

# Certification Standard for Sustainably Grown Agricultural Crops

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# 1. Overview of the Standard

## 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Standard is to provide a comprehensive assessment framework and common set of environmental, social, and governance requirements to evaluate the extent to which agricultural crops have been produced in a sustainable manner.



## PROGRAM GOALS

- 1 To encourage agricultural producers to strive for the highest levels of environmental, social, and governance performance
- 2 To stimulate innovation in agricultural production toward increasing sustainability
- 3 To incentivize and reinforce agricultural initiatives to slow climate change
- 4 To promote sound and responsible working conditions and ensure adequate health and safety measures for worker protection
- 5 To encourage agricultural producers to be good neighbors in their engagement with the surrounding community
- 6 To promote continuing improvement over time
- 7 To stimulate retailer and consumer purchases that reinforce sustainable agricultural production



## 1.2 Intended Users

Intended users of this Standard are agricultural crop producers of all sizes located around the globe. Any producer of agricultural crops may apply for Sustainably Grown certification. In this Standard, the term “Producer” refers to the person or entity – i.e., individual Producer or Producer Group – that is legally responsible for the cultivation and sale of the crop(s) in scope.

## 1.3 Scope

This Standard applies to the Agricultural Production Operation – the farming enterprise engaged in the production of the agricultural crops to be certified – and includes all processes and inputs under the Producer’s management related to the production, harvesting, and handling of the crop(s) to be evaluated. The Standard does not address livestock production.

The Agricultural Production Operation may include several non-contiguous areas or farm plots that are in different locations or sites. Partial certification of the crop(s) in scope at the Agricultural Production Operation is generally not allowed.

In the case of a Producer Group – i.e., an association of farms operating under a common management system, organized independently as a formal cooperative or association, or by a trader or other supply chain actor – the Agricultural Production Operation encompasses the relevant production sites of all member farms.

*The Group Manager for a Producer Group is required to aggregate data from all member farms and to demonstrate conformance with all indicators within the Standard, and is responsible for the development and effective implementation of an Internal Control System that governs the production and sale of the crop(s) to be certified. Member farms are responsible for their respective production sites and cannot make a certification claim about their product(s) unless sold through the Producer Group.*

In addition to the requirements to ensure traceability through the supply chain that are included in this Standard, separate Annexes outlining chain-of-custody responsibilities within the supply chain may be developed for use by distributors, wholesalers, food manufacturers, retailers, and foodservice providers.

## 1.4 Sustainable Agriculture Framework

This Standard is built on a comprehensive Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) framework with performance criteria and accompanying requirements (i.e., indicators) that must be achieved for an Agricultural Production Operation to be certified as Sustainably Grown.

An Agricultural Production Operation is considered conformant when it meets all the required criteria, as confirmed by an SCS Standards-approved third-party certification body.



## SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FRAMEWORK



### BUSINESS INTEGRITY



### SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES



### ETHICAL STEWARDSHIP

- Responsible Management Systems
  - Legal Compliance
  - Traceability and Transparency
  - Business Accounting, Reporting, and Planning
  - Product Quality and Safety
- Crop and Pest Management
  - Soil Conservation
  - Water Stewardship
  - Climate Neutrality
  - Air Quality and Stratospheric Ozone Protection
  - Biodiversity Protection
  - Energy Efficiency
  - Integrated Waste Management
- Fair Work Agreements
  - Equitable Work Hours, Wages, and Benefits
  - No Child, Forced, or Coerced Labor
  - Non-Discrimination and Freedom of Association
  - Responsible Workforce Management
  - Workforce Health and Safety
  - Community Engagement



## 1.5 Certification Claims

Producers who are successfully certified to the Standard will be entitled to make the “Certified Sustainably Grown” claim and to use the corresponding SCS-trademarked certification mark in approved marketing and sales applications.

In addition, Producers whose Agricultural Production Operations are certified to the Standard can make complementary claims, all of which are inherently built into the program requirements:



**Farmworker Protection**



**Pollinator Friendly**



**Water Conservation**



**Soil Conservation**



**Biodiversity Protection**



**Climate Neutral\***

*\* Once relevant requirement is met*



## 1.5 Trailblazer Recognition

Certified Producers may also seek to be recognized as “Trailblazers” in any of the following four categories. Trailblazer recognition requires conformance with additional criteria and indicators, as indicated.

### Applicable Criteria to Earn Trailblazer Recognition

TRAILBLAZER CATEGORY	ADD-ON CRITERIA
<b>Regenerative Farming</b>	3.2.1.11
<b>Living Wage</b>	4.2.2.6
<b>Worker Empowerment</b>	4.5.2.4 4.5.2.5
<b>Community Development</b>	4.7.1.5 4.7.1.6
<b>Biodiversity Champion</b>	2.1.2.12 3.6.1.6 3.6.1.5 4.5.3.3

The Trailblazer icon is used to call out the relevant criteria in each section of the Standard.

## 1.7 Voluntary Standard

This Standard is voluntary. It is not intended to replace the legal or regulatory requirements of any country or geographic area in which agricultural crops are produced, handled, or sold.





## 2. Business Integrity



## 2.1 Responsible Management Systems

### 2.1.1 Criterion: Access and Confidentiality

The Producer provides access to the Agricultural Production Operation and proprietary information to demonstrate conformance with this Standard.<sup>1</sup>

#### Indicators:

**2.1.1.1** The Producer shall agree to a timetable of scheduled audits by the approved third-party certification body.

**2.1.1.2** The Producer shall agree to facilitate unannounced audits.

**2.1.1.3** The Producer shall agree to provide the approved third-party certification body with access to records, personnel, and the physical site(s) that the certification body deem essential to conduct the audit.

**2.1.1.4** The Producer shall enter into a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement with the approved certification body to address the release of proprietary information that is needed for the independent assessment.

### 2.1.2 Criterion: Production Operation Details

The Producer provides information about crops and production practices, and establishes a written Agricultural Sustainability Plan that addresses each key aspect of the operation.

#### Indicators:

**2.1.2.1** The Producer shall identify land currently in production or intended for use, including precise location coordinates and measurements of area in acreage or hectareage.

**2.1.2.2** The Producer shall provide site maps of the operation including cultivated areas, non-cultivated areas, buildings, roads – in the context of adjacent landscape features, water sources (groundwater and surface water), watersheds, natural habitats, planted pollinator habitats, areas subject to erosion, and other key landmarks.

**2.1.2.3** The Producer shall provide a description of the most recent known prior use of the land.

**2.1.2.4** The Producer shall establish and maintain an Agricultural Sustainability Plan in support of environmental, social, and governance sustainability objectives.

<sup>1</sup> The agreements referenced under this Criterion are prerequisite to participation in the Sustainably Grown program, and are confirmed by the approved certification body.

The Plan, which shall be updated annually, includes, at a minimum:

- A. A description of the Agricultural Production Operation's current practices;
- B. Statement of goals for meeting the criteria of this Standard, improving performance, and building resilience;
- C. Identification of indicators that will require monitoring, and a description of strategies to be implemented;
- D. Identification of problems or unexpected outcomes, along with remediation or improvement plans, within one year of certification;
- E. Specific written documents, including policies and procedures, to address discrete aspects of the operation, including Quality Assurance Plan, Crop Planting and Diversity Plan, Chain of Custody Plan, Biodiversity Management Plan, Water Resource Management Plan, and Pest Management Plan; and
- F. Quantification of performance benchmarks across the product lifecycle (cradle to gate).

**2.1.2.5** Consistent with 2.1.2.4.e, the Producer's written Quality Assurance Plan shall include, at a minimum:

- A. A listing of quality requirements for each product brought to market;
- B. A procedure for monitoring the food safety of applicable crops; and
- C. A procedure for monitoring conformance with Maximum Residue Level (MRL) or tolerance requirements, including periodic testing at critical control points, pre- and post-harvest.

*NOTE: The Producer may use the program's Agricultural Sustainability Plan Template or any other format of their choosing, provided that all of the elements of the plan are addressed.*

**2.1.2.6** Consistent with 2.1.2.4.e, the Producer shall establish a Crop Planting and Diversity Plan that considers the climate and contains, at a minimum:

- A. Crop types, varieties, planting stocks;
- B. Projected annual yields;
- C. Crop rotation plans for building soil health and climate resilience (if applicable); and
- D. Fertility approach that minimizes the use of synthetic fertilizers and prioritizes non-synthetic chemical soil nutrient options when available.

**2.1.2.7** Consistent with 2.1.2.4.e, the Producer shall establish a Pest Management Plan that contains, at a minimum:

- A. A policy to sustain crop productivity and quality while minimizing the use of pesticides;
- B. Either an organic production plan, or an integrated pest management (IPM) plan that favors the use of non-hazardous pest and disease vector interventions approaches that support the agroecosystem, relying on physical, biological, and cultural controls, and using pesticides only as a last resort;
- C. Procedures to ensure that pesticide applications are conducted safely;

- D. A policy for assessing and minimizing risk of pesticide drift with demonstrated consideration for applicable environmental conditions (e.g., wind speed, temperature), and for addressing any drift incidents that may be identified; and
- E. A policy aimed at the protection of pollinators.

**2.1.2.8** Consistent with 2.1.2.4.e, the Producer shall establish a Water Resource Management Plan that contains, at a minimum:

- A. Procedures for conducting annual risk assessment addressing both water quality and quantity (see 3.3.1 and 3.3.2);
- B. Identification of applicable legal requirements;
- C. Summary of water sources, storage needs, and irrigation requirements;
- D. Summary of options and goals for water use reduction / minimization;
- E. Sources of potential pollution of surface and ground water;
- F. Summary of options for mitigation of potential pollution from operations; and
- G. Description of the influence of farm operations on the watershed.

