



**Leading Harvest Farmland  
Management Standard 2025:  
Pasture and Livestock  
International Glossary**

## Introduction

This glossary serves as a companion to the Leading Harvest Farmland Management Standard and provides internationally agreed-upon definitions for key terms related to sustainable agriculture certification. The terms defined herein are applicable across all regions and crop types, ensuring consistency and clarity in the implementation of the standard on a global scale. However, in recognition of regional variations, Standard Users operating in countries or areas where different definitions for certain terms exist may apply those definitions, provided they can supply adequate evidence during the audit process to justify the use of country- or region-specific terminology. This flexibility allows for local relevance while maintaining the integrity of the certification process.

**Agistment:** The movement of livestock from a property where there is little feed or water to another property where there are adequate supplies, generally in exchange for payment.

**Agistor:** The person who takes animals onto their land to graze in exchange for payment. Responsible for animal care when they are on their land.

**Agricultural best management practices or good agricultural practices:** A set of principles, regulations and technical recommendations applicable to a region for the production, processing and food transport, addressing human health care, environment protection and improvement of worker conditions and their families. (Adapted from [FAO](#))

**Agricultural chemicals:** Any substance used to help manage an agricultural ecosystem, or the community of organisms in a farming area. Agrochemicals include: (i) fertilizers; (ii) liming and acidifying agents; (iii) soil conditioners; (iv) pesticides; (v) rodenticides; (vi) fungicides; (vii) insecticides; (viii) chemicals used in animal husbandry, such as antibiotics and hormones as well as chemicals used for mating disruption in agricultural crops (Adapted from [IPBES](#))

**Agricultural land:** Agricultural land is defined as the land area that is either arable, under permanent crops, under permanent pastures, or utilized in controlled environments such as greenhouses and hydroponic systems. Arable land includes land under temporary crops such as cereals, temporary meadows for mowing or for pasture, land under market or kitchen gardens, and land temporarily fallow. Land abandoned as a result of shifting cultivation is excluded. Land under permanent crops is cultivated with crops that occupy the land for long periods and need not be replanted after each harvest, such as orchards and vineyards, excluding land under trees grown for wood or timber. Permanent pasture is land used for five or more years for forage, including natural and cultivated crops. Controlled environments allow for the cultivation

of crops with optimized conditions for growth. Additional agro-environmental indicators include organic farmland and transgenic cropland. This indicator is presented as a total and per type of agricultural land and is measured in hectares and in percentage. (definition inspired by the [OECD](#))

**Agricultural practices:** Specific methods including tillage system, planting, irrigation, application practices for fertilizers and crop protectants, harvesting and other cropping practices that are applied to grow and harvest annual or perennial crops for food, animal feed, forage, fiber, oilseed and other agricultural products.

**Agricultural products:** Any product or commodity, raw or processed, that is marketed for human consumption (excluding water, salt and additives) or animal feed ([FAO](#))

**Agricultural waste:** Refers to solid waste that is generated by the rearing of animals or the production and harvest of agricultural products. This may include, but is not limited to, poultry and livestock manure and residual materials in liquid or solid form generated from the production and marketing of poultry, livestock, fur-bearing animals, other livestock products and crop residues from row crops and permanent crops (US EPA)

**Animal health products:** Includes pharmaceutical, immunobiological and complementary products that can be administered to the animal, internally or externally, to manage a specific disease, condition or circumstance. The use of such products results in a direct affecting on the animal.

**Animal husbandry:** Breeding and caring for farm animals. It includes day-to-day care, selective breeding and the raising of livestock.

**Animal welfare:** The state of an animal and how well it is coping with the conditions in which it lives.

**Appropriate:** Suitable or proper in the circumstances for a particular purpose. Considerations may include whether an activity will achieve the goal of an indicator or performance measure in a specific setting, is practical and reasonable and contributes to achieving regulatory compliance or obtaining social license.

