******Continuous Improvement Process Checklist**

**Phase Zero** - Define Project Intent & Scope

*Project Scoping:*

* Select Project Pathway *(Question 1)*
* Define Project Geography (*Question 2)*
* Define Primary & Rotational Crops *(Questions 3 & 4)*
* Identify Relevant Natural Resource Concern *(Questions 5 & 6)*

**Phase One** - Develop Continuous Improvement Plan

*Project Design & Strategy:*

* Confirm Project Participants *(Section 1: Question 2)*
* Define Continuous Improvement Objective(s) and Baseline *(Section 1: Questions 3 & 4)*
* Define Grower Engagement & Support Strategies *(Section 2: Questions 1 - 4)*
* Outline Practices and Value-Added Incentives for Innovations Projects *(Section 3: Questions 1 & 2)*

**Phase Two** - Implement & Evaluate Progress

*Project Implementation*

* Implement Continuous Improvement Strategies

*Progress Evaluation:*

* Track & Report Progress Annually
* Share Annual Progress Reports on Project Directory
* Practice Adaptive Management by Identifying Strategy or Activities Improvement Opportunities

**Phase Three** - Document Project-Level Improvements

*Project Evaluation:*

* Conduct Project-Level Evaluation
* Share Results on Project Directory

**Phase Four** – Demonstrate Project-Level Sustainability Impact

*Optional for Incubation & Insight Projects:*

* Evaluate Results from Five Years of Data to Demonstrate Impact
* Utilize Impact Claims Protocol to Verify Results

**PROJECT**

**REGISTRATION**

Field to Market’s Continuous Improvement Accelerator harnesses the power of collaboration across the agriculture value chain to implement locally-led conservation solutions to deliver sustainable outcomes for agriculture.

Each project in the Accelerator seeks to support farmers in advancing their journey of continuous improvement and addressing pressing local natural resource concerns, while also contributing to global sustainable development priorities.

By registering continuous improvement projects and publicly reporting progress against achieving continuous improvement goals and objectives, the Accelerator creates a standardized and validated approach to recognize and reward the contributions of Field to Market members in advancing sustainable agriculture.

Effective August 2019, all Projects must be registered with Field to Market, providing a Continuous Improvement Plan no later than October 31, 2019 to be listed on the public-facing project directory. Projects will be required to report publicly on an annual basis on progress achieved against this plan by April 30 each year.

**PROJECT INTENT & SCOPE**

**PHASE ZERO**

*The following information is required to register the project on Field to Market’s public facing project directory. Project names will be generated based on information supplied.*

1. **Project Pathway***Please select the pathway that best describes the intent of your project.*

[ ]  **Incubation** [ ]  **Insight** [ ]  **Innovation**

1. **Project Geography**

*Provide the state of the project (required) and whichever categories of more localized geography most accurately define the project.*

**State(s):** Click here to enter text.

**County/District(s)** (optional)**:** Click here to enter text.

**Watershed** (optional)**:** Click here to enter text.

**Supply Shed (**optional)**:** Click here to enter text.

1. **Primary Crop(s)**

**PHASE ZERO**

*Please list the primary crop(s) the project will address.*

[ ]  Alfalfa

[ ]  Barley

[ ]  Corn, grain

[ ]  Corn, silage

[ ]  Cotton

[ ]  Peanuts

[ ]  Potatoes

[ ]  Rice

[ ]  Sorghum

[ ]  Soybeans

[ ]  Sugar Beets

[ ]  Wheat (Durum)

[ ]  Wheat (Spring)

[ ]  Wheat (Winter)

1. **Rotational Crops** (optional)

*If applicable, please list any additional crop(s) in rotation that will be engaged by the Project*.