**2.1.2.10** Consistent with 2.1.2.4.e, the Producer shall establish a Chain of Custody Plan that contains, at a minimum, policies, and procedures for identifying certified products, ensuring traceability, and preventing contamination of certified products through all steps of production and post-harvest handling, processing, storage, packaging, and shipping.

**2.1.2.11** Consistent with 2.1.2.4.e, the Producer shall establish a Biodiversity Management Plan that contains, at a minimum:

- A. Procedures for assessing the effects of the Agricultural Production Operation on natural ecosystem flora and fauna;
- B. Identification of applicable legal requirements;
- C. Identification of relevant species under the IUCN Red List;
- D. Summary of options and goals for native species protection; and
- E. Plan to achieve benchmarks related to improved wildlife and pollinator habitat.

**2.1.2.12 [Required for Biodiversity Champion Trailblazer Recognition]**

In addition to the requirements of 2.1.2.11, the Producer's Biodiversity Management Plan shall contain:

- A. Identification of biodiversity hotspots on or adjacent to the Production Operation;
- B. Identification of structural impediments to biodiversity;
- C. Identification of local and regional stakeholders influencing local biodiversity (e.g., other farms, local communities, other businesses and industries); and
- D. A roadmap for development of dedicated wildlife and pollinator habitat.



Biodiversity  
Champion



### 2.1.3 Criterion: Management System, Documentation and Records

The Producer implements a management system and maintains documentation and records related to practices and outcomes.

#### Indicators:

**2.1.3.1** The Producer shall have a management system in place that addresses implementation of the Agricultural Sustainability Plan and compliance with the requirements of the Sustainably Grown Standard.

**2.1.3.2** The Producer shall store documents and records securely in a manner that is accessible for review for a period of at least three years (unless otherwise specified), or for a duration of time in line with local legal requirements, whichever is longer.

**2.1.3.3** The Producer shall maintain auditable records for all agricultural inputs used, including:

- A. Product trade name(s) and active ingredient(s);
- B. Dosage rates and dates;
- C. Application method and equipment used;
- D. Application locations; and
- E. Name(s) of applicator(s).

**2.1.3.4** The Producer shall maintain worker-specific records related to:

- A. Worker recruitment and hiring;
- B. Termination;
- C. Disciplinary actions and corrective actions;
- D. Complaints and grievances;
- E. Worker training;
- F. Health and safety incidents;
- G. Accidents or exposure to hazardous materials;
- H. Biomonitoring results; and
- I. Early-entry safety procedures (if applicable).



## 2.2 Legal Compliance

### 2.2.1 Criterion: Legal Compliance

The Producer has knowledge of, and complies with, all applicable international, national, and local laws and regulations.

#### Indicators:

- 2.2.1.1** The Producer shall attest that, to the best of their knowledge, the operation is compliant with its policies and all applicable legal requirements pertaining to:
- A. Environmental protection (i.e., pest management, water usage, erosion control, land alteration, vulnerable habitat, and species protection, burning if applicable, wastewater treatment and discharge, waste management);
  - B. Worker protection (i.e., worker recruitment and hiring, use of labor intermediaries, wages and benefits, work hours and overtime, leave and termination, occupational health and safety, accidents and exposures to hazardous materials, grievances, child labor and forced labor prohibitions);
  - C. Financial reporting; and
  - D. Food safety.

**2.2.1.2** The Producer shall provide evidence of any necessary permits related to agrochemical inputs and hazardous materials, water usage, wastewater treatment and discharge, burning if applicable, land clearing, and other applicable environmental regulations.

**2.2.1.3** The Producer shall dispose of industrial wastes, construction debris or rubble, excavation materials, debris from land clearing, and domestic wastes in accordance with applicable national or local regulations.

**2.2.1.4** The Producer shall report any violations of national or local legal requirements applicable to the operation that occurred in the previous year, sanctions received, and how any such violations were remedied.

## 2.3 Traceability And Transparency

### 2.3.1: Criterion: Traceability, Chain of Custody, and Transparency

The Producer maintains traceability throughout the chain of custody.

#### Indicators:

**2.3.1.1** The Producer shall ensure traceability of product during all steps of production and post-harvest handling, processing, and storage, up to the point where the Producer no longer owns the product, or the point where activities are no longer under the Producer's management.

**2.3.1.2** If the certified crop is labeled with a Sustainably Grown certification claim at the point of sale or is used as an ingredient in a finished product with an on-product or ingredient certification claim, the Producer shall demonstrate that there is sufficient traceability up to the point where the product is in its final state (e.g., final consumer packaging).

**2.3.1.3** The Producer shall ensure that its Chain of Custody records are accessible to the approved certification body upon request.

## 2.4 Business Accounting, Reporting And Planning

The Producer's financial accounting, reporting, and planning practices support the sustainability of its operations.

### 2.4.1 Criterion: Accounting, Reporting and Financial Planning

The Producer documents the economic performance of the operation.

#### Indicators:

**2.4.1.1** The Producer shall have a methodology for measuring the financial health of its operation.

**2.4.1.2** The Producer shall develop an annual financial plan.

## 2.5 Product Quality And Safety

### 2.5.1 Criterion: Product Quality and Safety

The product meets industry quality and safety expectations.

#### Indicators:

**2.5.1.1** The Producer shall have a quality control system to ensure that product shipped from the Agricultural Production Operation meets or exceeds basic industry quality standards, consistent with its written Quality Assurance Plan (2.1.2.5).

**2.5.1.2** For food crops, the Producer shall undergo third-party certification of food safety practices and shall meet conformance requirements of a recognized food safety scheme (e.g., Global Food Safety Initiative recognized scheme; USDA GAP) during the previous 12 months, consistent with its written Quality Assurance Plan (2.1.2.5).





## 3. Sustainable Farming Practices

### 3.1 Crop and Pest Management

The Producer implements production systems that support soil and plant health, minimize pest pressures, and sustain crop productivity and quality.

#### 3.1.1 Criterion: Crop Diversity and Quality

The Producer implements a Crop Planting and Diversity Plan.

##### Indicators:

**3.1.1.1** For annual crops, the Producer shall implement a plan to rotate crops within a given field whenever such rotations are justified from an agricultural scientific perspective. In cases where a Producer is not implementing annual rotations, they shall provide a written justification.

#### 3.1.2 Criterion: Pest Management

The Producer implements a pest management plan to minimize pest and disease pressures and sustain crop productivity and quality.

##### Indicators:

**3.1.2.1** The Producer shall have a system in place for monitoring signs of pest and diseases.

**3.1.2.2** The Producer shall implement preventative measures to reduce the need for pesticide application by using cultural controls, mechanical controls, and/or biological controls.

**3.1.2.3** The Producer shall prioritize the use of low risk or botanical pesticides to reduce health and environmental risks.

**3.1.2.4** The Producer shall apply only pesticides that are legally allowed for use within the government jurisdiction or territory in which the crop(s) is grown.

**3.1.2.5** The Producer shall abide by the pesticide use requirements indicated in the policy, “Sustainably Grown – Pesticide Policy and Restricted Pesticide Reference List.”

**3.1.2.6** Pesticide application decisions shall be overseen by qualified pest control advisors.

**3.1.2.7** The Producer shall ensure that all pesticide application equipment is calibrated per manufacturers' instructions. Any deviation from manufacturers' instructions shall be accompanied by a reasonable written justification by an appropriately experienced professional.

**3.1.2.8** The Producer shall minimize risk of pesticide drift consistent with its Pest Management Plan's pesticide drift policy.

**3.1.2.9** When pesticides are used, the Producer shall prioritize and select application methods that avoid exposing workers or the community to harmful chemicals.

**3.1.2.10** The Producer shall undertake strategies to minimize pesticide resistance (e.g., rotating pesticide modes of action, maintaining untreated areas).

**3.1.2.11** The Producer shall demonstrate that decisions for pesticide use are based on monitoring data and economic thresholds.

*NOTE: The approved certification body will provide access to the Pesticide Risk Tool found at: [www.pesticiderisk.org](http://www.pesticiderisk.org).*

**3.1.2.12** The Producer shall implement a risk mitigation procedure based upon the Pesticide Risk Tool for those pesticides identified as being high-risk to humans, pollinators, or the environment.

### **3.1.3 Criterion: No Use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)**

The Producer does not use genetically engineered seedstock or planting stock.

#### **Indicators:**

**3.1.3.1** The Producer shall ensure that no GMOs are used as seedstock or planting stock for the crop in scope on the Agricultural Production Operation.

*NOTE: Exceptions to this ban are permitted if the Producer: 1) can provide scientific evidence based on the Precautionary Principle that use of such seedstock or planting stock shows clear benefit in terms of, e.g., climate resilience, water conservation, crop protection, reduced fertilizer/input usage, or enhanced nutrition, to be reviewed by SCS Standards; and 2) can provide evidence that the use of such seedstock or planting stock poses low or no risk of contamination of nearby non-GMO plantings. Any exceptions will be documented on the audit report and certificate.*

## 3.2 Soil Conservation

The Producer selects crops and production systems that support soil and plant health, minimize pest pressures, and sustain crop productivity and quality.