**Appropriate deforestation cutoff date:** A cutoff date marks the latest date a company or country will source from lands that have been converted for agricultural purposes. For example, a food company may decide that it will no longer buy soy from any area converted after 2015. (WWF)

**Behavioral:** Reactions made in response to stimuli.

**Biodiversity:** The variety of life on earth. As defined by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity it includes the diversity of ecosystems in the biosphere, the number and variety of species within an ecosystem, the genetic variation within these species, and the ecological processes that support them World Land Trust ([worldlandtrust.org](http://worldlandtrust.org))

**Biodiversity for food and agriculture:** The diversity of plants, animals and microorganisms at genetic, species and ecosystem levels, present in and around crop, livestock, forest and aquatic production systems. It includes the diversity of domesticated crops, livestock and farmed fish and aquatic invertebrates, forest trees and wild-harvested aquatic species. It also includes the diversity of all the non-domesticated species that enable production to occur – for example, pollinators, soil-dwelling organisms, the natural enemies of pests, and the microorganisms that enable ruminant animals (cattle, sheep, goats, etc.) to digest fibrous feed – and all the wild species gathered or hunted for food and for other purposes. Ecosystems essential to food and agriculture include forests and grasslands, oceans and a variety of inland and coastal wetlands, including mangroves, coral reefs and seagrass beds. (FAO)

**Biosecurity:** Biosecurity refers to the “implementation of practices that create barriers in order to reduce the risk of the introduction and spread of disease agents. The three principal elements of biosecurity are: 1) Segregation The creation and maintenance of barriers to limit the potential opportunities for infected animals and contaminated materials to enter an uninfected site. This step, properly applied, will prevent most infection. 2)Cleaning Materials (e.g. vehicles, equipment) that have to enter (or leave) a site must be thoroughly cleaned to

remove visible dirt. This will reduce the risk from a contaminant (organism). 3)Disinfection Properly applied, disinfection will inactivate any contaminant that is present on materials that have already been thoroughly cleaned. (FAO, [World Organisation for Animal Health \(OIE\)](#), and the World Bank, ‘[Biosecurity for Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza](#)’, 2008)

**Castration:** The removal or disruption of the function of the testes by excision, or by constriction and / or crushing of the testicular blood supply (using a rubber ring, tension band or burdizzo clamp) or by dysfunction created by the cryptorchid method.

**Certification body:** An independent third party that is accredited and competent to conduct certifications to the Leading Harvest Standard.

**Climate change:** Change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. It may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

**Climate-smart agriculture (practices):** Practices and principles that promote sustainable increases in agricultural productivity (including sustainable intensification) while adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

**Conservation:** 1. The practice of protecting and preserving the abundance and variety (biodiversity) of all species, regardless of classification, ecosystems, and genetic diversity, on the planet. 2. Management of a renewable natural resource with the objective of sustaining its productivity in perpetuity while providing for human use compatible with sustainability of the resource. (Adapted from [UN IFAD](#) and Leading Harvest)

**Contract management company:** A third-party company used by a Standard user to directly operate enrolled farmland.

**Covenant of quiet enjoyment:** A covenant that promises that the grantee or tenant of an estate in real property will be able to possess the premises in peace, without disturbance by hostile claimants. Quiet enjoyment is a right to the undisturbed use and enjoyment of real property by a tenant.

**Cover cropping:** Cover crops are defined as a “close-growing crop that provides soil protection, seeding protection, and soil improvement between periods of normal crop production, or between trees in orchards and vines in vineyards. When plowed under and incorporated into the soil, cover crops may be referred to as green manure crops” (SSSA, 2008). Cover crops are also found called “Living mulch” or “Green manure”. In some cases, cover crops can remain permanently on the soil, which constitutes a living soil cover. ([FAO](#))

**Critical external factor:** Any off-farm attribute or factor that is materially and substantially relevant to the viability, long-term profitability, and sustainability of agricultural production of a management unit or farm. These may include economic factors (e.g., labour availability, regional market demand and opportunities, regulatory changes, farmland tenant availability, supplier availability and technological advancements), environmental factors (e.g., climate change, regional availability of water, and other inputs), and social factors (e.g., social license).

**Crop:** Plant species that are purposefully grown and/or harvested to satisfy human and livestock needs. They can include plants grown for food, feed, forage, fiber, decorative purposes, oilseed, medicine, cultural practices, fermentation products or fuel, including, but not limited to, field crops, hay or forage, fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains and horticultural specialties. Cover crops and companion crops may be considered crops if purposefully grown.