[ ]  Alfalfa

[ ]  Barley

[ ]  Corn, grain

[ ]  Corn, silage

[ ]  Cotton

[ ]  Peanuts

[ ]  Potatoes

[ ]  Rice

[ ]  Sorghum

[ ]  Soybeans

[ ]  Sugar Beets

[ ]  Wheat (Durum)

[ ]  Wheat (Spring)

[ ]  Wheat (Winter)

[ ]  Other:

1. **Key Natural Resource Concerns and Target Sustainability Metrics***Please select at least one primary natural resource concern and associated target metric(s) critical to the region where the project is operating:*

[ ]  Climate change

 [ ]  Greenhouse Gas Emissions

[ ]  Energy Use

[ ]  Soil Carbon

[ ]  Ecosystem conservation

[ ]  Land Use

[ ]  Biodiversity

[ ]  Soil health/quality

[ ]  Soil Carbon

[ ]  Soil Conservation

[ ]  Water scarcity

[ ]  Irrigation Water Use

[ ]  Water quality

[ ]  Water Quality

[ ]  Soil Conservation

[ ]  Other, please specify: Click here to enter text.

1. **Related Programs** *(optional)*

**PHASE ZERO**

*Please indicate if this project is communicated about by any other names or as part of a larger corporate or organizational program.*

Click here to enter text.

1. **Contact Information**

Please provide the name, organization, and email address of the lead contacts responsible for this project.

**Primary Contact:** Click here to enter text.

**Secondary Contact:** Click here to enter text.

**CONTINUOUS**

**IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**SECTION 1: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S)**

**PHASE ONE**

The following components must be completed and on file with Field to Market before a project can be considered an active project in the Continuous Improvement Accelerator and listed on the public-facing Project Directory.

1. **Project Summary**

Provide a brief (3-5 sentence) overview of the project’s continuous improvement goal(s) to appear on the Field to Market Project Directory.

Click here to enter text.

1. **Multi-Stakeholder Participation**

**Sponsors**Provide a list of Field to Market Full Members investing in the project (financially or in-kind)
Click here to enter text.

**Partners**

Please provide a list of Associate Members and/or Non-Members that contribute to the project. Please note that any entity wishing to make public communications about their involvement in the project must meet Field to Market’s licensing requirements before they can be affiliated with your project.

Click here to enter text.

1. **Continuous Improvement Objective(s)**

Please list one or more time-bound, measurable continuous improvement objectives that define the near-term scope and achieve the project’s continuous improvement goal(s) summarized above. Objective categories can be around grower or acreage engagement, practice adoption, and metric impact.

 **Objective 1:** Click here to enter text.

 **Objective 2** (optional)**:** Click here to enter text.

 **Objective 3** (optional)**:** Click here to enter text.

1. **Objective Baseline**

**PHASE ONE**

Please provide a baseline against which progress and success will be evaluated for each continuous improvement objective (e.g., baseline of 15% of enrolled growers have nutrient management plans; to meet the project objective, nutrient management plans will be developed for 100% of enrolled growers by the end of Year 2).

Please note that baselines may either be established prior to project implementation or updated from the status of “In Process of Drafting” to actual baseline during Year One of project implementation.

 **Objective 1:** Click here to enter text.

 **Objective 2** (*optional)***:** Click here to enter text.

 **Objective 3** (*optional)***:** Click here to enter text.

1. **Local Relevance**Please describe how the local relevance of these natural resource concerns was identified and prioritized. For guidance on available resources to identify and prioritize natural resource concerns, please download Field to Market’s quick reference guide to Addressing Key Natural Resource Concerns.

*Guidance Utilized:* Choose an item.

*Please Elaborate:* Click here to enter text.

1. **Other Sustainability Initiatives or Equivalencies** (optional)

Field to Market seeks to harmonize our approach with other sustainability initiatives. Please indicate other sustainability initiatives or equivalences which you are utilizing in your project.

[ ]  SAI Platform

[ ]  The Sustainability Consortium

[ ]  Cotton Trust Protocol

[ ]  Midwest Row Crop Collaborative

[ ]  Soil Health Partnership

[ ]  NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program

[ ]  Gold Standard

[ ]  Other: Click or tap here to enter text.

**PHASE ONE**

1. **Level of Verification** (optional)

How do you plan to verify Project results? This can be altered during annual reporting. For more information about the Verification process and requirements for each level, please review Field to Market’s Assurance Principles which outline criteria for verifying claims.

