.

*Indicator 6.2.3 Responsible and Efficient Management of Effluent:* Manage *effluent* in line with relevant legislative and guideline requirements, to protect surface and ground waters from impacts of effluent, contain effluent within the bounds of the property and utilise the nutrient resource appropriately on farm while avoiding environmental nuisance (odour, faecal matter, water impacts) to surrounding amenities and neighbouring lands.

## Objective 7. Conservation of Biodiversity

To manage *pasture* and *farmland* in a manner that maintains agricultural production while conserving *biodiversity* where *appropriate* or legally required.

**Performance Measure 7.1 Species Protection:** *Standard Users* shall protect *species at risk*.

*Indicator 7.1.1 Species at Risk: A Program* to locate and protect known viable occurrences of *species at risk* on enrolled *farmland*. A *protection program* may be developed independently or collaboratively and may use easements, *conservation* land sales, exchanges or other *conservation* strategies.

*Indicator 7.1.2 Species at Risk Protection: Protection of species at risk* when they occur on enrolled *farmland* and management of agricultural operations with consideration of *species at risk* in the local catchments and landscapes of operation.

**Performance Measure 7.2 Wildlife Habitat Conservation:** *Standard Users* shall conserve *native habitats*, *wildlife habitat*, *natural communities* and *Ecologically Important Sites* on enrolled *farmland*.

*Indicator 7.2.1 Native Habitats and Natural Communities:* Maintenance or *conservation* of *native habitats* and *natural communities* in areas not used for agricultural production.

*Indicator 7.2.2 Ecologically Important Sites:* Participation individually or collaboratively in plans or *programs* that manage *Ecologically Important Sites* in a manner that takes into account their unique qualities.

*Indicator 7.2.3 Cropland for Wildlife Habitat:* Application of *agricultural best management practices* on *cropland* to create temporary *wildlife habitat* where *appropriate*.

*Indicator 7.2.4 Grazing Land for Wildlife Habitat:* Application of *best management practices* on *grazing land* to maintain and enhance *wildlife habitat* where *appropriate*.

**Performance Measure 7.3 Avoided Conversion:** *Standard Users* shall avoid conversion of *natural forests*, other *natural communities*, and *Ecologically Important Sites*.

*Indicator 7.3.1 Habitat Conversion:* Demonstration of commitment and *due diligence* to avoid the *land use conversion* and fragmentation of *natural communities* and *Ecologically Important Sites* on enrolled *farmland*.

*Indicator 7.3.2 Deforestation:* Demonstration of commitment to prevent *deforestation* of *natural forest* when farming where biome-specific or geography-specific *deforestation* protocol(s) are in place, by a written *policy* to demonstrate the *Standard User's* commitment to a zero *deforestation* *policy* that identifies the regions of application, relevant *natural forest* types, *appropriate deforestation* cut-off date(s) in areas with biome-specific or geography-specific *deforestation* protocols.

*Indicator 7.3.3 Responsible Land Acquisition:* Demonstration of *due diligence* to prevent the acquisition of *farmland* that was converted from *natural forest* after an *appropriate deforestation cutoff date(s)* identified by the *Standard User* in areas with biome-specific or geography-specific *deforestation* protocols.

**Performance Measure 7.4 Crop and Pasture Diversity:** Support *crop* and *pasture diversity* on *farmland*.

*Indicator 7.4.1 Crop and Pasture Diversity:* Use of a variety of *crop* and *pasture* species, *crop* and *pasture* varieties, companion *crops* (e.g., *cover crops*, cross-pollination donors) and/or *crop/pasture* rotation where *appropriate*.

## Objective 8. Protection of Special Sites

To manage *Special Sites* on *farmland* that are geologically or culturally important in a manner that recognizes and respects their unique qualities.

**Performance Measure 8.1 Special Site Management:** *Standard Users* shall manage *Special Sites* in a manner *appropriate* for their unique qualities.

*Indicator 8.1.1 Special Site Identification:* Use of information such as existing heritage databases (from national or *sub-national* administrations) or expert advice in identifying or selecting *Special Sites*.

*Indicator 8.1.2 Special Site Management:* *Appropriate* mapping, cataloging, and management of identified *Special Sites* in a manner that recognizes their unique qualities.

## Objective 9. Local Communities

To operate safely and responsibly; contribute to the economic well-being, social networks and health of local communities; and to recognize and respect the rights of local communities and *Indigenous Peoples* in regions of agricultural operations.

**Performance Measure 9.1 Economic Well-Being:** *Standard Users* shall foster the economic vitality of local communities through business practices that support sustainable agriculture and the local economy.

