



UNDERSTANDING THE BENEFITS AND COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OF FIELD TO MARKET'S **PROCESS-BASED STANDARD**

By harnessing the power of collaboration and locally-led conservation solutions, Field to Market's Process-Based Standard delivers sustainable outcomes for agriculture, people and the planet. Use this resource to share benefits with internal and external stakeholders.

Guided by a Process-Based Standard for accelerating continuous improvement, each project in Field to Market's Continuous Improvement Accelerator follows a standardized approach to leverage the collective action of the value chain to support resilient ecosystems and enhance farmer livelihoods.

Understanding Field to Market's Process-Based Standard

Field to Market's Process-Based Standard provides a flexible and standardized approach to create shared value and improve environmental outcomes. By offering three unique project pathways to accelerate continuous improvement, the Standard meets farmers and the value chain wherever they are on their sustainability journey. The Standard prioritizes transparency, helping strengthen public confidence in food and agriculture by creating a clearinghouse for credible action on sustainable agriculture

The Process-Based Standard is a public-facing document that concretely defines to external stakeholders Field to Market's approach to advancing sustainable agriculture and communicates how all projects, regardless of pathway, are credibly enabling change. Creating a Standard aligns Field to Market with the approach

taken by other sustainable agriculture initiatives and enables us to define how Field to Market's Continuous Improvement Projects drive sustainable agriculture forward.

This guide offers a resource to help you better explain and share the benefits and comparative advantage of Field to Market's approach with your colleagues and interested stakeholders.



BENEFITS TO YOUR SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAM

FOCUS - Projects have complete freedom in selecting both their purpose and the targeted outcome on which they choose to focus.

CHOICE - While the continuous improvement objective(s) must be SMART, projects have choice between framing the objective around Engagement, Adoption or Impact.

CONSISTENCY - By standardizing the approach to projects, each project benefits from the improved credibility offered by a consistent approach with clear parameters for implementation.

PRE-COMPETITIVE - The Continuous Improvement Accelerator's pre-competitive approach allows you to ensure your sustainability program is benchmarked and consistent with the efforts of leaders within the food and agriculture industry.

CONFIDENCE - By uniting with stakeholders across the value chain to document and demonstrate our collective progress, we can strengthen confidence in our food and ag system.

BENEFITS TO YOUR PROCUREMENT TEAM

FLEXIBILITY - By offering two methods for supply-chain accounting of allocated farmers, acres and impact, your suppliers and upstream farmers have flexibility to support your goals.

OUTCOMES-BASED - Rather than prescribing how to farm, Field to Market's approach gives farmers the freedom to innovate in how they deliver improved outcomes, which improves participation and empowers farmers

HARMONIZED - By supporting benchmarking and equivalencies with other schemes, Field to Market can offer streamlined assessment of sustainability performance and assurance utilizing your organization's preferred verification protocols.

SUPPLY SECURITY - By partnering with your upstream supply chain, you can strengthen relationships and secure a long-term, sustainable supply of raw ingredients and materials.

BENEFITS TO YOUR MARKETING COLLEAGUES

STORYTELLING - The Process-Based Standard's focus on setting baselines, measuring progress and enabling five types of sustainability claims supports your marketing colleagues in credibly communicating how you are activating your brand's purpose.

STRENGTH - The Continuous Improvement Accelerator's Project Directory will define what credible action looks like in advancing sustainable agriculture to external stakeholders, strengthening your leadership position.

CONFIDENCE - By uniting with stakeholders across the value chain to document and demonstrate our collective progress, we can strengthen confidence in our food and ag system.

RELATIONSHIPS - Through projects, your brands have direct access to both support farmers' continuous improvement journey and amplify the voices of the sustainability champions in your supply chain enabling progress against your corporate commitments.

Understanding the Limits of Traditional Certification

While certification has an important role to play in managing risk within supply chains, experts have noted limitations¹ that should be examined further with respect to commodity agriculture.

Cost Relative to Value – Certification can be a costly exercise, particularly for the producer. Commodity crops do not offer the market premium needed to provide the ROI for the producer.

Scalability – By recognizing only top-tier producers, certification fails to catalyze continuous improvement in late adopters who may need more support and a different incentive structure to make change.

Limited Impact – There are recognized limitations in certification’s ability to drive change in agricultural production systems at scale.

COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE OF FIELD TO MARKET’S APPROACH



EFFECTIVENESS

Experts find that 25 percent of food producers whose practices are least sustainable produce only 10 percent of the commodity. Yet, these producers cause approximately 50 percent of the environmental impacts². By focusing on strategies targeted at shifting your supply chain’s entire performance curve, your supply chain, agriculture and the environment benefit the most—in production, income and reduced impacts—by working to improve the poorest-performing producers than by certifying the best.



PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

Continuous Improvement Projects are focused on taking the lessons learned by better producers—ones that increase productivity while reducing environmental impacts—and turning those into blueprints for action. Peer-to-peer learning and benchmarking enables farmers on the low-performing end of the spectrum to understand how sustainable decisions are good for the bottom line. If farmers find they are lagging behind regional, state or national benchmarks, projects can support them in identifying what changes in management can lead to improved outcomes over time.



PRE-COMPETITIVE

Rather than trying to differentiate products based on the sustainability performance of ingredients or raw materials, Field to Market champions an approach that supports the broader industry in tackling critical sustainability issues together. When we accept sustainability as a pre-competitive issue, we can start to drive progress that is swift and dramatic. By collaborating together to support farmers’ journeys of continuous improvement across the crop rotation or teaming up within a watershed to deliver sustainable outcomes across the landscape, that is when we can deliver sustainable outcomes at scale.

¹ Andre de Freitas, “It is Time to Recognize the Limits of Agriculture Certification,” *Sustainable Agriculture Network*, November 10, 2017, <https://www.sustainableagriculture.eco/blog/2017/11/10/it-is-time-to-recognize-the-limits-of-agriculture-certification>.

² Jason Clay, “Feeding the World, Saving the Planet,” *DevEx*, July 7, 2014, <https://www.devex.com/news/feeding-the-world-saving-the-planet-83813>.