### 3.2.1 Criterion: Soil Health and Soil Nutrients

The Producer manages soil health and nutrition to produce healthy plants while minimizing risk of runoff or leaching.

#### Indicators:

**3.2.1.1** The Producer shall conduct a review of the operation's current farming practices to identify those that could detract from soil carbon storage capacity.

**3.2.1.2** The Producer shall assess soil erosion risks on the Agricultural Production Operation and implement procedures to reduce and prevent soil erosion (e.g., ridging, cover crops, mulch, no-till planting, grassed waterways, terraces, or runoff diversions).

**3.2.1.3** The Producer shall identify and implement strategies that increase soil organic matter and improve soil structure (e.g., compost, constant living cover, crop rotation, reduced tillage, animal grazing, or cover crops).

**3.2.1.4** The Producer shall establish a baseline soil organic matter or soil organic carbon level.

**3.2.1.5** Every three years, the Producer shall test soil organic matter and soil organic carbon in a manner comparable to the baseline data, and shall assess results of soil tests to identify changes over time.

**3.2.1.6** If soil tests show a decrease in soil organic matter or soil organic carbon, the Producer shall conduct a root cause analysis and implement remediation measures.

**3.2.1.7** The Producer shall monitor fertility and crop nutrient status, and shall use soil and plant tissue testing as needed to ensure that the soil contains adequate, but not excessive, plant nutrients for crop production.

**3.2.1.8** The Producer shall apply nutrients in a way that optimizes uptake and crop health while minimizing risk of runoff, accumulation or leaching. The Producer shall implement variable rate applications, taking into consideration dosage, timing, and release properties where fertility conditions vary within a field.

**3.2.1.9** The Producer shall ensure that all nutrient application equipment used is calibrated per the manufacturers' instructions. Any deviation from manufacturers' instructions shall be accompanied by a reasonable written justification by an appropriately experienced professional.

**3.2.1.10** The Producer shall demonstrate that synthetic fertilizers are not used as the sole strategy for maintaining soil fertility.



**3.2.1.11 [Required for Regenerative Farming Trailblazer**

**Recognition]** The Producer shall demonstrate that they engage in all of the following practices designed to support healthy soil ecosystems and enhance soil carbon sequestration:



Regenerative  
Farming

A. Maintaining living roots in the soil year-round;

*NOTE: An exception is made in climates where such processes result in a long-term environmental trade-off. In these exceptions, a rationale shall be provided and an alternative approach to accomplishing the goals of soil retention, increased soil organic matter, and carbon sequestration shall be implemented.*

B. Minimizing physical and chemical disturbance to the soil ecology;

C. Keeping soil covered to reduce erosion;

D. Supporting soil biodiversity related to flora, fauna, and microbial life;

E. Integrating management practices that use animals to improve soil organic matter and microbial density, such as through rotational grazing (if relevant and aligned with food safety best practices).

*NOTE: The Producer shall describe these Regenerative practices in their Agricultural Sustainability Plan.*



### 3.3 Water Stewardship

The Producer preserves water quality and prevents water resource depletion.

#### 3.3.1 Criterion: Water Quality Protection

The Producer preserves water quality.

##### Indicators:

**3.3.1.1** The Producer shall conduct an annual risk assessment related to the operation's water use addressing:

- A. Contamination of ground and surface water sources;
- B. Efficiency of storage and distribution;
- C. Water quality as used for irrigation;
- D. Impacts on water quality due to farming operation (e.g., nutrients, agrochemicals);
- E. Wastewater discharge from packing and processing operations; and

**3.3.1.2** The Producer shall identify appropriate measures to mitigate identified risks to water quality related to the operation's water use.

**3.3.1.3** Within one year of certification, and in years thereafter, the Producer shall adopt appropriate measures to mitigate identified risks to water quality related to the operation's water use.

**3.3.1.4** Within two years of certification, and in years thereafter, the Producer shall assess the efficacy of mitigation measures implemented to protect water quality.

#### 3.3.2 Criterion: Water Resource Conservation

The Producer uses water efficiently.

##### Indicators:

**3.3.2.1** The Producer shall assess short-term and long-term irrigation needs and demonstrate that irrigation rates and interval decisions are based on crop needs, water availability (surface water and groundwater), soil type, and other relevant factors.

**3.3.2.2** In irrigated production systems, the Producer shall implement strategies for efficient water usage that reflect best practices by crop and region (e.g., no-till or reduced till, increasing soil water-holding capacity, use of overhead or drip irrigation, use of low-drift spray nozzles, improved irrigation rates and intervals, drought-tolerant crop varieties).

**3.3.2.3** In irrigated production systems, the Producer shall record the volume of water used and availability of irrigation water from all sources. Metering shall be used when it represents best practice in the Producer’s region.

**3.3.2.4** The Producer shall review changes in the volume of water used annually and the availability of irrigation water and shall identify potential risks to the operation or the surrounding environment.

**3.3.2.5** If the volume of water used has increased or the availability of irrigation water has decreased, the Producer shall implement measures to mitigate impacts to the operation and the surrounding ecosystem.

## **3.4 Climate Neutrality**

The Producer minimizes greenhouse gas emissions and increase climate resilience.

### **3.4.1 Criterion: Reduction of Pollutants Contributing to Climate Change**

The Producer takes steps to reduce risks related to greenhouse gases and other pollutants that contribute to climate change.

#### **Indicators:**

**3.4.1.1** The Producer shall collect inventory data pertaining to farm operations that produce emissions of greenhouse gases and sequester carbon or fix nitrogen, then use a calculator tool approved by SCS Standards to determine the farm’s carbon footprint, and update this annually.

**3.4.1.2** The Producer shall identify and implement measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (e.g., from farm equipment, agricultural inputs, energy consumption, soil management) from both point sources and non-point sources.

**3.4.1.3** The Producer shall identify and implement measures to increase the farm’s climate resilience, in response to changing climate conditions that directly affect crop production and water availability (e.g., heat/drought tolerant crop varieties, improved water conservation, increased soil organic matter).

*NOTE: A plan to address this issue should be established based upon best available science. Some crops will benefit from increased temperatures while other type of crops will be adversely affected. The plan should reflect the local climate prediction models.*

### 3.4.2 Criterion: Achieving Net Zero Emissions

After minimizing the greenhouse gases and other climate pollutants from the Agricultural Production Operation, the Producer takes steps to balance out any remaining emissions with insets or offsets that prevent an equal or greater amount of climate changing emissions from being released into the atmosphere.

**3.4.2.1** Within five years of certification, the Producer's Production Operation shall be third-party certified as a climate neutral farming operation.

*NOTE: The phase-in period may be adjusted to account for crop-specific or local considerations.*

*NOTE: For on-product Climate Neutral claims, a farm-to-market scope is required. For a Sustainably Grown claim, a farm-to-gate scope is sufficient.*

## 3.5 Air Quality And Stratospheric Ozone Protection

The Producer protects air quality and conforms to international protocols related to the use of ozone depleting substances.

### 3.5.1 Criterion: Reduction of Air Pollutants

The Producer takes steps to reduce risks to air quality from dust and air pollutants.

#### Indicators:

**3.5.1.1** The Producer shall conduct an assessment to evaluate on-farm sources of dust and other air pollutants with known harmful effects to human health or the environment.

*NOTE: See, for instance, the US EPA Hazardous Air Pollutant list: <https://www.epa.gov/haps/initial-list-hazardous-air-pollutants-modifications>*

**3.5.1.2** If risks are identified, the Producer shall implement air quality protection procedures to reduce harmful air pollutants and restore air quality, with demonstrated improvement over time.

### 3.5.2 Criterion: Reduction of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODSs)

The Producer takes steps to reduce risks to the stratospheric ozone layer from the release of ODSs.

#### Indicators:

**3.5.2.1** The Producer shall not use any ODSs (e.g., agricultural fumigants and refrigerants) that have been prohibited under the terms of the Montreal Protocol or successive treaties. The Producer shall ensure that all ODS-based refrigerants are contained, and that equipment is checked for leaks on a periodic basis.

*NOTE: If an exemption has been made for the use of an ODS for a specific crop sector, the Producer shall only use such a material as a last resort if other non-ODS options are available.*

**3.5.2.2** Montreal Protocol-exempted uses of Methyl Bromide shall meet regional and national regulations. If alternatives are available, such alternatives shall be used.

### 3.6 Biodiversity Protection

The Producer enhances species health and diversity and supports habitats.

#### 3.6.1 Criterion: Land Stewardship

The Producer engages in practices that have been demonstrated to support and enhance biodiversity and native wildlife.

**3.6.1.1** The Producer shall assess and describe the effects of the Agricultural Production Operation on natural ecosystem flora and fauna (e.g., soil microorganisms, beneficial insects, riparian zones, and other habitats).

**3.6.1.2** The Producer shall identify and implement strategies to mitigate adverse impacts and improve or restore biodiversity and ecosystem health over time.

**3.6.1.3** The Producer shall establish or maintain appropriate buffer zones adjacent to:

- A. Water bodies;
- B. In watershed recharge zones; and
- C. Between cultivated areas and natural habitats.

*NOTE: Buffer zone vegetation and widths shall be informed by relevant environmental concerns (pesticide drift, erosion, pollinator habitat, etc.) as well as regional recommendations and site considerations (soil types, weather patterns, grade, etc.).*

**3.6.1.4** The Producer shall implement measures on or off-farm to support or improve wildlife and pollinator habitat on non-cultivated land (wildlife corridors, riparian planting).