*Indicator 9.1.1 Economic Contributions:* Payment of applicable taxes and, as *appropriate*, employment of staff from local communities and local procurement of supplies and services.

**Performance Measure 9.2 Community Relations:** *Standard Users* shall engage local communities to increase community awareness and support for the practice of sustainable agriculture and maintain or enhance *Standard User* reputation.

*Indicator 9.2.1 Community Engagement:* Engagement in positive relationships with neighbours and local communities thus raising the awareness of sustainable agriculture.

**Performance Measure 9.3 Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples:** *Standard Users* shall recognize and respect rights of local communities and *Indigenous Peoples*.

*Indicator 9.3.1 Local Community and Indigenous Peoples Policy:* A written *policy* demonstrating a commitment to recognize and respect the rights of local communities and *Indigenous Peoples*.

*Indicator 9.3.2 Land Tenure Rights of Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples:* Demonstration of *due diligence* to prevent infringing on the land tenure rights of local communities and the land tenure rights, access to and use rights, customary rights, and legal rights *Indigenous Peoples* when purchasing and managing land.

*Indicator 9.3.3 Local Communities' and Indigenous Peoples' Inquiries:* Demonstration of commitment to be receptive to local communities' and *Indigenous Peoples'* inquiries and concerns.

**Performance Measure 9.4 Public Health:** *Standard Users* shall apply measures to protect public health from adverse impacts of *enrolled farmland*.

*Indicator 9.4.1 Public Health and Safety:* Application of health and safety *agricultural best management practices* that protect public health from adverse impacts of *agricultural chemicals*, excessive nutrients, equipment gases and fluids, fuels and air pollution and that train employees to operate equipment safely.

## Objective 10. Personnel and Farm Labour

To provide a safe and healthy working environment and *fair compensation* and training for *Standard User* personnel and *contract management company* employees and contract farm labour necessary to improve the practice of sustainable agriculture.

**Performance Measure 10.1 Safe and Respectful Working Environment:** *Standard Users* shall foster a culture of safety and respect among *Standard User* personnel and *contract management company* employees to *minimize* injuries, help establish safe routines and enhance employee productivity.

*Indicator 10.1.1 Equal Opportunity Employment:* Provision for equal opportunity employee recruitment and occupations, including *equitable* access to professional development.

*Indicator 10.1.2 Respectful Work Environment:* Maintain a safe, *gender-equitable*, and *professional work environment*.

**Performance Measure 10.2 Occupational Training:** *Standard Users* shall provide training for *Standard User* personnel and ensure adequate training for *contract management company* employees necessary to improve the knowledge and practice of sustainable agriculture and low stress animal handling.

*Indicator 10.2.1 Personnel and Contract Worker Training:* Workplace health and safety education and training for *Standard User* personnel and *contract management company* employees.

**Performance Measure 10.3 Supporting Capacity for Sustainability:** *Standard Users* shall require *appropriate* training of *Standard User* personnel and *contract management company* employees so that they are competent to fulfil their responsibilities under the *Leading Harvest Standard*.

*Indicator 10.3.1 Sustainability Policy Commitment:* *Standard Users* shall provide a written *policy* demonstrating commitment to the *Leading Harvest Standard* that is communicated throughout the organization, particularly to facility and farm managers.

*Indicator 10.3.2 Employee Roles and Responsibilities for Sustainability: Assignment and understanding of roles and responsibilities for achieving the objectives of the Leading Harvest Standard.*

*Indicator 10.3.3 Employee Sustainability Training: Staff education and training for Standard User personnel and contract management company employees sufficient to fulfil their roles and responsibilities under the Leading Harvest Standard.*

**Performance Measure 10.4 Compensation:** *Standard Users shall ensure adequate livelihood for employees and contract management company employees to attract and retain a stable workforce.*

*Indicator 10.4.1 Wages and Pay: Compensation to ensure an equitable and fair wage for Standard User personnel and contract management company employees.*

**Performance Measure 10.5 Farm Labour:** *Standard Users shall monitor contract management companies or farm labour contractors to help ensure farm labour working conditions consistent with the Principles and Objectives of Leading Harvest Standard.*

*Indicator 10.5.1 Farm Labour Monitoring Program: A program to monitor farm labour contractors employed by Standard Users or contract management companies to ensure compliance with applicable labour laws, statutes, and regulations by reviewing policies, practices, and training addressing workplace environment, equal opportunity, workplace health and safety, and compensation, including equitable and fair wage and, where appropriate, housing and transportation.*

## Objective 11. Legal and Regulatory Compliance

To comply with applicable national and sub-national laws, statutes, and regulations relating to agriculture.