[ ]  I plan to self-report progress achieved

[ ]  I plan to have a partner to support progress reporting

[ ]  I plan to have an independent, third-party validate progress reporting

**SECTION 2: GROWER ENGAGEMENT**

*The development of a grower engagement plan which identifies methods in which the project will engage growers and specifies qualitative and quantitative engagement goals for the project is an essential element of a successful project. Each project is required to provide a feedback mechanism that enables farmers to identify and pursue opportunities for continuous improvement. The plan must also include a strategy for using grower engagement to advance Field to Market’s overall goal of continuous improvement in sustainability outcomes.*

1. **Planned Outreach/Recruitment Mechanisms***Identify the methods your project will utilize to reach, recruit, engage and retain growers. Examples include, but are not limited to, community outreach mailers, targeted outreach (calls or email) and/or in-person events.*

Click here to enter text.

1. **Engagement Goals & Timeline**

*Identify timebound targets for the number of growers and collective acreage under management that your project will engage during the lifespan of the project. Progress against these targets will be reported annually.*

***Growers:***Click here to enter text.

***Acres:***Click here to enter text.

***Target Year:*** Click here to enter text.

1. **Grower Support**

**PHASE ONE**

*All projects are required to help participating growers advance their continuous improvement journey through providing a feedback mechanism and/or tangible support.*

*What are the**tangible outcomes that participating growers receive as a result of their involvement in the project?*

*(Some examples include, but are not limited to, Incubation: written conservation plan, nutrient management plan; Insight: actionable feedback on their Fieldprint Analysis and peer-to-peer comparison at annual grower meetings; or Innovation: cost-share on practice adoption.)*

Click here to enter text.

Describe, how the project’s strategy for supporting farmers is tied to improvements in environmental outcomes.

Click here to enter text.

1. **Enrollment Methodology
*(Required for Insight and Innovation Projects)***

What is the percentage of enrolled acres for which you intend to collect data?

*Please note that Field to Market requires participating growers to enter data for a minimum of 10% of the total acreage they wish to enroll for the project, ensuring that the fields selected are representative of their overall operations.*

\_\_\_% of Each Farmers’ Total Acreage

How are you ensuring that the fields that are selected are a representative of the farmers’ total acreage enrolled?

Click here to enter text.

**SECTION 3: INVESTING IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
*(Required for Innovation Projects Only)***

**PHASE ONE – REQUIRED FOR INNOVATION PROJECTS ONLY**

*Please document the strategies the project will employ to advance the continuous improvement objectives previously identified and highlight what direct investments the project will make to support farmers in adopting conservation practices.*

1. **Practices**
	1. *What practices are you promoting with the farmers in the project to address the identified natural resource concerns?*

Click here to enter a response

* 1. *Select, from the list below, what guidance you utilized to determine the applicable practices for this region.*

Choose an item.

**2. Value-Added Incentives**

*What value-added incentive strategies do you plan to incorporate into your project to help participating farmers pursue opportunities for continuous improvement and de-risk adoption of new practices?*

*For examples, please reference the Value-Added Case Studies White Paper.*

**Financial Assistance**

[ ]  Practice Incentive Payments

 [ ]  Per Unit Premium for Data

 [ ]  Per Acre Premium for Data

 [ ]  Reduced Crop Insurance Premiums

[ ]  Tax Credits of Conservation Equipment

[ ]  Payment for Ecosystem Services / Pay
for Performance

 [ ]  Equipment Rental Availability

 [ ]  Extended Lease Terms

[ ]  Other – Please Describe: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Technical Assistance**

[ ]  Dedicated trusted adviser

[ ]  Grower training on effective practice implementation

[ ]  Other – Please Describe: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Market Access**

**PHASE ONE**

[ ]  Long-Term Contracts

 [ ]  International Market Access

[ ] Other – Please Describe: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Please provide a written description of the value-added incentives available to farmers in your project.*

Click here to enter a response

**Date submitted:** Click here to enter a date.

**PROJECT**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

*The following annual report is required to be on file and reviewed by Field to Market annually for each year the Project is active. The reporting period is January 1 through April 30 for data collected in the previous crop year.*

**PHASE TWO**

*Annual Reports must be submitted during the reporting period to maintain an Active Project registration on the public-facing Project Directory. Please note that delinquent reporting will result in the public-facing status being changed to reflect non-conformity (Suspended or Incomplete). The information provided in your annual report will serve as a public-facing report on progress achieved against your project’s continuous improvement goal(s) and objectives.