Biodiversity  
Champion

**3.6.1.5 [Required for Biodiversity Champion Trailblazer Recognition]** The Producer shall maintain dedicated wildlife and pollinator habitat equaling at least 1% of total land under production, and increasing each year by 1% at least up to a designated percentage of land.

*NOTE: The designated percentage shall vary depending on distance of habitat from the farm operation.*



Biodiversity  
Champion

**3.6.1.6 [Required for Biodiversity Champion Trailblazer Recognition]** The Producer shall coordinate with neighboring farms and/or communities on implementation of measures to support biodiversity.

*NOTE: See 3.1.2 for pollinator and other wildlife protections related to pesticide usage.*

### **3.6.2 Criterion: Protection of IUCN Red Listed Species and Their Habitats**

The Producer protects species of concern and critical habitats as identified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and fosters biodiversity.

#### **Indicators:**

**3.6.2.1** The Producer shall evaluate the potential impacts of the operation on threatened or endangered species based upon IUCN Red List and implement measures to minimize the impacts to these species and their habitats.

**3.6.2.2** If impacts to IUCN Red List species from the Agricultural Production Operation have been observed, the Producer shall take measures (e.g., reduction of corridor barriers, habitat offsets) to mitigate and minimize such impacts.

**3.6.2.3** Since September 2014, the Producer shall not have engaged in the clearing of critical habitats, including wetlands, native grasslands, peatlands, or forests.

*NOTE: The limit is set as September 2014 to coincide with the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Summit New York Declaration on Forests.*

**3.6.2.4** The land on which the Producer operates shall not have been cleared within five years before the initial audit.



### 3.7 Energy Efficiency

The Producer takes steps to minimize the use of non-renewable energy.

#### 3.7.1 Criterion: Energy Consumption

The Producer minimizes energy consumption.

##### Indicators:

**3.7.1.1** The Producer shall provide records of fuel and electricity used for production processes, storage operations and other facilities, including electricity and fuel used in applications such as water pumping, greenhouse lighting and climate control, cold storage facilities, farm equipment, and packing operations.

**3.7.1.2** The Producer shall assess opportunities for energy efficiency upgrades, and shall include a cost- benefit analysis.

**3.7.1.3** The Producer shall implement measures to reduce energy consumption based on the assessment.

### 3.8 Integrated Waste Management

The Producer manages waste to minimize environmental harm.

#### 3.8.1 Criterion: Organic Waste Materials and Crop Residues

The Producer provides evidence of beneficial use or proper disposal of crop residues and other organic materials.

##### Indicators:

**3.8.1.1** The Producer shall utilize prunings and crop residues on farm (e.g., compost, mulch, erosion control), and take steps to minimize sending organic crop waste to the landfill.

**3.8.1.2** The Producer shall make use of any available recycling or composting programs for the disposal of non-crop organic wastes (e.g., cardboard, wood pallets, paper).

**3.8.1.3** The Producer shall not burn crop residue unless the practice can be adequately justified as being essential for pest or disease management, without any viable alternatives. If burning takes place, the Producer shall demonstrate that it is conducted in a way that minimizes negative impacts on air quality, workers, and surrounding communities.

*NOTE: Burning is not allowed without documented phytosanitary reasons.*

### 3.8.2 Criterion: Inorganic Waste

The Producer reduces the volume of inorganic waste disposed of in landfills.

#### Indicators:

**3.8.2.1** The Producer shall demonstrate that inorganic wastes (e.g., drip tape, plastics, metals) are properly stored and disposed of in landfills, and do not negatively impact the environment (e.g., leaching, runoff).

**3.8.2.2** The Producer shall make use of available recycling programs and take steps to minimize sending inorganic wastes to the landfill that can otherwise be reused or recycled

**3.8.2.3** The Producer shall not burn inorganic waste as a means of disposal.

### 3.8.3 Criterion: Agrochemicals and Other Hazardous Materials

The Producer manages agrochemical and other hazardous chemicals in an appropriate manner during procurement, storage, and disposal to minimize risk.

#### Indicators:

**3.8.3.1** The Producer shall store and dispose of agrochemicals and other hazardous chemicals in accordance with label specifications and in a way that minimizes risk to workers and the surrounding environment.

**3.8.3.2** The Producer shall ensure that pressure-treated lumber and hazardous building and construction debris are properly disposed of, and are not burned, composted, or mulched.

**3.8.3.3** The Producer shall take appropriate corrective action for all incidents involving any hazardous material that could have negatively impacted workers, community members, or the environment (e.g., agrochemical spills) consistent with the Producer's emergency procedures.

**3.8.3.4** The Producer shall ensure that all used chemical containers that may contain hazardous residues are returned to the chemical manufacturer or other approved party for proper disposal when such a program is available. Otherwise, empty containers shall be triple rinsed, punctured, and landfilled, and the rinse water shall be properly contained to prevent groundwater contamination.

**3.8.3.5** The Producer shall ensure that all agrochemicals and other hazardous materials are stored in their original marked containers or otherwise properly labeled and identified, and are segregated to facilitate proper storage, handling, transportation, and disposal.

**3.8.3.6** The Producer shall ensure that all agrochemical and other hazardous material storage sites are not in environmentally sensitive areas or flood zones, or are in the area least susceptible to flooding. If there is a potential for flooding, preventative measures shall be in place to prevent water entry into agrochemical and other hazardous materials storage sites.

**3.8.3.7** The Producer shall ensure that all agrochemical and hazardous material storage facilities are locked, and access is limited to qualified personnel with training in the handling of such chemicals.

**3.8.3.8** The Producer shall provide visible warning signage for all storage sites for hazardous materials consistent with national or international conventions.

**3.8.3.9** The Producer shall maintain an up-to-date agrochemical stock inventory.

**3.8.3.10** The Producer shall arrange agrochemicals and hazardous chemical drums and containers from oldest to newest (i.e., first in, first out) to prevent obsolete stock from accumulating.



## 4. Ethical Stewardship

## 4.1 Fair Work Agreements

The Producer fosters long-term relationships with workers.

### 4.1.1 Criterion: Work Agreements

Workers are provided with clear and binding work agreements.

#### Indicators:

**4.1.1.1** The Producer shall provide all workers with written work agreements before they enter into employment, in a language the affected workers understand. The written work agreement and supplemental documents shall contain key employment details that are in compliance with applicable legal requirements, including, but not limited to:

- A. Full name of worker, address, and date of birth;
- B. Company name and address of employer;
- C. Employment start date and end of employment contract (if applicable);
- D. Regular hours of work;
- E. Overtime expectations;
- F. Compensation details including pay schedule, gross pay, bonuses, and special payments;
- G. Benefits and any legal deductions;

- H. Safeguards from loss of pay in the case of illness, disability, or accident;
- I. Termination terms;
- J. Work responsibilities and areas of work;
- K. Date and signature of worker (or fingerprint, if applicable); and
- L. Date and signature of employer.

**4.1.1.2** The Producer shall ensure that applicants are not required to undergo HIV, genetic, or pregnancy tests as a condition of hire or continued employment.

**4.1.1.3** The Producer shall ensure that workers have not received loans from the Producer or the labor intermediary that are subject to unreasonable terms and conditions, such as excessively high interest rate.

**4.1.1.4** The Producer shall ensure that workers have the right to terminate their employment after reasonable notice.

**4.1.1.5** The Producer shall ensure that workers have access to the Producer's designated staff person to raise questions and obtain information about work-related issues in good faith and in a clear and transparent manner.

**4.1.1.5** The Producer shall ensure that workers have access to the Producer’s designated staff person to raise questions and obtain information about work-related issues in good faith and in a clear and transparent manner.

**4.1.2 Criterion: Recruitment**

The Producer engages in responsible recruitment and hiring practices.

**Indicators:**

**4.1.2.1** The Producer shall only use licensed labor intermediaries that are compliant with legal requirements, and in good standing with regards to any licenses, certificates, and other requirements in the country(ies) where workers are employed and recruited.

**4.1.2.2** If a third-party labor contractor is used to recruit and/or manage workers, there is a formal agreement between the Producer and the labor intermediary that ensures that all workers onsite are treated in accordance with the relevant labor requirements in this Standard (e.g., working conditions, working hours, pay).

**4.1.2.3** The Producer shall not engage in recruitment and hiring practices in a manner that avoids obligations to workers under applicable labor or social security laws and regulations.

**4.1.2.4** The Producer or labor intermediaries who hire workers through a guestworker program (e.g., H2A) shall comply with provisions of the program and applicable regulations.

**4.1.2.5** The Producer shall pay any recruitment, document processing, and other hiring fees associated with the employee onboarding process.





## 4.2 Equitable Work Hours, Wages, and Benefits

Workers are dealt with fairly and honestly regarding wages and benefits. Expectations for working hours are clearly explained prior to employment and all workers have sufficient time off for non-work activities.

### 4.2.1 Criterion: Working Hours

Working hours and overtime policies are aligned with applicable laws, regulations, and industry standards.

#### Indicators:

**4.2.1.1** The Producer shall ensure that working hours for non-supervisory workers conform to the following requirements:

- A. Compliance with national or local laws;
- B. Work weeks shall not exceed 48 hours, excluding overtime;
- C. Where legally allowed, working hours in excess of 60 hours per week are documented by the Producer and recorded in the audit report;
- D. A written agreement is signed by the worker providing consent for voluntary overtime hours and peak harvest scheduling;

- E. Workers receive at least 24 consecutive hours off in every seven-day period except in extraordinary circumstances (per ILO C14 and C106) or as allowed by collective bargaining agreement; and
- F. Overtime work is voluntary, and workers unable or unwilling to work overtime are not discriminated against or denied employment, or subject to abuse, threats of punishment or retaliation if such work is refused.