**Performance Measure 11.1 Legal Compliance:** *Standard Users shall comply with applicable national and sub-national agricultural and related social and environmental laws, statutes, and regulations.*

*Indicator 11.1.1 Access to Compliance Information: A process by which personnel have access to information of relevant laws, statutes, and regulations in appropriate locations.*

*Indicator 11.1.2 Standard User Compliance Program: A program to achieve compliance with applicable national and sub-national laws, statutes, and regulations.*

*Indicator 11.1.3 Compliance Commitment: Demonstration of commitment to legal compliance through available regulatory action information.*

**Performance Measure 11.2 Legal Compliance Policies:** *Standard User shall take appropriate steps to comply with all applicable social laws at national and sub-national levels in the jurisdictions where the Standard user operates.*

*Indicator 11.2.1 Written Compliance Policy: A written policy demonstrating commitment to comply with social laws, such as those addressing civil rights, equal employment opportunities, anti-discrimination and anti-harassment measures, workers' compensation and equitable and fair wage, Indigenous Peoples' rights, workers' and communities' right to know, prevailing wages, workers' right to organize, and workplace health and safety.*

*Indicator 11.2.2 Consistency with International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions: Demonstration of commitment to respect the principles concerning fundamental rights set out in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.*

*Indicator 11.2.3 Consistency with Farmland Tenant/Lease Laws: Demonstration of commitment to respect the rights of tenants/lessees of leased lands with respect to the covenant of quiet enjoyment as determined by applicable national and sub-national laws, statutes, and regulations.*

## Objective 12. Management Review and Continual Improvement

To promote continual improvement in the practice of sustainable agriculture by conducting management reviews and monitoring performance.

**Performance Measure 12.1 Farm Review and Continual Improvement:** *Standard Users shall establish a management review system to examine findings and progress in implementing the Leading Harvest Standard, improve resource-use efficiency of agricultural production, make appropriate improvements in programs, and inform their employees of changes.*

*Indicator 12.1.1 Performance Review: A system to review commitments, programs, procedures, and measures of progress; evaluate their effectiveness; and review progress toward achieving goals for employees, tenants, use of agricultural inputs, management of adverse and positive environmental impacts, and agricultural production, including greater resource-use efficiency.*

*Indicator 12.1.2 Monitoring Performance: A program for collecting, reviewing and reporting information to management regarding progress in achieving **Leading Harvest Objectives** and **Performance Measures**.*

*Indicator 12.1.3 Agricultural Innovation: A process for identifying and considering opportunities for achieving improved farming efficiency, deploying improved technologies, and using new markets for under-utilized **agricultural products**, **new plant or animal genetics** and low-grade agricultural materials (e.g., bioenergy markets).*

*Indicator 12.1.4 Annual Review and Improvement: An annual review of progress by management and determination of changes and improvements necessary to continually improve agricultural efficiency and farm conformance to the **Leading Harvest Standard**.*

**Performance Measure 12.2 Support for Sustainable Agriculture:** *Standard Users* shall individually and/or through cooperative efforts support science-based agricultural research *programs* or partnerships or other efforts by associations to improve **soil health**, agricultural productivity, sustainable agriculture and animal management.

*Indicator 12.2.1 Support for Agricultural Research:* Participation individually or collaboratively in agricultural research or other science-based programs that improve the knowledge and practice of sustainable agriculture including animal management.

### Objective 13. Tenant/Leased Operations

To promote the use of *agricultural best management practices* on leased *farmland* or *share-farming* arrangements to broaden the practice of sustainable agriculture and to promote the efficient use of agricultural inputs and the management of environmental impacts.

**Performance Measure 13.1 Leased-Land and Share-farm Management:** *Standard Users* shall clearly define and implement strategies to ensure that *tenant/lessee* and *share-farm* activities adhere to the principles of sustainable agriculture.

*Indicator 13.1.1 Leased-Land and Share-farm Program:* A program to help ensure that *pasture* and *farmland* management complies with the *agricultural best management practices* and the *Principles* and *Objectives* of the **Leading Harvest Standard** as determined by a *Standard User*, *tenant/lessee*, and *share-farmer*.

*Indicator 13.1.2 Farmland Lease and Share-farm Agreements:* Written agreements with *tenants/lessees* and *share-farmers* demonstrating their commitment to applying *agricultural practices* and *animal husbandry practices* consistent with *best management practices*.