**Cropland:** A Land cover/use category that includes areas used for the production of adapted crops for harvest. Two subcategories of cropland are recognized: cultivated and noncultivated. Cultivated cropland comprises land in row crops or close-grown crops and also other cultivated cropland, for example, hayland or pastureland that is in a rotation with row or close-grown crops. Noncultivated cropland includes permanent *hayland* and *horticultural c.* (USDA NRCS)

**Crop productivity/yields:** Crop yields are the harvested production per unit of harvested area for crop products. In most of the cases yield data are not recorded, but are obtained by dividing the production data by the data on area harvested. ([OECD](#))

**Crop protectants (Plant protection products):** Plant protection products are substances, or mixtures of substances, of a chemical or biological nature, or formulated preparation of microorganisms (fungi, viruses, bacteria, protozoa or other microscopic self-replicating biotic entities), intended for use in agriculture, horticulture, forestry, gardens and amenity areas, on stored plant products and on land not intended for cropping, for the purpose of:

- protecting plants or plant products by destroying, repelling or limiting the growth of pests;
- destroying or limiting the growth of weeds or undesired plants;
- controlling or modifying the growth of plants (other than as nutrients). ([European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization](#))

**Crop residues:** Crop residue refers to the biomass left in the field after harvesting the economic components of crops, such as grains. It is a significant source of fibers, energy, and plant nutrients, with a composition dominated by cellulose, hemicellulose, and lignin. ([Encyclopedia of Soils in the Environment](#))

**Crop genetic diversity:** The total number of genetic characteristics in the genetic makeup of the plant species used in agriculture and their close evolutionary related wild species ([FAO](#))

**Deforestation:** 1. Deforestation is the process of clearing naturally occurring forests by logging or burning for purposes such as agriculture, fuel or urban development. Deforestation also occurs naturally or unintentionally through wildfires and overgrazing. This results in loss of habitat and biodiversity and is a significant contributor to soil erosion. 2. Long-term reduction of the tree canopy cover below the minimum 10 percent threshold. ([Adapted from World Land Trust and FAO](#))

**Dehorning:** The removal of attached horns.

**Desirable traits:** Breeding for traits that are more suitable for production systems and are conducive of reducing animal welfare issues (e.g., temperament, polledness, structural and udder soundness, disease and pest resistance, heat tolerance, doing or “fleshing” ability, mothering ability, and calving ease).

**Disbudding:** Removal of an area of skin including the horn bud in a young animal prior to solid attachment of the horn bud to the skull.

**Discretionary:** Available for use by the judgment of the user in consideration of a particular situation.

**Due diligence:** The process through which an organization identifies, prevents, mitigates, and accounts for how it addresses its actual and potential adverse impacts which can be related to employment, human rights, the environment, bribery, and consumers. ([GRI](#))

**Ecologically Important Sites:** Sites of exceptional ecological importance including areas with critically endangered or endangered species or natural communities, rare natural communities or unique ecological landscape features.

**Effluent:** Effluent from dairy sheds or other infrastructure such as yards, feedpads and calving pads predominantly consisting of manure, urine and washdown water. It may also include gravel, detergents, soil particles, cow hair, milk, string, paper and wire and is high in nutrients, particularly nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium.

**Energy-efficient agricultural practices:** Practices that deliver more services for the same energy input or the same services for less energy input (modified from International Energy Agency definition of energy efficiency).

**Enrolled lands:** Lands managed by the Standard user and enrolled under the Leading Harvest Standard and subject to third-party audit to the Leading Harvest Standard.

**Equal Opportunity Employment:** Employment process that seeks to level the playing field so that gender, ethnicity, birthplace, family background and other characteristics that are beyond an individual's control do not influence a person's outcomes. Success should depend on people's choices, effort, and talents, not on their circumstances at birth. ([World Bank](#))

**Equitable:** Equity is the absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically or by other dimensions of inequality (e.g. sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation). ([WHO](#))

**Euthanasia:** Put to death humanely; a person conducting the euthanasia must take reasonable action to confirm the animal is dead.

**Export slaughter interval:** the minimum time that must elapse between veterinary chemical administration to livestock and their slaughter for export (APVMA, 2021).

**External threats:** Including extremes of weather conditions, drought, fires, floods, disease, injury and predation.

**Fair wage or fair compensation:** Often used interchangeably with living wage. However, a fair wage is a broader concept that encompasses the idea of equitable compensation for work performed. It means paying workers a wage that is reasonable, and in line with their skills, experience, and market conditions.