*NOTE: If exceptions are taken under 4.2.1.1 (e), exceptions must be explained in the audit report.*

**4.2.1.2** The Producer shall ensure that working hours do not result in workers being put at greater risk of exposure to harmful chemicals, excessive temperatures, dehydration risk, excessive heavy work, or other health and safety risks.

#### 4.2.2 Criterion: Remuneration for Work Performed

Wages and salaries are at or above the legal minimum wage.

##### Indicators:

**4.2.2.1** The Producer shall pay all workers at least the national minimum legal wage or a wage that is consistent with local industry standards, whichever is greater.

**4.2.2.2** The Producer shall pay workers who are paid on a piece-rate or quota basis at least the equivalent of the local minimum wage for the number of hours worked.

**4.2.2.3** The Producer shall facilitate access to work agreements, pay records and other employment records for contract workers hired through a labor intermediary.

**4.2.2.4** The Producer shall determine pay increases on an equitable basis, considering work performance, seniority, and level of training, without bias based on sex, gender identity or expression, ethnicity, race, or sexual preference.

**4.2.2.5** Within one year of certification, and in years

thereafter, the Producer shall assess the regional living wage level and the gap between living wage and actual wage paid to workers.

##### 4.2.2.6 [Required for Living Wage Trailblazer

**Recognition]** The Producer shall demonstrate that workers are paid at least a living wage for the area in which the operation is located, consistent with the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) Living Wage Salary Matrix.



#### 4.2.3 Criterion: Form and Payment of Wages

The Producer ensures that wages are paid in legal tender, at regular intervals, and documented with clear, written pay records.

##### Indicators:

**4.2.3.1** The Producer shall make all payments of wages in cash in the local currency, or cash equivalent (e.g., direct deposit), directly to workers or through legitimate services (e.g., banks, payroll companies).

**4.2.3.2** The Producer shall provide written pay records that clearly state wages, taxes, and other authorized withholding deductions.

**4.2.3.3** The Producer shall ensure that wage and salary deductions are made only in accordance with legal requirements, and as determined by a collective bargaining agreement, when applicable. Deductions shall not be applied as a disciplinary measure.

**4.2.4 Criterion: Worker Benefits**

Workers have access to workers' compensation, disability, and social security benefits.

**Indicators:**

**4.2.4.1** The Producer shall provide all workers with the benefits required by applicable national or local legislation, whichever offers greater protection. Such benefits shall include, but are not limited to, paid leave, workers' compensation, disability, social security, and retirement benefits.

**4.2.5 Criterion: Meals and Other Work Breaks**

Workers receive regular meal and work breaks.

**Indicators:**

**4.2.5.1** The Producer shall ensure that workers are given regular breaks for meals and sanitary needs during work shifts in accordance with local and national laws.

**4.2.5.2** The Producer shall allow one unpaid 30-minute meal break for every six hours worked.

**4.2.5.3** The Producer shall provide nursing mothers with a private space and sufficient breaks to accommodate their nursing needs.

**4.2.6 Criterion: Sick Leave**

Workers are provided with time off for illness.

**Indicators:**

**4.2.6.1** The Producer shall allow workers to take unpaid time off for illnesses or other health issues that require medical, dental, or other professional attention without risking the workers' employment status.

**4.2.6.2** The Producer shall provide workers' compensation insurance or a comparable benefit to permanent workers.

**4.2.7 Criterion: Maternity, Paternity, and Family Leave**

Workers are provided with time off for maternity, paternity, and family leave.

**Indicators:**

**4.2.7.1** The Producer shall provide maternity, paternity, and family leave that meets or exceeds the legal minimum requirements and/or collective bargaining agreements, whichever offer the highest level of protection for the worker.

**4.2.7.2** The Producer's employee records shall demonstrate that workers are offered the same or equivalent position and pay rate upon return from maternity, paternity, and family leave.

**4.2.7.3** The Producer shall post maternity, paternity, and family leave policies onsite, or otherwise make such information readily available in an easily accessible location.

**4.2.8 Criterion: Health Care and Health Insurance**

Workers, their spouses, and children have access to health care and health insurance.

**Indicators:**

**4.2.8.1** The Producer shall provide health insurance to workers and their spouses and children in compliance with legal minimum requirements and/or collective bargaining agreements, whichever offer the highest level of protection.

**4.2.8.2** The Producer shall provide workers and their children with access to health care.

**4.2.8.3** The Producer shall post information onsite in an easily accessible area about public and private health care programs and facilities in the predominant language(s) spoken by workers.

**4.2.9 Criterion: Education and Day Care for Children**

Workers' children have access to education and day care.

**Indicators:**

**4.2.9.1** The Producer shall ensure that workers' children have access to education. Children living onsite shall have the ability to leave the operation to attend school or shall be provided the opportunity to attend school onsite.

#### 4.2.10 Criterion: Employer-Provided Employee Housing

Worker-provided housing is clean and safe.

##### Indicators:

**4.2.10.1** Producer shall assure any employer-provided housing:

- A. has safe and operable electricity and plumbing;
- B. is structurally sound and in a good state of repair;
- C. is clean and litter-free;
- D. has potable water;
- E. has sanitary facilities;
- F. has waste collection
- G. safe, sanitary sewage disposal;
- H. has sufficient fire exits; and
- I. has a clean, sufficiently equipped area for food preparation; and
- J. has adequate ventilation.

**4.2.10.2** The Producer shall demonstrate that within worker housing units, an adequate amount of floor space and sleeping space is provided to each person, with, at a minimum, access to the following:

- A. Secure space for storing personal items;
- B. One clean and separate bed, constructed of sturdy and comfortable material with, at a minimum, foam support; and
- C. Sleeping quarters with the option of separate accommodations to address gender-based or married couple privacy concerns.

*NOTE: Per ILO R115, "adequate space" is defined as 203 cm headspace and 198x80 cm for sleeping space. There must be a reading lamp for each bed, heating where appropriate, etc.*

**4.2.10.3** When employer-provided worker housing is provided, the Producer shall site it sufficiently far from agricultural production areas to prevent agrochemical exposure.

**4.2.10.4** The Producer shall assure that employer-provided housing safety and security policies do not impinge upon workers' freedom of movement (i.e., ability to come and go), personal integrity, safety, and rights.

### 4.3 No Child, Forced, or Coerced Labor

The Producer abides by child labor and forced labor prohibitions, and assures that workers who are minors are p

#### 4.3.1 Criterion: Child Labor

The Producer complies with child labor protection requirements for agricultural workers and local child education statutes.

##### Indicators:

**4.3.1.1** The Producer shall not employ any persons under the age of 15 or the minimum employment age required under national or local law, whichever is older, in accordance with ILO Convention 138.  
Age verification shall be required at the time of hire.

**4.3.1.2** The Producer shall not allow workers under the age of 18, or the age recognized by local law as a legal adult, whichever is higher, to handle potentially harmful chemicals or undertake jobs that inherently have the potential to jeopardize health and safety.

*NOTE: If child labor is uncovered, the Producer shall be put on suspension, and immediately take proper steps for remediation that put the best interests of the child first. Remediation shall include at a minimum, but is not limited to, the following activities, which shall be well documented:*

- a. Ensure the child is immediately removed from work and placed somewhere safe until they can be reunited with a legal guardian;*
- b. Ensure that the child is compensated for all wages owed;*
- c. Establish a written remediation plan and procedure, and engage local experts to support the process;*
- d. Conduct and document an internal investigation about how the child labor occurred;*
- e. In the event that the family is financially dependent on the child's income, provide employment opportunities for the adults of the family; and/or*
- f. Involve social workers or other independent organizations focused on child welfare to assist in monitoring the situation.*



**4.3.1.3** The Producer shall maintain the following documentation for all workers who are under the age of 18, or the age recognized by local law as a legal adult, whichever is higher:

- A. Name;
- B. Date of birth;
- C. Current address;
- D. Name of parents or legal guardian;
- E. Employment authorization signed by parents or legal guardian;
- F. Type of work legal minor is doing;
- G. Number of hours assigned to work; and
- H. Wages or salary.

**4.3.1.4** The Producer shall ensure, for any workers under the age of 18, that farm work does not jeopardize educational opportunities or physical development.

**4.3.1.5** The Producer shall post policies onsite related to employment of young workers and specific child labor prohibitions.

**4.3.1.6** The Producer shall assess the Agricultural Production Operation to identify potential child labor risks.

#### **4.3.2 Criterion: Voluntary Labor**

All labor is voluntary; forced or coerced labor is prohibited, in accordance with ILO Conventions 29, 105, and 182.

##### **Indicators:**

**4.3.2.1** The Producer shall ensure that all work is provided voluntarily.

**4.3.2.2** The Producer shall ensure that no forced labor, compulsory labor, trafficked labor, slave labor, bonded labor, indentured labor, convict labor, or other forms of undue pressure are used by the Agricultural Production Operation.

**4.3.2.3** The Producer shall ensure that workers are not required to surrender any part of their salary, benefits, property, or identity papers as a means of forced employment or as a disciplinary measure, or to make deposits or financial guarantees to secure employment.

**4.3.2.4** The Producer shall have a process in place to ensure that labor intermediaries and Farm Labor Contractors are held to the same requirements related to the use of forced, bonded, indentured, or prison labor.