*Indicator 13.1.3 Communicating Leased-Land Objectives:* A written statement clearly defining sustainable agriculture goals of the *Standard user* for *pasture* and *farmland* that is shared with *lessees* and *share-farmers* and made available to *appropriate* stakeholders upon request.

*Indicator 13.1.4 Tenant/Lessee and Share-farmer Social Responsibility Commitment:* A written statement by *tenants/lessees* and *share-farmers* demonstrating their commitment to operate safely and responsibly; provide a safe working environment; and comply with applicable country, state/provincial, and local laws, statutes, and regulations.

**Performance Measure 13.2 Leased-Land and Share-farm Monitoring:** *Standard Users* shall monitor *agricultural practices* used by *tenants/lessees* or *share-farmers* to ensure their consistency with *agricultural best management practices*.

*Indicator 13.2.1 Verifiable Monitoring System:* Use of a *verifiable monitoring system* with:

*Indicator 13.2.1a A process for monitoring the agricultural practices used by tenants/lessees and share-farmers; and*

*Indicator 13.2.1b A process for evaluating application of agricultural practices by tenants/lessees and share-farmers and identifying and communicating areas where tenants/lessees and share-farmers can improve their performance and achieve greater consistency with agricultural best management practices and the Principles and Objectives of the Leading Harvest Standard.*

*Indicator 13.2.2 Improvement of the Verifiable Monitoring System:* A process for using information from the *verifiable monitoring system* to identify and demonstrate areas of performance improvement for the *verifiable monitoring system*.

**Performance Measure 13.3 Agistment Management and Monitoring:** *Standard Users* shall clearly define and implement strategies to ensure that agistment activities adhere to the principles of animal well-being and are able to monitor these outcomes.

*Indicator 13.3.1 Agistment Program: A program to help ensure that animal management complies with animal well-being best management practices and the relevant Principles and Objectives of the Leading Harvest Standard as determined by a Standard User and agistor.*

*Indicator 13.3.2 Agistment Agreements: Written agreements with the agistor demonstrating their commitment to applying animal husbandry practices consistent with best management practices.*

*Indicator 13.3.3 Communicating Agistment Objectives: A written statement clearly defining animal well-being goals of the Standard User for animals that are agisted off the enrolled pasture or farmland and made available to appropriate stakeholders upon request.*

*Indicator 13.3.4 Animal Monitoring System: A process for monitoring and evaluating application of animal husbandry practices by agistors and identifying and communicating areas where agistors can improve their performance and achieve greater consistency with animal husbandry best management practices and the relevant Principles and Objectives of the Leading Harvest Standard.*

## Objective 14. Animal Well-Being

To ensure people responsible for animals have the required competencies to perform their responsibilities in such a manner that ensures the basic *physiological* and *behavioural* needs of animals are met; with a goal of avoiding unnecessary animal stress and prioritizing animal health and continual improvement in *animal husbandry* practices.

### Performance Measure 14.1 Animal Health Program:

*Standard Users* have an up-to-date herd health program that ensures *appropriate* animal nutrition, *protection*, health monitoring, breeding, and health treatments and is *appropriate* to the region of the *Standard User*, including relevant guidelines and standards.

*Indicator 14.1.1 Animal Care: A process to ensure animals have reasonable access to food and water to meet nutritional needs, health, and production goals and animals are protected from external threats such as extreme weather events, predator impact and biosecurity hazards.*

*Indicator 14.1.2 Animal Health Management: Management of animal health including:*

- a. Preventative Health: A process for preventing *pests* and *disease* through *appropriate biosecurity*, *preventative health care* and *animal management best management practices*.
- b. Monitoring Animal Health: A *program* for inspecting, collecting information, and reporting on animal health on a regular basis, in accordance with *country or regional animal welfare best practices and/or guidelines*, with a focus on continuous improvement to increase accuracy and efficiency of record keeping.
- c. Breeding for Animal Health and Production: A *process* for identifying and selecting *desirable traits* best suited to the local environment, which maintain or improve animal health outcomes, as well as animal productivity.
- d. Application of *Animal Health Products*: A *process* for identifying and managing animal health conditions that require treatment using *animal health products* to alleviate or eliminate symptoms of ill health and/or improve lifetime *animal welfare*, with a focus on selecting the lowest risk, most selective treatment option.