**Farmland:** Land that includes cropland, rangeland, grassland, pasture land, incidental forest land and wetlands that are part of an agricultural operation (USDA NRCS).

**Farmland tenant:** A lessee of farmland where the lease is managed by a Standard user.

**Farm labour contractor:** Any person, other than an agricultural employer, an agricultural association, or an employee of an agricultural employer or agricultural association, who, for any money or other valuable consideration paid or promised to be paid, performs any farm labor contracting activity. ([FAO](#))

**Fertilizer:** A substance that is used to provide nutrients to plants, usually via application to the soil, but also to foliage or through water in rice systems, fertigation, hydroponics or aquaculture operations. ([FAO](#))

**Forest:** Land with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10 percent and area of more than 1.2 acres (0.5 hectares) with tree species largely of indigenous origin. The trees should be able to reach a minimum height of 16.4 feet (5 meters) at maturity in situ. It may consist either of closed forest formations where trees of various heights and undergrowth cover a high proportion of the ground or open forest formations with a continuous vegetation cover in which tree crown cover exceeds 10 percent. It does not include land that is predominantly under agricultural or urban land use (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

**Gender-equitable:** The fair treatment for men and women according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different, but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities (UNESCO). Equivalency between men and women does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they were born male or female.

**Grasslands:** Natural or semi-natural land defined by the following characteristics:

1. a non-wetland formation;
2. vascular vegetation has at least 10 percent cover;
3. graminoids have at least 25 percent cover (but if less than 25 percent cover, graminoids exceed that of other herbaceous and shrub cover);
4. broad-leaved herbs (forbs) may have variable levels of cover and dominance;
5. shrubs have less than 25 percent canopy cover;
6. and trees: (i) in temperate zones, typically have less than 10 percent canopy cover, are less than 5 meters tall and single-layered or (ii) in tropical regions, typically have less than 40 percent canopy cover, are less than 8 meters tall and are single layered (Dixon et al. 2014).

**Greenhouse gases:** Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, that absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of radiation emitted by the Earth's surface, by the atmosphere itself, and by clouds. This property causes the greenhouse effect. ([IPCC](#))

**Groundwater:** Water that exists underground in saturated zones beneath the land surface. The upper surface of the saturated zone is called the water table (USGS).

**Groundwater depletion:** Groundwater depletion refers to a long-term decline in levels of groundwater caused by sustained groundwater pumping within a watershed or catchment (USGS). This decline can be exacerbated by factors such as prolonged drought conditions and reduced snowpack, which diminish natural replenishment of aquifers. These environmental changes lead to increased reliance on groundwater resources, further intensifying depletion and impacting both water availability and ecosystem health.

**Groundwater regulatory agency:** A public authority of any jurisdiction or government agency with statutory authority to exercise regulatory or supervisory oversight in the use and/or extraction of groundwater.

**Habitat:** With respect to any species of animal, plant or other organism, an area on which the species depends, directly or indirectly, to carry on its life processes, including life processes such as reproduction, rearing, hibernation, migration or feeding, and includes places in the area, whichever is applicable, that are used by members of the species as dens, nests, hibernacula or other residences. ([FAO](#))

**Hazardous waste:** Any waste or combination of wastes with the potential to damage human health, living organisms or the environment. Hazardous wastes usually require special handling and disposal procedures which are regulated by national and international laws. ([FAO](#))

**Health and safety:** Regulations and procedures intended to prevent accident or injury.

**Humane killing:** Must ensure that the animal is killed at the first reasonable opportunity.

**Imperiled (species):** At high risk of extinction or elimination due to restricted range, few populations or occurrences, steep declines, severe threats, or other factors. ([NatureServe](#))

**Indicator:** A specific metric that provides information about an organization's agricultural and environmental performance and that is integral to assessing conformance to the Leading Harvest Standard.

**Indigenous Peoples:** Indigenous Peoples are distinct social and cultural groups that share collective ancestral ties to the lands and natural resources where they live, occupy or from which they have been displaced. The land and natural resources on which they depend are inextricably linked to their identities, cultures, livelihoods, as well as their physical and spiritual well-being.

