

Criterion for joining the Food Trade Sustainability Leadership group and becoming a signatory of the *Declaration of Sustainability in the Organic Food Trade*:

- A member business must be a based grower, processor, handler, broker, certifier or retailer in the organic food trade
- A member business must have at least one certified organic product line and demonstrate a commitment to grow the percentage of their business that is organic.
- A member business must have no genetically modified food ingredients and demonstrate a commitment to eliminating GMO's in all processes (i.e. packaging and biofuel feedstock etc)

Declaration of Sustainability in the Organic Food Trade

As growers, processors, handlers, brokers, certifiers and retailers in the organic food trade are deeply concerned about the unprecedented scale and speed of environmental pollution and degradation, climate change, and about the depletion of natural and human resources that our business practices may perpetuate. We believe that urgent actions are needed to address these fundamental problems and reverse these trends.

Vision

Our vision is to conduct our businesses in a way that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We recognize that ecology, human communities, and economy are interwoven into a seamless net of causes and effects. Therefore we embrace the challenge to continuously evolve our operations and actions toward sustainable models in which the management of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of development, and the evolution of the organic food trade becomes consistent with the principles of sustainability.

Principles

We will endeavor to establish a culture of sustainability whereby the following four "systems conditions" will be standard throughout the organic food trade (The Natural Step):

1. Our companies will endeavor to systematically reduce and eventually eliminate their economic dependence on substances extracted from the earth's crust, such as heavy metals and fossil fuels.
2. Our companies will endeavor to systematically reduce and eventually eliminate their economic dependence on synthetic and bio-accumulating toxic substances produced by humans, such as fossil fuel based plastics, pesticides/herbicides, soil amendments, manufacturing and building materials, other synthetic toxic materials as well as growth hormones and- genetically modified organisms.
3. Our companies will endeavor to systematically reduce and eventually eliminate their dependence on materials and processes that degrade the 'stocks' and 'flows' of 'natural capital', such as soil, air, water, plants, habitat etc. harvested in environmentally damaging ways and quantities.
4. Our companies will endeavor to systematically reduce and eventually eliminate their economic dependence on actions that increase inequity in the way resources are distributed. Companies must actively implement approaches that guarantee all workers in our industry access to fair wages, sufficient benefits and quality work conditions.

We, therefore, agree to strive for continuous progressive improvement and to practice transparency in annually auditing our organizations in the following areas:

Organic—We recognize the many benefits of organic farming for the health of the soil, water resources, plant, animal and human communities. We will strive to source the food products we vend from farms using organic methods.

Furthermore, we will source all agriculturally derived products (fiber, bio-based fuels and packaging, company meals, etc) we use in our operations from farms and supply sources using organic methods and offering organically grown product lines. We recognize the importance of 3rd party certification as an assurance that organic methods are being followed and will endeavor to verify all organic claims before vending a product.

Our company's efforts made in this area:

Distribution—We will strive to produce, pack, transport, and distribute products from field to market using the most efficient means possible with the most environmentally responsible renewable fuel sources. We will systematically improve our energy efficiency, reduce our energy consumption, and reduce food-miles whenever possible.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Energy—We will strive to store, process, distribute and vend our products using energy resources in the most resourceful means possible with energy efficiency best management practices. We will utilize the most environmentally responsible renewable energy opportunities whenever possible such as solar, wind, hydro, and geothermal.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Climate Change—We will strive to actively reduce all production, storage, processing, and retail practices that create the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change. We will measure the carbon footprint of our operations and strive for achieving carbon-neutrality in all of our business practices.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Water— We will strive to use renewable water sources in the most efficient way possible. We will work collaboratively with our community to ensure ample clean water is available for all in perpetuity. We will raise awareness of regional and local water issues through education and info sharing. We commit to managing our water resources with the realization that multiple water stressors create a region where water is an increasingly scarce resource.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Packaging— We will strive to implement a “cradle-to-cradle” approach to packaging. This will entail: 1) reducing the amount of packaging we use, 2) actively participating in the development of packaging that is reusable, recyclable, and/or biodegradable; 3) considering packaging material contents when making all purchasing decisions, and 4) collaborating with buyers and suppliers on creative solutions which eliminate unsustainable packaging throughout the value chain.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Waste—We will strive to reduce waste at the source and treat waste in a way that sustains all living systems, through recycling, reusing, donating and composting. When necessary we will utilize environmentally sound disposal systems. We will continually redesign our operations so that eventually “waste” will be eliminated because all material will become the raw material for new products and uses.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Labor—We will strive to produce, harvest, transport, and distribute food in a way that sustains all parties involved. We acknowledge that those communities which protect and work the land are particularly vulnerable and must be treated fairly. Growers and handlers of organic food products will collaborate to guarantee basic labor rights, a living wage, and verifiable improvements in the lives of farm workers and their communities. We will work to ensure that all workers are given the opportunity to give feedback about their needs and wants. We will develop and implement company policies, procedures, training and internal reporting structures to ensure commitment to good labor practices throughout our organization. These labor practices will include ensuring that we compensate our employees to enable them to meet at least their basic needs and provide the opportunity to improve their skill and capability in order to raise their social and economic opportunities, promoting equal opportunity for our employees at all levels of the company, and provide a safe and healthy workplace and protect human health.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Animal Care—We will strive to ensure that livestock have access to clean and sufficient food and water; that their environment is not dangerous to their health; that they have sufficient protection from weather elements; that they have

sufficient space allowance in order for them to move naturally including access to pasture; and other features to ensure the safety, health and comfort of the animal. In addition, that managers and caretakers be thoroughly trained, skilled and competent in animal husbandry and welfare, and have good working knowledge of their system and the livestock in their care.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Consumer Education— We strive to will provide consumers, employees, our communities, and the media accurate, useful and timely information about the production, transport, marketing (including health, economic, social, and environmental) of our food products. **Including information on:** 1) the farm and country of origin, 2) the farmer's labor and environmental practices, and 3) the means of transportation, and the distance the food traveled from farm to consumer.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

Governance—We will strive to review our progress toward these goals on a regular basis by conducting regular audits and by empowering all employees and the public with audit results. We will actively engage in communication across the trade to solve problems, and will facilitate dialogue regarding action on large trans-industry issues.

Our company's e efforts made in this area:

**Declaration of Sustainability Signatory
President/Executive Director**

Organization

Name

Signature

Name

Signature

Date