#### 4.3.3 Criterion: Corporal Punishment, Coercion, and Abuse

Workers are protected from corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion, and physical or verbal abuse.

##### Indicators:

**4.3.3.1** The Producer shall assure that the use of corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion, intimidation, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse, or sexually intimidating, abusive, and exploitative behavior are not supported or tolerated.

**4.3.3.2** The Producer shall assure that, when reported, incidents of corporal punishment, mental or physical coercion, intimidation, bullying, harassment, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and sexually intimidating, abusive, and exploitative behavior, are investigated and proper disciplinary action is taken when warranted.

**4.3.3.3** The Producer shall assure that workers who submit grievances are not disciplined, dismissed, or discriminated against for using the grievance procedure.



## 4.4 Non-discrimination And Freedom of Association

The Producer promotes a work environment free of any type of discrimination.

### 4.4.1 Criterion: Non-Discrimination

Workers benefit from an established policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity, in accordance with ILO Conventions 100 and 111.

#### Indicators:

**4.4.1.1** The Producer shall provide equal opportunity and non-discrimination in recruitment, access to training, work duties, benefits, working conditions, and other employment-related activities on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, age, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, or other personal characteristics.

**4.4.1.2** The Producer shall ensure that policies ensuring equal pay for equal work are implemented, unless work agreements stipulate otherwise (e.g., based on seniority).

**4.4.1.3** The Producer shall post written policies onsite on the following topics in an easily accessible area for all workers:

- A. Hiring and Employment;
- B. Equal Pay;
- C. Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination;
- D. Child Labor;
- E. Forced Labor; and
- F. Freedom of Association.

### 4.4.2 Criterion: Freedom of Association

Workers are assured freedom of association and collective bargaining, in accordance with ILO Conventions 87 and 98.

#### Indicators:

**4.4.2.1** The Producer shall ensure that workers have the right to freedom of association, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly, and collective bargaining, and are protected from retaliation. Information on this right shall be posted in an easily accessible location onsite. Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted or prohibited under law, the Producer shall not hinder alternative forms of independent workers representation and negotiation, in accordance with international labor standards.

**4.4.2.2** The Producer shall not interfere with, obstruct, or prevent activities related to freedom of association or collective bargaining, and shall not engage in anti-labor organization activities.

**4.4.2.3** The Producer shall not discriminate against, enact punitive measures against, or terminate any worker for involvement in labor organization activities.

**4.4.2.4** The Producer shall ensure elected worker representatives or labor organization representatives are not subject to discrimination, harassment, or undue management oversight or intervention. The Producer shall provide worker representatives with access to workplaces necessary to enable them to carry out their representation functions.

**4.4.2.5** The Producer shall recognize workers' associations if such associations have been formed.

## **4.5 Responsible Workforce Management**

The Producer has an established structure to carry out human resource management functions.

### **4.5.1 Criterion: Human Resources**

Workers benefit from responsible human resource management.

#### **Indicators:**

**4.5.1.1** The Producer shall provide a written employee manual or handbook to all workers that describes all relevant employment policies, including but not limited to hiring, termination, conditions of employment, workplace conditions, working hours, benefits, pay schedule, holidays, sick leave, non-discrimination, sexual harassment, and unacceptable behavior.

**4.5.1.2** The Producer shall assure confidentiality of all worker personnel files.

**4.5.1.3** The Producer shall assure that termination of worker employment is carried out in accordance with local and national laws, and shall maintain auditable records in personnel files describing causes for termination.

**4.5.1.4** The Producer shall train supervisors and senior management on the following topics at a minimum:

- A. Hiring and employment;
- B. Equal pay;
- C. Equal opportunity and non-discrimination;
- D. Child labor;
- E. Forced labor;
- F. Freedom of association; and
- G. Environmental Issues covered by the standard.

#### 4.5.2 Criterion: Grievance Policy

Workers benefit from grievance policies and procedures that are accessible, fair, transparent, and provide a non-retaliatory process for communicating and resolving work-related complaints.

##### Indicators:

**4.5.2.1** The Producer shall implement a policy to address worker grievances, including but not limited to issues related to compensation and receipt of benefits, discrimination, sexual harassment, and other gender-related grievances. The policy shall:

- A. Be easily accessible (e.g., local languages, paper based, etc. to account for different locations, language, workers);
- B. Describe the means by which workers can communicate grievances to designated management representatives individually or as a group, and anonymously if so desired;
- C. Provide the process and timeline through which grievances will be assessed and resolved;
- D. Ensure that no penalty, retribution, or retaliation is suffered by workers making complaints; and
- E. Explain disciplinary actions and the right to appeal.

**4.5.2.2** The Producer shall resolve worker grievances in a timely manner. Corrective and preventative action shall be taken when warranted.

**4.5.2.3** The Producer shall communicate written grievance policies to all workers through employee manuals, public postings, and/or trainings.

**4.5.2.4 [Required for Worker Empowerment Trailblazer Recognition]** The Producer shall have a worker committee that is involved in the review and resolution of worker grievances.



Worker  
Empowerment

**4.5.2.5 [Required for Worker Empowerment Trailblazer Recognition]** The Producer shall provide sensitivity and response training to all managers and workers responsible for handling grievances.



Worker  
Empowerment

#### 4.5.3 Criterion: General Training, Professional Development, and Continuing Education

Workers obtain training related to operational policies and procedures, and benefit from opportunities for professional development.

##### Indicators:

**4.5.3.1** The Producer shall demonstrate through attendance records that all workers receive regular training on employer responsibilities to workers, non-discrimination, harassment, occupational safety and hygiene, and other applicable operational policies.

**4.5.3.2** The Producer shall provide trainings on operational policies and procedures free of charge to workers, during regular working hours, and in a manner understandable to workers. The Producer shall compensate workers for their time spent in training.



Biodiversity  
Champion

**4.5.3.3 [Required for Biodiversity Champion Trailblazer Recognition]** The Producer shall provide annual training to workers and management on elements of the Biodiversity Action Plan and measures underway to achieve its goals.

## 4.6 Workforce Health and Safety

All workers have a safe, clean, and healthy work environment.

### 4.6.1 Criterion: Workplace Health and Safety

Workers benefit from a safe and healthy working environment.

##### Indicators:

**4.6.1.1** The Producer shall ensure that areas where agrochemicals are stored and mixed are adequately sized for the operation, clearly marked, signed appropriately, and equipped with readily accessible emergency equipment that includes, at a minimum:

- A. Spill kits (e.g., sawdust, sand, or other adsorbent);
- B. Empty containers to repack damaged or leaking containers;
- C. Spade and brush;
- D. Fire extinguisher;
- E. Eyewash kit;
- F. Emergency protective gear;
- G. Water supply;
- H. Corresponding Safety Data Sheets (SDS); and
- I. Posted emergency procedures.



**4.6.1.2** The Producer shall assure that all workers use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to handle, mix, or apply agrochemicals, as specified on the labels and SDS.

**4.6.1.3** The Producer shall assure that the workplace provides convenient access to potable water at all times. The Producer shall label potable and non-potable water sources to assure worker protection.

**4.6.1.4** If potable water is not provided by a public source, the Producer shall conduct water analysis at least every two years to confirm that water potability is conformant with local or other applicable drinking water standards.

**4.6.1.5** The Producer shall assure that the workplace provides a safe, comfortable area for breaks.

**4.6.1.6** The Producer shall enforce workers' rights to remove themselves from situations when they have reasonable justification to believe that there is a serious risk to their safety or health.

**4.6.1.7** When transportation is provided, the Producer shall assure that drivers are licensed, vehicles are inspected, and the number of passengers does not exceed vehicle capacity.

**4.6.1.8** The Producer shall assure access to toilet and handwashing facilities that are in adequate numbers, and with sufficient lighting and ventilation. Toilet facilities shall have nearby hand washbasins with soap and water or hand sanitizer, and disposable towels or hand-dryers. These installations shall be scaled to the size and complexity of the operation and compliant with the following minimal provisions:

- A. Gender-Specific Toilets: 1 per 20 men and 1 per 20 women. A single unisex toilet shall only be allowed when there are fewer than 5 total workers and the toilet can be locked from the inside. When portable toilets are in temporary use, they may be unisex but must meet the number requirements of 1 per 20 workers.
- B. Washbasins: 1 per 20 workers.

**4.6.1.9** The Producer shall assure that any persons under age 15 (other than the Producer's family members) are prohibited onsite unless suitable areas (e.g., childcare) are provided or specific family-oriented events are held. Such areas and events shall be located away from any hazardous materials or equipment, chemical spraying or mixing, or other operationally dangerous activities.

**4.6.1.10** The Producer shall maintain an incident log listing all work-related accidents and illnesses that includes a description of the nature of the injury or illness, work site of occurrence, and how the event occurred. Such incidents may include the following: work-site accidents, skin disorders, respiratory conditions, poisonings, hearing losses, days away from work, or deaths.

**4.6.1.11** The Producer shall monitor worker exposure to highly toxic hazardous materials (e.g., records of PPE use, verified use of proper chemical applicators, manager reports).

#### **4.6.2 Criterion: Risk Mitigation**

Health and safety risks are recognized and mitigated.

##### **Indicators:**

**4.6.2.1** The Producer shall implement procedures to prevent worker exposure to excessively high noise levels, temperatures, dehydration risk, highly toxic hazardous materials, and dust and other contaminants (e.g., exhaust, pesticide off-gassing).