The following are important characteristics of Indigenous Peoples:

- Self-identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member
- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies

- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources
- Distinct social, economic or political systems
- Distinct language, culture and beliefs
- Form non-dominant groups of society
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities. (Adapted from [World Bank, Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, FSC](#))

**Integrated Pest Management:** The careful consideration of all available pest control techniques and subsequent integration of appropriate measures that discourage the development of pest populations and keep pesticides and other interventions to levels that are economically justified and reduce or minimize risks to human health and the environment. IPM emphasizes the growth of a healthy crop with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems and encourages natural pest control mechanisms. ([FAO](#))

**Land use conversion:** A change in the extent or composition of an ecosystem or habitat where there is a shift from one land use to another that is considered significant or irreversible.

**Living wage:** Compensation for a regular work week that is sufficient to meet the worker's basic needs and provide some discretionary income. ([FLA](#))

**Low-emission technologies:** Low-carbon emitting technologies are referred to as innovative technical solutions that are characterized by a low emission intensity, compared to state-of-the-art alternatives. In a way, they can be seen as best-in-class technologies with a focus on environmental impact. ([World Economic Forum](#))

**Lowest risk, most selective treatment options:** A treatment used to control site-specific pests that minimizes impact to non-target organisms and people and has the least overall impact while meeting management objectives. Considerations may include the target pest, the degree of control needed, cost, the season and timing of application, rates and methods, terrain, crop conditions and the presence or absence of water bodies.

**Minimize:** To do only that which is necessary and appropriate to accomplish the task or objective described.

**Mulesing:** The removal of skin from the breech and/or tail of a sheep using mulesing shears.

**Native habitats:** Land and water areas where the ecosystems biological communities are formed largely by native plant and animal species and human activity has not essentially modified the area's primary ecological functions. ([EEA](#))

**Natural communities:** An assemblage of interacting plant species and animal species and their common environment, recurring across the landscape, in which the effects of human intervention are minimal. The vegetation is largely indigenous origin defined by a characteristic range of species composition, diagnostic species occurrence, habitat conditions and physiognomy. They reflect sub-regional to local topo-edaphic factors of substrates, hydrology, disturbance regimes and climate (NatureServe). Three characteristics distinguish natural communities: 1) plant species composition, 2) vegetation structure (e.g., forest, shrubland or marsh) and 3) a specific combination of physical conditions (e.g., water, light, nutrient levels and climate). Grassland and shrub areas that have been plowed or otherwise have had extensive soil disturbance and removal of the vegetation in the past are typically not natural communities. Forests on sites that have been converted to other land uses (e.g., agriculture) in the past and subsequently allowed to regrow trees are typically not natural communities. Human-made wetlands from wetland mitigation projects on sites that have been converted in the past from other land uses (e.g., agriculture) or cleared forest and graminoid and/or shrub wetlands occupying sites once plowed or having extensive soil disturbance in the past are typically not considered to be natural wetlands.

**Natural forest:** Forest composed of indigenous trees and not classified as a plantation forest. Plantation forest is defined as an intensively managed planted forest that at maturity is composed of one or two species, has one age class, and has regular tree spacing. Forest that is planted for ecosystem restoration or protection and forest that resembles natural forest at stand maturity is not defined as plantation forest. (Adapted from [FAO](#)).

**Nutrient management:** To manage the amount, source, placement, form and timing of the application of nutrients and soil amendments to ensure adequate soil fertility for plant production and to minimize the potential for environmental degradation, particularly water quality impairment (USDA NRCS) and unnecessary air emissions.

**Objective:** A fundamental goal.

**Occupational:** Relating to a job or profession.

**Overgrazing:** The regrazing of plants before they are allowed sufficient time for recovery and the grazing of plants for prolonged periods that exceeds the carrying capacity of the pasture.

**Pasture:** (1) Grazing lands comprised of introduced or domesticated native forage species that are used primarily for the production of livestock. They receive periodic renovation and/or cultural treatments such as tillage, fertilization, mowing and weed control, and may be irrigated. They are not in rotation with crops. (2) A grazing area enclosed and separated from other areas by fencing or other barriers; the management unit for grazing land. (3) Forage plants used as food for grazing animals. (4) Any area devoted to the production of forage, native or introduced, and harvested by grazing (USDA).