#### *Indicator 14.1.3 Use of Animal Health Products:*

- a. *Prohibited Use of Health Care Products: Prohibition of the use of animal health products and supplements to enhance animal growth or products that are not registered or permitted for use and/or trial. Note: this does not include products where the primary reason for administration is for animal health benefit.*
- b. Withholding Periods: Application of a process to ensure all withholding periods or export slaughter intervals are met following applications of inputs to pasture or animals, including animal protectants, animal health products or feed treatments as per relevant legislation and guidelines to meet animal and human health objectives.
- c. Storage of *Animal Health Products*: Storage of animal health products according to the label instructions and regulatory requirements and application of practices to protect employees, farm workers, public health and the environment.



**Performance Measure 14.2 Animal Husbandry:** *Standard Users* shall ensure best management practices are followed in accordance with *country or region animal welfare best practices and/or guidelines* for the industry in which it operates; underpinned by continuous improvement to reduce and/or eliminate *animal husbandry* methods that may compromise animal welfare.

*Indicator 14.2.1 Animal Handling:* Application of animal handling methods, including design of handling facilities and use of equipment, to *minimize* the occurrence of pain, stress or injury to the animal, and to improve handler safety.

*Indicator 14.2.2 Animal Transport:* Application of animal transport procedures that *minimize* stress on the animal and follow requirements of *country or region animal welfare best practices and/or guidelines* for the industry in which the *Standard User* operates and have a system to report concerns and/or adverse outcomes.

*Indicator 14.2.3 End-of-Life Care:* Administer safe, timely and humane euthanasia to prevent animals suffering, where treatment is not an option or has failed to improve the health of an animal.

*Indicator 14.2.4 Standard Animal Husbandry Procedures:* A process for implementing standard *animal husbandry* procedures, for *castration, tail docking (sheep)*, that result in benefits to lifetime animal welfare, better animal management, and/or improved occupational and animal health and safety.

- a. *Discretionary Animal Husbandry Practices:* A process for implementing discretionary *animal husbandry* procedures, such as *mulesing, tail docking (cattle), dehorning, disbudding, calving induction, spaying*, that result in benefits to lifetime animal welfare, better animal management, and/or improved occupational and animal health and safety in line with *country or region animal welfare best practice and/or guidelines* of the *Standard User*.
- b. *Continuous Improvement of Practices:* A process for continuous improvement in use of discretionary *animal husbandry* procedures, including adoption of pain relief and, where applicable, a program to move towards alternative practices/procedures to improve animal health and reduce pain.

**Performance Measure 14.3 Calf-Rearing in Dairy:**

*Standard Users* shall follow requirements of *country or region animal welfare best practices and/or guidelines* to ensure calves in calf rearing systems are adequately cared for.

*Indicator 14.3.1 Monitoring and Managing Calf Feeding:* Programs are to be undertaken to ensure calves receive appropriate nutrition and care to maintain or enhance calf health, including colostrum after birth.

*Indicator 14.3.2 Calf Rearing System Management:* A process for providing *appropriate* care to maintain and/or improve calf health in calf-rearing systems and protect them from external threats such as weather and predator impact, following requirements of *country or regional animal welfare best practices and/or guidelines*.

*Indicator 14.3.3 Managing Surplus Dairy Calves:* A program to demonstrate the adoption, or move towards the adoption, of practices designed to reduce the incidence of surplus dairy calves; otherwise, healthy calves must not be euthanised on-farm.



# SECTION 2

## USE OF OFF-PRODUCT MARK



## 1. Use of *Leading Harvest* Off-Product Mark

### 1.1 Off-Product Mark

*Leading Harvest* has an off-product mark to show participation in the program and to promote the program generally. *Leading Harvest* owns all right, title and interest in the off-product mark, and exercises legitimate control over its use.

The off-product mark may only be used by *Program Users* in good standing whose operations are enrolled in the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Program* (for all or a portion of their operations). Any express or implied claim that a *Program User* is in conformance with the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard* must be substantiated by a current, valid certification by an accredited *certification body* recognized by *Leading Harvest*.

The *Leading Harvest* off-product mark and messages/claims cannot be used on product labels.

### 1.2 Public Claims and Mark Use<sup>2</sup>

1.2.1 **Full Participant** Claims and Mark Use. A *Program User* who wishes to make a public claim regarding their participation in *Leading Harvest* must have successfully completed certification to the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard* by a recognized accredited *certification body* and submit a public audit summary report which will be posted to the *Leading Harvest* website. The contents of the audit report are detailed in Section 4, *Communications and Reporting*. The messages or claims that may be used with the *Leading Harvest* off-product mark are outlined in the *Leading Harvest Brand Guidelines* in Section 3.