**4.6.2.2** The Producer shall make records of agricultural inputs used accessible to workers and their representatives.

**4.6.2.3** The Producer shall post all entry points of pesticide-treated fields and facilities with signs restricting entry in accordance with pesticide label re-entry interval information.

**4.6.2.4** The Producer shall make cholinesterase testing readily available and ensure that it is conducted for workers who handle or spray organophosphates or N-methyl-carbamate pesticides.

- A. If health thresholds are exceeded, the worker is reassigned to avoid further exposure, with no reduction in pay, and the Producer provides additional corrective and remedial actions as needed.
- B. Test results are available to workers and maintained in the employee's file.

**4.6.2.5** The Producer shall reassign pregnant workers as needed to ensure that they do not handle potentially harmful chemicals or undertake jobs that inherently have the potential to jeopardize health and safety.

**4.6.2.6** The Producer shall assure that chemical safety procedures are in place to protect workers and the community from exposure to hazardous materials, consistent with Section 3.7.

**4.6.2.7** The Producer shall appoint an individual with appropriate training and competency as the designated health and safety officer in charge of coordinating the workplace risk assessment and creating a health and safety program.

**4.6.2.8** Within one year of certification, and in years thereafter, the Producer shall conduct a workplace risk assessment and created a health and safety program.

**4.6.3 Criterion: Workplace and Equipment Safety**

Workplaces are safe, and equipment, tools, and clothing in good working condition and stored properly.

**Indicators:**

**4.6.3.1** The Producer shall assure that:

- A. electrical equipment and fittings in shops, packinghouses, and storage facilities do not have worn or bare cables;

- B. conduit and grounds are used for high amperage equipment; and
- C. improvised installations are avoided.

**4.6.3.2** The Producer shall assure that workers are provided with equipment and tools that are in a good state of repair and not damaged or worn out in any way that could endanger health or safety.

**4.6.3.3** The Producer shall assure that workspaces are well organized, tools and materials have specifically designated storage areas, and tools are not contaminated with hazardous materials.

**4.6.3.4** The Producer shall assure that mechanical and electrical equipment, and machine guards, including lockout/tagout equipment (as applicable), are adequately signed and labeled, with readily available operating instructions.

**4.6.4 Criterion: Emergency Preparedness**

Producers and workers benefit from emergency preparedness and response procedures.

**4.6.4.1** The Producer shall maintain a contingency plan for potential emergency situations (e.g., medical emergencies, fires, workplace accidents, chemical exposures, natural disasters), including staff roles. The contingency plan shall be documented, and include the following:

- A. Evacuation routes and procedures;
- B. Decontamination procedures;
- C. Procedures for emergency alerting;
- D. PPE and emergency equipment;
- E. Medical treatment in emergencies;
- F. Personnel roles; and
- G. Training policies.

**4.6.4.2** The Producer shall ensure and routinely check that facility emergency exits are clearly marked, that pathways are free from obstruction, that there is clear access to emergency equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers, fire hoses, eye washes, first aid kits), and that emergency procedures are posted in a public, easily accessible area.

**4.6.4.3** The Producer shall demonstrate that fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment are fully operational and routinely checked.

**4.6.4.4** The Producer shall demonstrate that hazard signage is appropriately located (e.g., near high voltage electrical equipment, electrical breakers, flammable, or other hazardous materials).

**4.6.4.5** The Producer shall ensure that any water leaks, uneven or damaged floors, damaged or worn-out structures, or infrastructure that could increase the possibility of accidents are repaired in a timely manner.

#### 4.6.5 Criterion: Health and Safety Training

Workers benefit from health and safety training.

##### Indicators:

**4.6.5.1** The Producer shall provide training in the following subjects to workers and other personnel who are in contact with agrochemicals.

- A. The use of proper clothing and additional protective equipment;
- B. Safe handling of hazardous materials, chemicals, and biological agents;
- C. Understanding of information on agrochemical labels and Safety Data Sheets (SDS);
- D. The operation of application and mixing equipment;
- E. Re-entry procedures;
- F. Cleaning and/or disposing of contaminated materials and clothing; and
- G. Risk factors and identification of the symptoms of cholinesterase poisoning.

**4.6.5.2** The Producer shall provide training in subjects that are relevant to workers and other personnel involved in the operation of equipment and machinery or inherently dangerous tasks, including proper operational, cleaning and maintenance procedures; the use of protective equipment; and the use of lockout/tagout equipment, if applicable.

**4.6.5.3** The Producer shall schedule regular safety trainings for all relevant workers and keeps attendance records.

**4.6.5.4** The Producer shall ensure that a designated worker or supervisor who is trained in first aid is present on all shifts.

## 4.7 Community Engagement

The Producer is a good neighbor and relates in positive ways to local and regional communities.

### 4.7.1 Criterion: Community Responsibility

The Producer works to assure that agricultural operations are aligned with community environmental, economic, and social goals.

#### Indicators:

**4.7.1.1** The Producer shall work to assure that the operation does not negatively affect the community's natural resources (e.g., groundwater quantity and quality, open waters, public and private arable and grazing land, natural habitats).

**4.7.1.2** The Producer shall recognize indigenous and other customary rights (e.g., related to fishing, hunting, collection, cultural sites), and shall work to assure that the operation does not negatively affect cultural community resources.

**4.7.1.3** The Producer shall identify the interests of local populations and community groups when the scope of farm activities might trigger negative impacts (e.g., noise, chemical contamination, waste, transportation impacts, resource overuse, ecological damage, visual impacts) or change in a way that require public notification.

**4.7.1.4** The Producer has established a publicly accessible grievance policy to address complaints and concerns of stakeholders in the community.

**4.7.1.5 [Required for Community Development Trailblazer Recognition]** The Producer shall designate at least 0.1% of the certified products' gross revenue as funds for community development initiatives.



Community  
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**4.7.1.6 [Required for Community Development Trailblazer Recognition]** The Producer shall have a worker committee consisting of both permanent and temporary workers that meets at least quarterly to make decisions regarding the allocation of financial contributions for community development initiatives.



Community  
Development



## ANNEX 1: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Approved Certification Body.** The independent auditing entity, or its auditor representative, approved to conduct auditing and certification activities in connection with this Standard.
- **Agricultural Input.** Substance or material, such as a pesticide or fertilizer, introduced to facilitate the production or handling of agricultural crops.
- **Agricultural Production Operation.** The farming entity engaged in the production of the agricultural crop(s) to be certified.
- **Agricultural Sustainability Plan.** The written document, or collection of documents, that serves as an organizational tool for documenting and achieving sustainability goals and for complying with the requirements of this Standard.
- **Agrochemical.** A chemical substance or plant extract used in agricultural production to maintain or build soil fertility, control weeds, combat pests, stimulate or regulate growth, or preserve agricultural products.
- **Agroecosystem.** The combination of organisms and abiotic factors that interact in an agricultural field, as impacted by agricultural production processes.
- **Biodiversity.** The variety of animal, plant, and fungal life present in a given area, from "biological diversity".
- **Biological Controls.** Methods of controlling pest populations or disease vectors that rely on biological organisms such as beneficial insects or fungi, or biopesticides that are derived from natural materials such as animals, plants, bacteria, and certain minerals.
- **Buffer.** A physical strip of land, typically vegetated, preserved, or created to prevent damage to crops, soil, or the environment from pests, weeds, disease, wind, and other agents by preventing activities on one side of the zone from impacting the area on the other side.
- **Carbon Footprint.** The net effect on climate associated with the climate pollutant emissions, landscape-level changes, soil management, and other farm management practices, expressed in equivalent tons as compared to carbon dioxide. Carbon Sequestration. The process by which atmospheric carbon dioxide is taken up by trees, grasses, and other plants through photosynthesis and stored as carbon in biomass (trunks, branches, foliage, and roots) and soils. For agricultural operations, increased carbon sequestration can be achieved through, for example, no-till or low-till practices, agroforestry, reforestation, or the use of biomass-containing amendments.

- **Certification Claim.** Oral, written, implied, or symbolic representation, statement, or advertising or other form of communication presented to the public or buyers of agricultural products that relates to a crop's certification status as Sustainably Grown.
- **Certified Product.** Crops and the products derived from them, independently evaluated by an approved certification body, and demonstrated to be produced in accordance with this Standard.
- **Chain of Custody.** The network of entities that take legal and/or physical possession of a product from its point of production to the end consumer.
- **Child Labor.** Any work performed by a person under the age of 15, or the minimum employment age required under national or local law, whichever is older, in accordance with ILO Convention 138.
- **Cholinesterase.** An enzyme produced in the liver that can be inhibited by organophosphate pesticides.
- **Climate Footprint.** A summary of the greenhouse gases, short-lived climate pollutants, and carbon sequestration that are associated a Production Operation, from cradle-to-gate.
- **Complaint.** A statement that a situation is unsatisfactory, unacceptable, or otherwise not up to normal standards.
- **Compost.** A mixture of decaying organic matter, as from leaves and manure, used to improve soil structure and provide nutrients.
- **Cover Crop.** A crop planted primarily to manage soil fertility, soil quality, water, weeds, pests, diseases, erosion, biodiversity, and wildlife in an agroecosystem.
- **Crop.** Agricultural plant that is cultivated for sale.
- **Crop Residue.** The vegetative material remaining in a field after the harvest of a crop, including stalks, stems, leaves, roots, and weeds.
- **Crop Rotation.** Alternating the crops grown on a specific field in a planned pattern or sequence.
- **Cultivation.** Digging up or cutting the soil to prepare a seed bed, control weeds, aerate the soil, or work organic matter, crop residues, or fertilizers into the soil.
- **Cultural Controls.** Planting, tillage, and other non-chemical cultivation techniques for controlling pest establishment, reproduction, dispersal, and survival, such as crop rotation, culling, cover crops, intercropping and compost spreading.
- **Discrimination.** The unfair or unequal treatment of a person based on the basis of race, color, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, age, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, or other personal characteristics.

