



## LEAF Marque

### Standard Setting

### Public System Report

LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) is a charity whose objectives are to promote and improve agriculture, horticulture and other types of farming and raise standards of practice in farm management for the public benefit in particular, and the promotion and advancement of the education of farmers and the general public concerning methods of farm management which conserve and enhance the fabric and wildlife of the countryside.

LEAF Marque is an environmental assurance system recognising more sustainably\* farmed products. It is run by LEAF and based on LEAF's Integrated Farm Management (IFM) principles. All LEAF Marque certified farms are independently inspected.

#### Integrated Farm Management

Integrated Farm Management (IFM) is a whole farm business approach that delivers sustainable\* farming. IFM uses the best of modern technology and traditional methods to deliver prosperous farming that enriches the environment and engages local communities.

\*"LEAF's sustainable farming - is an approach that works to deliver a site-specific farming system that supports the integration of and needs of the environment, farm economic viability and society over the long term".





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## Introduction

This document is a public report that describes LEAF Marque’s Standard Setting. It is intended to ensure transparency and demonstrate compliance with the ISEAL Standard Setting Code. LEAF Marque Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of LEAF, which is an environmental farming charity; more information on LEAF can be found on the [LEAF website](#).

## 1. Standard

### 1.1 Scope

The LEAF Marque Standard is applicable globally and it covers the whole farm business, including all sites and fields managed centrally. The LEAF Marque Standard applies to all products within the farm business and it is not limited to defined crops or enterprises within the business.

### 1.2 Intended Impacts and Outcomes

The principles of Integrated Farm Management (IFM) underpin the requirements of LEAF Marque certification, as set out in the LEAF Marque Standard. IFM is a whole farm business approach that delivers more sustainable farming.

Within the context of Integrated Farm Management, the Intended Impacts of the LEAF Marque System are to improve:

- Soil management to enhance soil quality and soil health
- The resilience of cropping systems
- Management of water use and water quality
- Energy efficiency and energy use
- Waste management
- Management of livestock to enhance the environment
- And enhance the management of native habitats and biodiversity.

There are three central pillars to the future ambitions of LEAF Marque:

- Growing impact for LEAF Marque certified farmers through opening up market opportunities, assisting with strategic business planning, enhancing on-farm biodiversity and delivering an improved environment



- Enabling brands and retailers to demonstrate commitment to environmentally sustainable procurement, continued improvement of supply base and sustainable farming becoming the benchmark for global farming
- Raising awareness among consumers, assuring them that food has been environmentally and sustainably produced and empowering consumers to make positive changes through their purchasing decisions.

The LEAF Marque Intended Impacts and future ambitions work alongside LEAF's beyond certification work and LEAF's Mission which is to inspire and enable sustainable farming that is prosperous, enriches the environment and engages local communities.

### **1.3 Need for the LEAF Marque Standard**

Soon after LEAF was established in 1991 to encourage more sustainable farming practices through the demonstration and development of IFM, it was recognised that there was a need to develop a market focused approach and enable consumer recognition of sustainable produced food. The LEAF Marque System was identified as a way to enable this, and with the input of the LEAF Marque Technical Team, wider stakeholders, and relevant expertise including UK retailers, the LEAF Marque Standard was developed in 2003. The need for such an assurance system is evidenced by the many ways in which the LEAF Marque Standard is utilised, ranging from larger organisations demonstrating their sustainability commitments, partnerships with other environmental organisations, and brands supporting their sustainability credentials. Examples include the requirement for all Waitrose UK fresh produce to be LEAF Marque certified, M&S fresh produce requiring LEAF Marque as a compulsory Plan A attribute, the Jordans Farm Partnership, Vitacress Farm Excellence and use by brands such as Farrington's Mellow Yellow and Carroll's Heritage Potatoes.

There are many challenges in achieving sustainable food production from global pressures such as climate change, a growing population, and the increasing incidence of resistance to plant protection products and antibiotics. Sustainable farming practices are therefore essential to ensure food supply in the future, and also have an important role to play in delivering towards the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). The sustainable farming practices within LEAF Marque contributes to addressing these challenges, as impacts can include reduced plant protection product use, saving energy and water, supporting the preservation of threatened species and helping communities manage the land in a sustainable way so it can be farmed successfully by future generations. Globalisation and the importance of world trade to many individuals' livelihoods means that the challenges of delivering more sustainable farming practices are beyond the capability of individual countries. LEAF Marque welcomes these partnerships and the international exchange of information, research and ideas.

### **1.4 Performance Level**

The LEAF Marque Standard is additional and complementary to other farm assurance systems (including Red Tractor Assurance for Farms, GLOBALG.A.P. integrated standards, GLOBALG.A.P. Option 2 and GLOBALG.A.P. benchmarked schemes). The LEAF Marque Standard is a supplementary system that focuses on the environmental aspects of farm management. Continuous improvement is a key part of IFM.