A *Program User* that has enrolled all their farmland acres/hectares in the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard* may use the *Leading Harvest off-product* mark and make the following public claim before achieving certification:

**100% of Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Enrolled**

In addition, *Program User* may use the *Leading Harvest off-product* mark and make the following public claim as farmland hectares are certified to the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard*:

**100% of Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Enrolled and XX% of Farmland Certified**

1.2.2 **Partial Participant** Claims and Mark Use. A *Program User* who wishes to make a public claim regarding their participation in *Leading Harvest* must have successfully completed partial certification to the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard* by a recognized accredited *certification body* and submit a public audit summary report which will be posted to the *Leading Harvest* website. The contents of the public audit report are detailed in Section 4, *Communications and Reporting*. The public claim that may be used with the *Leading Harvest off-product* mark is limited to the following until all the *Program User's* farmland acres/hectares are enrolled and certified:

**XX% of Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Enrolled and XX% Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Certified**

Program Supporter Claims and Mark Use: organizations that are formally recognized by *Leading Harvest* may only use the *Leading Harvest off-product* mark and the following tagline associated with the mark:

**Proud Supporter of Leading Harvest**

<sup>2</sup> A public claim is one that is made to the general public such as in a publicly posted sustainability report, press release, blog post, company letterhead, business cards, vehicle signage, etc.

1.3 Private Claims and Mark Use<sup>3</sup>

*Program Users* can make private, business to business, claims regarding their participation in *Leading Harvest*.

- 1.3.1 Full Participant Claims and Mark Use. A *Program User* who wishes to make a private claim regarding their participation in *Leading Harvest* must have successfully completed certification to the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard* by a recognized accredited *certification body* and submit a private audit report to *Leading Harvest*. The contents of the audit report are detailed in Section 4, *Communications and Reporting*. This report will be confidential and will not be made publicly available by *Leading Harvest*.

A *Program User* that has enrolled all their farmland acres/hectares in the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Program* may use the *Leading Harvest off-product* mark and make the following private claim before achieving certification:

**100% of Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Enrolled**

In addition, a *Program User* may use the *Leading Harvest off-product* mark and make the following private claim as farmland acres/hectares are certified to the standard:

**100% of Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Enrolled and XX% of Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Certified**

- 1.4 Partial Participant Claims and Mark Use. A *Program User* who wishes to make a private claim regarding their participation in *Leading Harvest* must have successfully completed certification to the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard* by a recognized accredited *certification body* and submit an audit report to *Leading Harvest*. The contents of the private audit report are detailed in Section 4, *Communications and Reporting*. This report will be confidential and will not be made publicly available by *Leading Harvest*.

- 1.4.1 The private claim that may be used with the *Leading Harvest off-product* mark is limited to the following until all the *Program User's* farmland acres/hectares are enrolled and certified:

**XX% of Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Enrolled and XX% Farmland Acres (or Hectares) Certified**

The off-product mark must be used as described in the *Leading Harvest Brand Guidelines*; subject to the limitations detailed in the preceding requirements.

<sup>3</sup> A private, business to business claim is one that is made to another business such as in an invoice, personal correspondence, sell sheet, etc. and is not made public.



# SECTION 3

BRAND GUIDELINES  
FOR USE OF OFF-PRODUCT  
MARK AND MESSAGES



## SECTION 3

### BRAND GUIDELINES FOR USE OF OFF-PRODUCT MARK AND MESSAGES

#### VERTICAL LOGO

The vertical logo is the primary logo and should be used whenever possible. See below for smaller and horizontal usage.

The minimum space around the logo should be at least one length of the centre leaf.

To ensure the logo maintains its readability, it should not go any smaller than 0.75" in height. If it does, please use the icon with text.



#### HORIZONTAL (ICON WITH TEXT)

If the logo is smaller than 0.75" please use the icon and add "Leading Harvest" positioned to the right, vertically centred, in all caps, Helvetica Neue Medium or Regular. Text can be adjusted to the size needed.



VERTICAL	HORIZONTAL
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#### 4-COLOUR LOGO

Use the CMYK colour palette when 4-Color printing is available. Navy and Teal logos are acceptable.



#### 2-COLOUR LOGO

Use PMS2189C (Navy) or PMS2223C (Teal) and 80% Black when PMS colour is available.



#### 1-COLOUR LOGO

Use B&W version of the marks when printing in black and white.



#### WEB-SAFE LOGO

Use JPEG or TIFF for all website and PowerPoint presentations.



#### WHITE LOGO

Use White version of the mark when applying it to dark backgrounds or over images. (PNG, EPS, or AI).