- **Drift.** The unintended physical movement of agrochemicals beyond their intended targets by water or wind.
- **Economic Threshold.** The level of infestation or pest attack beyond which some control should be exerted to prevent further economic loss.
- **Ecosystem.** A biological community of organisms, including plants, animals, and micro-organisms, interacting in a physical environment within a defined geographic area (e.g., streams, ponds, wetlands, forests, grasslands)
- **Energy Efficiency.** The relative amount of electricity or fuel used per unit of agricultural product produced.
- **Equal Opportunity.** The policy of treating job applicants or employees equally without regard to the person's race, color, gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, age, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, or other personal characteristics.
- **Excessively High Noise Level.** A noise level capable of causing permanent damage to the ears. 85 decibels (dB) or higher is considered dangerous with extended exposure (e.g., 8 hours); 100 dB can cause damage after 15 minutes; and 120 dB can cause damage immediately.
- **Fertilizer.** A substance containing one or more recognized plant nutrient(s) that is used primarily for its plant nutrient content and is designed for use or claimed to have value in promoting plant growth.
- **Field.** An area of land identified as a discrete unit within the Agricultural Production Operation.
- **Forced Labor.** Any work or service that a person is coerced into performing, under involuntary servitude or otherwise under the threat of punishment
- **Genetically Modified Organism.** Any organism with genetic material (DNA) that has been altered by means of recombinant DNA methods or that is inherited or otherwise derived from any genes that have been altered through recombinant DNA technology.
- **Greenhouse Gas (GHG).** Any gaseous emission capable of absorbing infrared radiation (net heat energy) emitted from Earth's surface and reradiating it back to Earth's surface, including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.
- **Grievance.** A complaint raised by a worker about a workplace-related issue or incident.
- **Hazardous Air Pollutants.** Airborne pollutants that are known or suspected to cause serious health effects or adverse environmental and ecological effects.

- **Hazardous Material.** Any material that has the potential to cause harm to humans, animals, or the environment if not properly managed, treated, stored, and disposed of.
- **Labor Intermediary.** A person, agency, or contractor that recruits, solicits, employs, supplies, or transports workers to perform work at the Agricultural Production Operation.
- **Mechanical Controls.** Methods of controlling pest populations that kill or deter pests directly without the use of chemicals.
- **Monitoring.** To test or sample, especially on a regular or ongoing basis, to evaluate compliance with a given standard or regulation.
- **Native.** Adjective used to describe flora or fauna that are indigenous to a given geographic area or bio-geographic province.
- **Natural Resources.** Features, materials, or substances in the natural environment such as minerals, trees, water, soil, and streams that can be used to support ecosystems and human needs.
- **Non-Renewable Energy.** Any naturally occurring source of energy such as coal, gas, or oil that, once consumed, cannot be replenished within a timeframe relevant to human endeavors.
- **Ozone Depleting Substance (ODS).** A substance that depletes ozone in the stratosphere, which is subject to prohibitions or severe use restrictions under international treaty agreements. ODSs have been widely used in refrigerators, air conditioners, electrical equipment, and as agricultural fumigants.
- **Particulate Matter (PM).** A complex mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets, made up of any of a number of components, including acids (such as nitrates and sulfates), organic chemicals, metals, and soil or dust particles. Particulate matter includes dust and smoke, or can be formed in the atmosphere from other pollutants, such as ammonia, nitrous oxides, and volatile organic compounds.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** The clothing and devices worn (e.g., protective suits, boots, gloves, aprons, masks, eyewear, and hats) to protect the human body from contact with hazardous chemicals or residues. Requirements for PPE are specified on pesticide product labels.
- **Pest and Disease Pressures.** Plants, animals, and fungi that are intrinsically detrimental to crops, or that harbor or transmit disease organisms or pathogens that may attack crops.

- **Pesticide.** Any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating the damage from any pest or disease. The term “pesticide” is used as an umbrella term to include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, fumigants, miticides, rodenticides, nematocides, repellants, algicides, molluscicides, defoliants, desiccants, inoculants, bacteriacides, virucides, insect growth regulators, and other substances used to protect the product from deterioration during storage and post-harvest handling.
- **Piece-Rate Wage.** A fixed regular payment to a worker on a per-unit or per-action performed basis, irrespective of time.
- **Planting Stock.** Any plant or plant tissue other than annual seedlings used in plant production or propagation, including rhizomes, shoots, leaf or stem cuttings, roots, or tubers.
- **Policy.** A plan, approach, or course of action adopted by the Agricultural Production Operation.
- **Potable Water.** Drinking water that is free from microorganisms, chemical substances and radiological hazards at levels that constitute a threat to a person’s health, and is of an acceptable color, odor, and taste, as defined by applicable laws, or by the international norms of WHO, whichever are more stringent.
- **Practices.** Tangible methods and techniques used to complete a task associated with the production or handling of an agricultural product.
- **Procedures.** The steps identified by a Producer for implementing policies related to the Agricultural Sustainability Plan.
- **Processing.** The transformation of raw ingredients into products, including cooking, baking, curing, heating, drying, mixing, grinding, churning, separating, extracting, cutting, fermenting, distilling, preserving, dehydrating, freezing, chilling.
- **Producer.** The person or entity legally responsible for the cultivation of the agricultural crops. The Producer may also be involved in packing, processing, storage, and shipping.
- **Producer Group.** Multiple producers that are organized independently as a cooperative or association, or by a trader or other supply chain actor, and who adhere to a common Internal Control System (ICS) that governs the production and selling of the crop(s) to be certified.
- **Product.** Good that has been packed or manufactured for sale.
- **Production System.** The system by which a Producer grows an agricultural product for market, including steps such as soil preparation, planting, nutrient management, pest management, irrigation, drainage, harvest, storage of fuel and chemicals, product storage, processing, packing, and shipping.

- **Record.** Any information in written, visual, or electronic form that documents the activities undertaken by a Producer to demonstrate conformance with this Standard.
- **Re-Entry Period.** The minimum amount of time that must pass after a pesticide application to an area or crop before people can enter that area without protective clothing or equipment.
- **Regenerative Agriculture.** An approach to the production of food and agriculture products that focuses on the restoration and maintenance of soil health, optimum soil carbon sequestration, and enhanced ecosystem services.
- **Riparian.** Relating to or located on the bank of a natural watercourse, such as a river.
- **Safety Data Sheet (SDS).** A document providing detailed information about the properties and uses of a chemical product or formulation, the nature of the product's hazards, appropriate safe handling procedures and emergency instructions. May also be referred to as Chemical Safety Data Sheet.
- **Short-Lived Climate Pollutants (SLCPs).** Pollutants that have a relatively short lifetime in the atmosphere, but that can have a big impact on the climate. The major SLCPs include black carbon, methane, tropospheric ozone, and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).
- **Soil Erosion.** The breakdown, detachment, transport, and redistribution of soil particles by forces of water, wind, or gravity.
- **Soil Fertility.** The level of nutrients in soils relative to the amount needed to sustain plant growth and reproduction.
- **Soil Organic Matter (SOM).** Content of soil where carbon is stored, directly derived from biomass of microbial communities in the soil, as well as from plant roots and biomass-containing amendments like manure, mulches, composts, and crop residues. SOM impacts the physical, chemical, and biological properties of the soil and serves as the storehouse for the energy and nutrients used by plants and other organisms.
- **Standard.** When capitalized, refers to the Sustainably Grown Standard.
- **Surface Water.** Lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, ponds, and other water collected at ground level.
- **Threatened or Endangered Species.** Flora or fauna species that have been listed as threatened or endangered by applicable laws as well as by international organizations, including the Red List of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

- **Traceability.** The ability to track an agricultural product back to the farm and field of derivation and forward through the chain of custody.
- **Trafficked Labor.** Any work performed by a person who has been recruited, transported, harbored, or obtained by means of the use of threat, force, coercion, or deception for the purpose of exploitation.
- **Trailblazer Recognition.** A special level of recognition reserved for Certified Producers who conform with additional optional criteria in at least one of four categories of performance.
- **Water Bodies.** Bodies of water that exist naturally, such as lakes, ponds, lagoons, rivers, streams, swamps, marshes, and bogs.
- **Water-Holding Capacity.** The total amount of water a soil can hold for crop use, controlled primarily by soil texture and organic matter.
- **Wastewater.** Water that has been adversely affected in quality during the course of agricultural activities.
- **Watershed.** A region or area bounded peripherally by a divide and draining ultimately to a particular watercourse or body of water.
- **Worker.** Any person, whether employed directly by an agricultural operation or contracted, who performs activities directly relating to the production and handling of agricultural crops on behalf of the Agricultural Production Operation. A worker may be full-time, part-time, permanent, temporary, or seasonal.



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- C095 – Protection of Wages Convention (1949)
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- C100 – Equal Remuneration Convention (1951)
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- C106 – Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention (1957)
- C110– Plantations Convention (1958), Convention and Protocol (1982)
- C111 – Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (1958)
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