### **1.5 Adaptations**

The LEAF Marque Standard has a global scope, therefore no national or regional adaptations are required or considered equivalent to the LEAF Marque Standard. Additional guidance is available through the LEAF Sustainable Farming Review which supports the LEAF Marque Standard and aids local adaptation and / or interpretation of the Standard. Each Control Point in the LEAF Marque Standard is linked to corresponding question(s) in the LEAF Sustainable Farming Review.



LEAF Marque offers certification for Producer Groups with a rigorous internal Quality Management System; the approach is similar to GLOBALG.A.P. Option 2. The Quality Management System ensures that all members of the group are meeting the requirements of the LEAF Marque Standard. At a minimum, the square root of the total number of producers in the LEAF Producer Group must be inspected. For more information about LEAF Producer Groups please see the [LEAF Marque Quality Management System Requirements](#).

## **2. Standard-Setting and Revision Process**

### **2.1 Stakeholders**

Stakeholder engagement is a core part of LEAF Marque. LEAF Marque wants to ensure that all stakeholders have the option to be involved in the process of revising and further developing the LEAF Marque Standard (as well as other areas of the LEAF Marque System as detailed in wider LEAF Marque documentation). LEAF Marque stakeholder engagement covers a wide range of representation including: those indirectly affected, geographic representation, gender, ecosystem representation, the scale of the facilities and different types of organisations.

Stakeholder groups actively involved / invited to be involved in the LEAF Marque Standard Setting Procedure include: LEAF Marque Board, LEAF Marque Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), TAC Working Group, LEAF Marque Secretariat and LEAF Groups & Committees. For more information about the stakeholder groups please see the [LEAF Marque Standard Setting Procedure and Stakeholder Mapping](#).

### **2.2 Governance**

The LEAF Marque Governance Structure is made up of the: LEAF Board of Trustees, LEAF Marque Board, LEAF Marque TAC and Expert/Working Groups. For more information about these multi-stakeholder groups please see the [LEAF Marque Standard Setting Procedure](#).

### **2.3 Summary of the Revision Process**

Revision of the LEAF Marque Standard will follow the [LEAF Marque Standard Setting Procedure](#). Preparation and planning for revision of the LEAF Marque Standard includes review of stakeholders identified and addition of further interested stakeholders as appropriate (including identifying groups that are not adequately represented), confirmation of the [LEAF Marque Standard Terms of Reference](#) and a summary of the Time Plan.

Public consultation is carried out using the existing or drafted version of the LEAF Marque Standard. The consultation is sent directly to all identified stakeholders, published on the LEAF website and publicised through LEAF media channels as appropriate. LEAF Marque will collate and review all comments received from the consultation. Feedback from prior to the consultation period and/or results from additional research will also be considered. LEAF Marque incorporates the consultation feedback in a (revised) draft Standard which will be reviewed by the LEAF Marque TAC. Additionally, LEAF Marque will summarise the comments received during the public consultation along with how they have been addressed and the main changes in the revised version. This will be shared with stakeholders who responded to the consultation and made available through the LEAF website. LEAF Marque will ensure that no confidential information is disclosed through the summary. LEAF Marque can repeat the consultation cycle if deemed necessary.

A draft final version of the Standard will be recommended by the LEAF Marque TAC for approval by the LEAF Marque Board.



From time-to-time, non-substantive change(s) may be required to the LEAF Marque Standard. In this case, there is no need for a formal revision process. Where urgent revisions are required to the LEAF Marque Standard, LEAF Marque will define the appropriate procedure.

#### **2.4 Decision-Making**

Where possible, all decisions will be reached by consensus. A consensus is considered to be a lack of sustained opposition. The process to reach consensus or resolution process for when consensus cannot be met, used by the LEAF Marque TAC (and/or Working Group), is outlined in the [LEAF Marque Standard Setting Procedure](#).

#### **2.5 Review and Revision Process**

The LEAF Marque Standard Setting Procedure is reviewed at least every 5 years for continued relevance and effectiveness in meeting its objectives. Reviews may be conducted more frequently if a need is perceived. The date of the next review is published on the [LEAF website](#).

LEAF Marque welcomes feedback on the LEAF Marque Standard and the LEAF Marque Standard Setting Procedure (and wider LEAF documentation) at all times. A Complaints and Enquiries form is available on the [website](#). LEAF Marque contact information is available on the LEAF website and published in our wider range of documentation, including the LEAF Marque Standard. The current version of the LEAF Marque Standard and plans for future revisions can be found on the LEAF Marque Standard section of the [LEAF Website](#).

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