LOGO + TAG LINE

“Grow Confidently” should be one weight less than “Leading Harvest,” either Helvetica Neue Regular or Light.

When using the tag line with the main logo, it should be centred under the shape of the logo within the pink lines. If the tag line feels too small, then you may increase the size of the tag line but it should not go outside of the blue lines.



HORIZONTAL + TAG LINE

If the logo is smaller than 0.75” and the name and tag line are needed, use this formatting.

Position “Leading Harvest” to the right of the mark, vertically centred, in all caps, Helvetica Neue Medium or Regular. Text can be adjusted to the size needed.

“Grow Confidently” should be in a lighter weight than “Leading Harvest,” either Helvetica Neue Regular or Light.



TYPOGRAPHY

Our typeface, Helvetica Neue is simple, clear, and universal.

Different weights and styles are used to establish importance in messaging.

- HELVETICA NEUE 75 BOLD
- HELVETICA NEUE 65 MEDIUM
- HELVETICA NEUE 55 ROMAN
- HELVETICA NEUE 56 ITALIC
- HELVETICA NEUE 45 LIGHT
- HELVETICA NEUE 45 LIGHT ITALIC
- HELVETICA NEUE 35 THIN

COLOUR PALETTE

The primary colours are Navy, Teal, White, and Dark Gray.

For print, use CMYK or PMS colours. Always match print jobs to colour swatches for consistency.

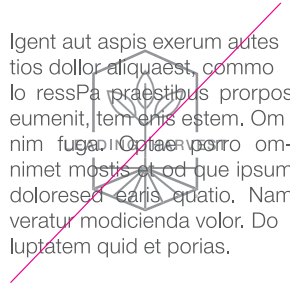
For website graphics, and PowerPoint presentations, use RGB or HEX colours.



LOGO DON'TS



Place logo on images that provide good contrast and legibility. Do not superimpose the logo onto any image that obscures the logo or reduces its readability.



Do not use the entire logo, or any part of it separately as a tinted background or decorative element.



Do not distort, recreate, add any elements, or alter the proportions of the logo.



# SECTION 4

## COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTING





### 1. Preparing and Submitting an Audit Report

A *Certified Program User* who wishes to make public claims shall provide a summary audit report (one copy must be in English) to *Leading Harvest* within 90 days after the successful completion of certification, recertification, or surveillance audit to the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard 2025*. The summary audit report will be posted on the *Leading Harvest* website for public review.

*Certified Program Users* that only use certification for internal reporting and business to business communications related to selling product must submit an audit report (which will not be publicly available) to *Leading Harvest* for validation within 90 days of the certificate being issued, and also shall share with *Leading Harvest* information regarding area and general geographies certified for aggregated reporting across program users.

- 1.1 The *certification body* shall prepare the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard 2025* summary audit report, which shall include, at a minimum:
- a. a description of the audit process, *objectives* and scope; This shall include:
    - the specific *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard 2025* objectives that were within the scope of the audit;
    - a description of the sampling approach (consistent with IAF MD-1:2018 and, where appropriate, adopting a risk-based approach) outlining the strata, location and number of sites sampled and the percentage of sites sampled within each stratum;
    - the sampling size, including the number of operations and managed farmland hectares physically inspected during the audit.
  - b. a description of substitute *indicators*, if any, used in the audit and a rationale for each;
  - c. the name of *Certified Program User* that was audited, including its *Leading Harvest contact person*;
  - d. a general description of the *Certified Program User's farmland* included in the audits.

**This shall include:**

- a general description of the management plan outlining farmland management policies and objectives;
- an outline of the area of ownership (including the number of acres/hectares under management and provide a description of key features)

The acre/hectare disclosure used to outline the area of ownership in public summary audit reports shall be listed using one of the range options listed below:

0 – 10,000ac (0 – 4,000ha)

10,000 – 50,000ac (4,000 – 20,000ha)

50,000 – 100,000ac (20,000 – 40,000ha)

100,000 – 250,000ac (40,000 – 100,000ha)

250,000 – 500,000ac (100,000 – 200,000ha)

500,000ac+ (200,000ha+);

- a general description of major *crop* types with a general characterisation of management and *conservation* approaches used.
- e. a description of the audit team. This shall include the names and professional qualifications of the lead auditor, all *audit team* members and any *technical experts* who participated in the audit. This may include the names and affiliations of any audit observers and an explanation of their role;
  - f. the dates the audit was conducted and completed. This shall include the number of auditor days spent to conduct the audit, broken down by auditor time spent off and on-site. This shall include the specific farmland operations visited if there is more than one operation/region associated with the certificate, and

- g. a summary of the findings, including general descriptions of evidence of conformity and any nonconformities (reported at the performance measure level) and corrective action plans to address them, opportunities for improvement, and exceptional practices.