**Performance measure:** A means of judging whether an objective has been fulfilled.

**Pests:** Any species, strain or biotype of plant, animal or pathogenic agent injurious to plants and plant products, materials or environments and includes vectors of parasites or pathogens of human and animal disease and animals causing public health nuisance. (FAO)

**Physiological:** Relating to the processes of the body, typically outside of conscious perception.

**Policy:** A written statement of commitment to meet an objective or to implement a defined program or plan to achieve an objective or outcome.

**Prime farmland (prime cultivated land):** Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and that is available for these uses. It has the combination of soil properties, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields of crops in an economic manner if it is treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, an acceptable level of acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable content of salt or sodium, and few or no rocks. Its soils are permeable to water and air. Prime farmland is not excessively eroded or

saturated with water for long periods of time, and it either does not flood frequently during the growing season or is protected from flooding. (Adapted from [USDA NRCS](#)).

**Process:** A series of purposeful actions or operations that leads to a sought-after end or outcome. This can include a set or sequence of informal or formal practices, procedures or routines.

**Professional work environment:** A non-discriminatory workplace environment free from harassment and composed of competent, respectful, mature and accountable employees working toward a common goal.

**Program:** An organized system, process, or set of activities to achieve an objective, performance measure or indicator.

**Protection:** Maintenance of the status or integrity, over the long term, of identified attributes or values including management where appropriate, giving consideration to past disturbance, land use, and pest risk when determining appropriate conservation strategies.

**Rangeland:** Commonly described as an area of shrub and/or grass receiving less than about 750 mm of annual rainfall. Within this definition rangeland may vary from mild sub-arid wooded savanna to desert. (FAO)

**Regulatory action information:** Information related to compliance with government regulations such as permits, reports and corrective action documentation.

**Renewable energy:** Renewable energy is energy derived from natural sources that are replenished at a higher rate than they are consumed. Sunlight and wind, for example, are such sources that are constantly being replenished. (UN)

**Riparian area (Riparian habitats):** They are found along the edges of streams and rivers. They perform important ecosystem services: the plants in the riparian zone prevent soil erosion and can reduce water pollution. They also provide important habitat for many species. In many countries riparian habitats are protected, and they can act as wildlife corridors through a deforested landscape. [World Land Trust \(worldlandtrust.org\)](#)

**Risk:** Uncertainty about the effects/implications of an activity.



**Runoff:** Water from precipitation or irrigation on an area that does not infiltrate, but instead is discharged from the area. The water that flows off the surface of the land without sinking into the soil is called surface runoff. Water that enters the soil before reaching surface water is called groundwater runoff or seepage flow from groundwater (USDA).

**Share-farming:** An arrangement whereby two parties (ordinarily both farmers) bring certain elements together to farm a property to generate profits which are then shared between the parties (Coulter Legal, 2023).

**Soil amendments:** Materials that typically are added to soil, plants or the plant-growth environment to enhance plant growth. These include fertilizers, compost, sludge, manure, microbes, additives, materials improving soil condition (i.e., adjusting the pH of the soil, improving soil structure and texture, aeration adjustment and moisture conservation among others), materials controlling or suppressing crop pests, and others or combinations thereof. Inorganic soil amendments are composed of synthetic chemicals and/or minerals, while organic soil amendments are often composed of organic matter from plant/animal sources and/or microbes, and may include materials such as manure, earthworm castings, soil, sphagnum peat, grass clippings, straw, wood chips, various composts, seaweed, guano, or naturally occurring mineral deposits (e.g., saltpeter), and living microorganisms, among others (USDA).

**Soil degradation:** is defined as a change in the soil health status resulting in a diminished capacity of the ecosystem to provide goods and services for its beneficiaries. Degraded soils have a health status such, that they do not provide the normal goods and services of the particular soil in its ecosystem. (FAO)

**Soil erosion:** Soil erosion is defined as the accelerated removal of topsoil from the land surface through water, wind and tillage (FAO).

**Soil fertility:** The ability of a soil to sustain plant growth by providing essential plant nutrients and favorable chemical, physical, and biological characteristics as a habitat for plant growth. (FAO)

**Soil health:** The capacity of soil to function as a living system, with ecosystem and land use boundaries, to sustain plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality, and promote plant and animal health. (FAO)

**Soil loss:** Soil erosion where the removal of topsoil occurs faster than the soil-forming processes can replace it due to natural, animal and human activity.

