FOOD ALLIANCE
Supporting Sustainability in Food and Agriculture

FoodAlliance.org
Define and promote sustainability in agriculture and the food industry, to ensure:

- Safe & Fair Working Conditions
- Healthy, Humane Animal Care
- Careful Stewardship of Ecosystems
What we do

• Sustainability Standards
• Third-party Certification
• Audits, Benchmarks, and Analysis
• Connections and Resources
Guiding Principles

1. Protect, conserve, enhance soil, water, wildlife habitat and biodiversity
2. Conserve energy, reduce and recycle waste
3. Reduce use of pesticides and other toxic or hazardous materials
4. Support safe and fair working conditions
5. Ensure healthy, humane animal treatment with no growth hormones or sub-therapeutic antibiotics

6. Guarantee product integrity, no genetically engineered or artificial ingredients

7. Maintain transparent and traceable supply chains

8. Continually improve practices
Sustainability Standards

• Crop Production
• Livestock Production
• Farmed Shellfish Production
• Nursery and Greenhouse Production
• Processor and Distributor Operations

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Sustainability Standards

- Standards Areas
  - Evaluation Criteria
    - Levels
    - Indicators
Standard for Crop Production
Evaluation Criteria

STANDARDS AREAS ➔ EVALUATION CRITERIA

Standards Areas

• Integrated Pest, Disease, and Weed Management
• Soil and Water Conservation
• Wildlife Habitat and Biodiversity Conservation
• Safe and Fair Working Conditions

Soil and Water Conservation Evaluation Criteria
Continuing Education for Soil and Water Conservation
Buffer Strips Around Waterways
Soil Erosion Prevention
Tillage Selection Practices and Soil Compaction Prevention
Irrigation Systems
Irrigation Water Conservation
Nutrient Management
Soil Organic Matter Management
STANDARDS AREAS ➔ EVALUATION CRITERIA ➔ LEVELS


**Level 1.** Soil organic matter is not monitored. Inorganic fertilizers supply the majority of plant nutrients. Fertilizers may be applied without regard to soil testing or crop monitoring.

**Level 2.** Soil organic matter is considered a factor in soil management. Of the following practices shown to increase soil organic matter content, manager employs at least one

**Level 3.** As per Level 2, soil organic matter management is a priority with at least two practices used from Level 2. One must be use of cover crops or no-till practices. Changes in soil organic matter resulting from implemented practices are documented.

**Level 4.** As per Level 3, and managers have eliminated use of inorganic fertilizers due to the successful implementation of soil quality and soil fertility management activities. Soil tests must be taken annually, and include organic matter content to score at this level. Manager has developed and documented a plan for improvement on each individual field.
Level 2. Soil organic matter is considered a factor in soil management. Of the following practices shown to increase soil organic matter content, manager employs at least one (check all that apply):
- No-till, direct-seed, strip-till, or other restricted tillage practice.
- Planting of seasonal cover crops that produce high volumes of organic material or root mass.
- Conservation cover (permanent vegetative cover) is planted between rows in orchards, vineyards, and other perennial row crops (e.g. caneberries and blueberries).
- Use of mulches (natural or synthetic).
- Regular additions of organic matter (e.g. animal manures, green manures, composts).
- Strip cropping with annuals and perennials.
- Using the least oxidizing inorganic fertilizers (e.g. ammonium nitrate versus anhydrous ammonia).
- Integration of perennial crops (e.g. orchards, vineyards, berries).
- Banding or split applications of fertilizers.
- Precision agricultural-guidance systems are used.
- Other (please specify):
Standard for Crop Production
Evaluation Criteria

Description of the Scoring System

Level 1: Meets legal requirements, or, in the absence of law, minimum expectations

Level 2: Common practice or industry standard

Level 3: Progressive management showing environmental stewardship and social responsibility

Level 4: Visionary management with exceptional effort to meet social and environmental goals

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Third-Party Certification

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Why Certification?

• differentiate and add value to products and your business
• verify product traceability from supply chain operations implementing responsible practices
• protect and enhance brand
• access niche market opportunities
• address customer concerns for social & environmental responsibility
• increase customer loyalty
• improve community relations

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The Dickinson College Farm Program

“To inspire responsible land stewardship through study of the earth’s natural processes and demonstrate the science, practice and culture of sustainable food production”
Function: Campus Sustainability

- Certified Organic & Food Alliance Certified Produce Served in Dining Hall
- Composting of Campus Organic Wastes
- Renewable Energy Education
Function: Student Education

• Supporting Academic Interests
• Field Trips and Guest Lectures
• Student Research and Internships
• Practical Life Skills
Function: Campus Resource & Community Connections
Why Food Alliance Certification?

- Whole Farm Approach
- Raise Farm Standards and Goals
- Reflection of DCF mission and purpose
- Academic Overlap/Student & Faculty Interests
- Complimentary Certification
Food Alliance & DCF Goals

• **One year goals**
  • Increase quality and diversity of products cultivated on our farm.
  • Implement innovative IPM program focused on our farm's landscape & organisms already present
  • Improve current soil and water management techniques
  • Continue to enhance the employee experience on our farm through improved communication and establishment of personnel and safety protocols.

• **Three year goals**
  • Formalize farm’s renewable energy applications; measure and document progress towards energy sustainability/neutrality
  • Full integration of small grains and dried beans into the farm crop plan
  • Improve farm management and increase the quality of work and overall program success

• **Five year goals**
  • See and experience the results from focused efforts to improve soil and water quality on our farm through improved crop health, produce quality, decreased pest and disease presence and overall farm vibrancy.
Food Alliance Inspection

- Self-Evaluation Tool Kit: Tomatoes
- Day Of Inspection
- Determining Goals for Continual Improvements
  - Conservation Plan
  - Student Research
  - Management