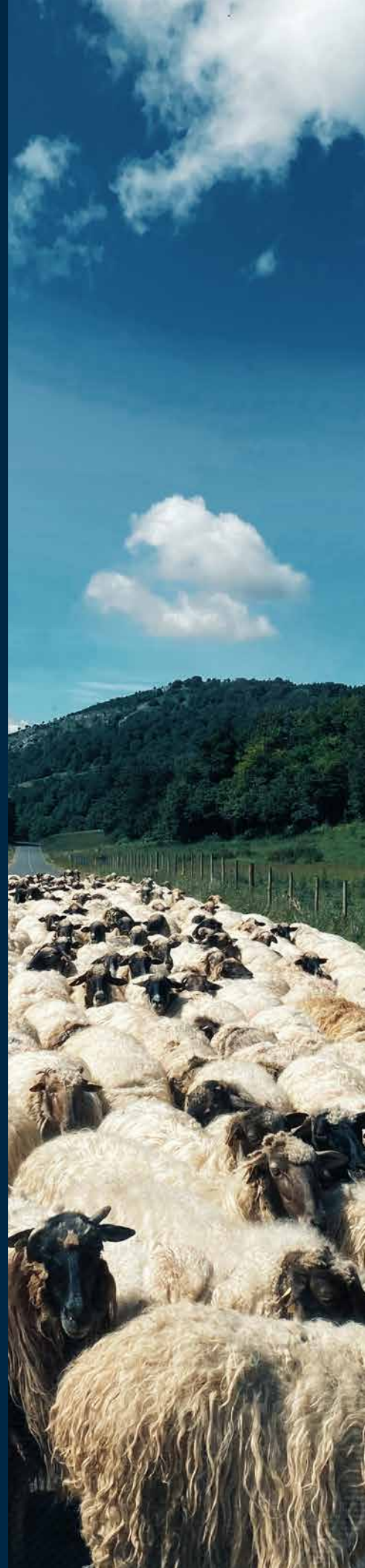
**This shall include:**

- a description of the evidence examined for each *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard 2025* objective within the scope of the audit.
  - an update on the status of previous non-conformities, if any.
- h. the audit team recommendation.



# SECTION 5

## DISPUTES AND APPEALS



## Introduction

A process that openly investigates concerns and disputes is an important component of any legitimate certification *program*. The transparency requirements of the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Program 2025* and supporting documents allow individuals and organizations to bring forward questions and concerns using the process as outlined in this section.

An official dispute or appeal does not challenge the credibility or the content of the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard 2025* requirements; rather it challenges the audit findings and the decision of the *certification body* to grant the certification, or events occurring since the audit that question the maintenance of the certification.

### 1. Disputes and Appeals Questioning the Validity of a Certification to the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard 2025*

The disputes and appeals process is an important component of any legitimate certification program, including the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Program 2025*. The disputes and appeals process allows individuals or organizations to have their concerns regarding the validity of a certification openly and independently investigated. A dispute or appeal does not challenge the credibility or the content of the *Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard 2025*, rather it challenges the audit findings and the decision to grant the certification, or events that have happened since the last audit that questions the maintenance of the certification.

#### **Disputes and Appeals Process**

- 1.1 The *certification body* will conform to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17021-1:2015, sections 9.7 and 9.8, as well as the additional requirements defined in this process.
- 1.2 The complainant outlines their concerns in a letter to the *Certified Program User's certification body*.
- 1.3 The *certification body* may request additional specifics associated with the concerns and will investigate the issue in accordance with their official complaint procedures that were approved by their accreditation body.
- 1.4 If the *certification body* finds a sound basis for the dispute or appeal, then it would require the *Certified Program User* to take corrective action to address the complaint and advise the complainant accordingly.
- 1.5 If the *certification body* does not find a sound basis for the complaint and determines the certification was appropriately granted and *Certified Program User's* performance has not changed since the certification, it would inform the complainant of this.
- 1.6 In the event litigation is involved between the complainant and the *Leading Harvest Certified Program User*, the dispute and appeals process shall be suspended pending resolution of the litigation. It shall be restarted following resolution of the litigation if *claims of nonconformity* issues remain.



[LeadingHarvest.org](http://LeadingHarvest.org)  
[info@LeadingHarvest.org](mailto:info@LeadingHarvest.org)