**Soil mismanagement:** Agricultural operations, practices and/or treatments that result in the decline of soil health and soil productivity, including soil loss.

**Soil productivity:** Soil productivity is defined as the capacity of a soil to produce a certain yield of agricultural crops or other plants using a defined set of management practices (Karlen, 2005).

**Solid waste:** Any solid, semisolid, liquid or contained gaseous materials discarded from agricultural operations. It includes garbage, construction debris, commercial refuse, sludge from water supply or waste treatment plants and other discarded materials (RCRA US EPA).

**Special sites:** Sites that include unique geological features or unique culturally important features that are recognized regionally or nationally or by Indigenous Peoples.

**Species at risk:** A species facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild in the immediate future. (FAO)

**Standard user:** An organization certified or committed to being certified by an accredited certification body to be in conformance with the Leading Harvest Standard.

**Suffering:** The state of severe distress, disease or injury.

**Sub-national:** Subnational (including local) governments are governance units at various levels, within countries, and are accountable to national governments to varying degrees. (CBD)

**Supply chain:** The sequence of processes involved in the production and distribution of a commodity to a consumer.

**Surface water:** All waters on the surface of the Earth including water found in streams, rivers, ponds, lakes, marshes or wetlands, and ice and snow. (GEMET-LANDY / BJGEO)

**Surplus food:** A food that is still perfectly edible and safe for human consumption, but exists, for example, because it has failed to meet aesthetic specifications, or is past its 'sell by' or 'best before' dates. Much of this food ends up as waste. If diverted in time, a sizeable share of this food can instead be redirected for human consumption, helping to alleviate hunger, and creating several benefits for the generating firms. ([FAO](#))

**Tail docking:** The removal of a portion of an animal's tail, or actions that cause the loss of a section of the tail. It does not include any trimming of the switch hairs (the bush) (cattle).

**Treaty rights:** Treaty rights are rights set out in either a historic or modern treaty agreement. Treaties define specific rights, benefits and obligations for the signatories that vary from treaty to treaty. Treaties and treaty rights also vary depending on the time and circumstances in which they were negotiated. ([RCAANC](#))

**Unique culturally important features:** Features having significance for or being representative of human activities or beliefs. Examples could include, but are not limited to, documented areas such as archaeological sites, unusual historical sites, cemeteries and sacred sites. Typically, these sites have been documented in databases established by governments and have been significant historically.

**Unique geological features:** Naturally occurring physical features on Earth's surface, which are unique or locally rare, typically limited in extent (0.1 to 100 acres), often less than 10 acres. Examples could include, but are not limited to, exceptional waterfalls, stream or river gorges, canyons, arches, caves or mine entrances, outcrops of fossil beds or rare mineral deposits, bluffs, buttes and cliffs.

**Verifiable monitoring system:** A system capable of being audited by a third party that includes:

1. a means to characterize farmland under the authority of a Standard user,
2. a process to identify and use sources of available data regarding the use of regional agricultural best management practices, and
3. a method to assess farmland tenant performance.

**Viable occurrences:** Occurrences of species with good or excellent viability according to NatureServe, including occurrences that exhibit favorable characteristics with respect to population size and/or quality and quantity of occupied habitat, and, if current conditions prevail, the occurrence is likely to persist for the foreseeable future (i.e., at least 20-30 years) in its current condition or better (NatureServe)

**Water quality:** The chemical, physical and biological characteristics of water, with respect to its suitability for a particular purpose e.g., drinking water for humans or livestock, commercial and industrial use, aquatic species habitat and crop irrigation. (USGS)

**Weather conditions:** The forecast of weather (temperature, humidity, precipitation, wind, cloudiness and atmospheric pressure) and severe weather warnings (thunderstorms, tornadoes, hurricanes, winter storms, snow, droughts) to include observations, flood information, seas forecasts and climate information.

**Wetlands:** Wetlands have been defined as areas that have free water at or on the surface for at least the major part of the growing season. The water is sufficiently shallow to allow the growth of a wetland crop or of natural vegetation rooted in the soil. ([FAO](#))

**Wildlife:** Animals and plants that grow independently of people, usually in natural conditions. ([GEMET/CAMB](#))



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