Confidential information is clearly noted below and will only be made available only to relevant staff at Field to Market. Timely and accurate reporting ensures that your organization can credibly demonstrate your efforts to accelerate continuous improvement and support Field to Market in demonstrating the collective impact of all members in driving sustainable agriculture forward.*

**SECTION ONE: PROJECT REQUIREMENTS, TERMS AND CONDITIONS**
*Please affirm Fieldprint Project requirements have been fulfilled (see Registration Form and Handbook):*

[ ]  I affirm that I comply with all Field to Market Process Requirements, Project Terms and Conditions

[ ] Amendment(s) to Project Registration will be filed with Field to Market within **30** days of Annual Report submission to update the project’s listing in the Project Directory.

 *PLEASE NOTE: A version history of your submitted plan will remain viewable on the Project Directory for transparency.*

**SECTION TWO: PROJECT STATS**

**PHASE TWO**

1. **Project Stats**
*Please report progress against stats that are included in the project. Report the number of active growers and total acres enrolled in the project for each crop for this reporting year. For Insight and Innovation Projects, please also report the number of acres entered into the Fieldprint Platform.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Growers | Enrolled Acres | Entered acres – Required for Insight and Innovation Projects  |
| Click here to enter number of Growers. | Click here to enter Enrolled acres. | Click here to enter Entered Acres. |

1. **Aggregate Metric Outcome(s)** *(Optional)*

If the desired measurement claim is of aggregate metric outcome measures ~~-~~ reported as static amounts and not trends or comparison of multiple years - then the aggregated outcomes for all enrolled participants in the project on the desired metric(s) must be provided here.
Click here to enter text.

1. **Accounting for shared projects** *(Optional)*

If the project intends to allocate acres and growers to multiple downstream companies, please note appropriate allocation amounts below for this year. This applies for cases where multiple Project Sponsors have agreed to share acres and growers within a project and is particularly important for any company that wishes to utilize the project to measure and evaluate improvements in metric outcomes.

*Please complete chart on the next page.*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Brand or Retailer Project Sponsor | Crop type allocated (one per member company) | Growers allocated  | Enrolled Acres allocated (Insight and Innovation Projects)(optional) |
| Click here to enter Brand/Retailer. | Choose crop type.  | Click here to enter number of growers allocated. | Click here to enter number of acres allocated. |
| Click here to enter Brand/Retailer. | Choose crop type.  | Click here to enter number of growers allocated. | Click here to enter number of acres allocated. |

 **SECTION THREE: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROGRESS**

**PHASE TWO**

**Option 1: PROJECTS WITH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN ON FILE**

1. **Objectives**

*Please report the continuous improvement strategies and activities implemented to deliver progress against the previously reported objective(s) of your Continuous Improvement Plan. In your description, please consider noting any challenges in achieving the objective if you feel your progress and/or success was impacted by factors outside of your control (i.e., extreme weather, disease pressures, etc.).*

*Our goal is to support you in communicating the interim steps you are taking to support farmers in accelerating continuous improvement in the targeted sustainability outcome and to create an authentic conversation to better inform stakeholders on the challenges and successes in advancing sustainable agriculture.*

**PHASE TWO**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Objective | Evaluation Mechanism  | Annual Progress Report | Level of Verification  |
| Prepopulated Objective 1  | Prepopulated Baseline 1  | Click here to report progress for Objective 1.  | [ ]  I self-reported results[ ]  A partner validated results[ ]  An independent, third-party validated results  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

1. **Adaptive Management**

Challenges and Opportunities(Optional)
*If there are challenges or opportunities that you would like to confidentially communicate to Field to Market about the project, please do so here.*

*Click here to enter text*

1. **Grower Engagement and Support (Optional)**

Reflect on your strategy for using grower engagement to influence continuous improvement in sustainability outcomes. What accomplishments have been realized in the crop year?

Click here to enter text.

**Option 2: PROJECT REPORTING PRIOR TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PLAN BEING FILED**

**PHASE TWO**

1. **Project Progress Summary**

*Provide a narrative description regarding the* ***annual progress*** *you have made against your Project Goals documented in the Project Summary. Please report the continuous improvement strategies and activities implemented to deliver progress against the previously reported objectives of your Continuous Improvement Plan. In your description, please include* ***adaptive management updates****, noting any challenges in achieving the goal if you feel your progress and/or success was impacted by factors outside of your control (i.e., extreme weather, disease pressures, etc.).*

*Our goal is to support you in communicating the interim steps you are taking to support farmers in accelerating continuous improvement in the targeted sustainability outcome and to create an authentic conversation to better inform stakeholders on the challenges and successes in advancing sustainable agriculture.*

*Click here to enter text*

1. **Level of Verification**

**PHASE TWO**

How were the results reported in this annual report validated?

*For more information about the Verification process and requirements for each level, please review Field to Market’s Assurance Principles which outline criteria for verifying claims.*

[ ]  I self-reported results

[ ]  A partner validated results

[ ]  An independent, third-party validated results

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Name:** Click here to enter text. **Title:** Click here to enter text.

**Organization:** Click here to enter text.

**Email:** Click here to enter text.

**Phone:** Click here to enter text.

**Date submitted:** Click here to enter a date.

**PROJECT**

**EVALUATION**

 **Project Evaluation
(Required for Multi-Year Projects)**

**PHASE THREE**

*Provide a narrative description evaluating the total progress you have made during your project’s lifespan against the stated goal(s) and objective(s) in your Continuous Improvement Plan. Please reflect on what continuous improvement strategies and activities were particularly effective in helping you achieve your goal(s) and objective(s) and share any lessons learned along the way. In your description, please reflect on any changes you made in your approach related to adaptive management, noting any challenges in achieving the goal if you feel your progress and/or success was impacted by factors outside of your control (i.e., extreme weather, disease pressures, etc.).*

*Our goal is to support you in communicating the efforts you have taken to support farmers in accelerating continuous improvement in the targeted sustainability outcome and to create an authentic conversation to better inform stakeholders on the challenges and successes in advancing sustainable agriculture.*

Click here to enter text

**CLAIMS**

**REQUEST**

 **Claims Request
(Please refer to Claims Protocol for Project Eligibility)**

**PHASES THREE & FOUR (OPTIONAL)**

1. **For which project are you submitting this claims request?**
2. **What type of claim are you requesting?**
	* Measurement
	* Adoption
	* Trends
	* Impact
3. **How many growers are included in the claim?**
4. **How many acres are included in the claim?**
5. **What is the retention rate of the growers included in the claim?**
6. **If your claim is related to changes in average metric outcomes, please confirm that weighted averages were used.**
	* Yes – Weighted Averages Used
	* No – Describe calculation method:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. **What additional methodologies, if any, did you use for calculations?**
8. **What level of verification did you use?**

**PHASES THREE & FOUR (OPTIONAL)**

* + First
	+ Second
	+ Third
1. **Please include provide supporting documentation.**

*For projects that wish to use a Third-Party Verified Badge, please attach audit summary. For First- or Second-Party Verification, please attach any relevant charts or spreadsheets that shows data analysis.*

**Impact Evaluation (Required for Impact Claims Only)**

*If you wish to quantify change over time or pursue additional pathways Field to Market has enabled that align with Scope 3 emissions reporting and/or ecosystem services markets, please provide a narrative description and accompanying spreadsheet to quantify impact.*

1. **What was the baseline you established for aggregate metric outcome you wish to quantify change over time?**
2. **What improvement trends does the data collected show?**
3. **Did you employ sampling?**

1. **How do you wish to utilize an Impact Claim:**
	* Pursue Scope 3 reporting for Science-Based Target
	* Connect to ecosystem services markets
	* Make a public claim of improvement
2. **Please share the top-line conclusions of your independent, third-party verification and provide accompanying documentation.**