



LEAF Marque Standard v16.0 Draft – Short Summary of Changes

The LEAF Marque Standard v16.0 Draft has been in development over the last 2 years. The Draft has been informed by development projects conducted over this period. A brief summary of the outcome of these projects is summarised in this document – please see the [full summary](#) for further detail. Where there is a change for v16.0, this is indicated in orange text.

1. Management Plans

Management Plan Control Points were reviewed and revised with the aim of improving clarity, consistency, and auditability.

- Within a Management Plan, reference to other Control Points has been removed unless their requirements are of benefit to the Plan. The required content of Management Plans is included within the Control Point text and not spread across multiple Control Points.
- Further explanation about the use and development of Management Plans has been added to the Introductory text (see page 10 of the LEAF Marque Standard v16.0 Draft). The intention of this is to help farmers and growers understand how Plans can be formatted, and that if there are existing plans that meet the Control Point requirement, they can be used.

2. Collaborative Action

Collaboration is necessary to achieve long-term impacts at scale. New Control Points were added to encourage working at a landscape scale and involvement in collaborative action.

- New Control Point 1.22 (*Recommended*) requires businesses to collaborate with others
- New Control Point 1.23 (*Recommended*) requires businesses to be part of collaborative action

3. Climate Resilience and Deforestation

It is important businesses have contingency plans in place to respond to the risks associated with climate change. Contingency planning can be included within existing management plans, or as a separate plan.

- New Control Point 1.24 requires businesses to ensure measures are taken to enhance climate resilience

Control Point 8.6 has been replaced by Control Point 8.28 (Essential) to strengthen requirements against deforestation.

- New Control Point 8.28 requires that conversion of natural ecosystems for agricultural use only occurs where there is compliance with national and/or global commitments and minimal negative environment impact



4. Carbon

The LEAF Marque Standard v15.0 has relevance to carbon emissions, reduction, and sequestration throughout, although it is not always explicitly mentioned. In the v16.0 Draft Standard, reducing carbon emissions and being climate positive is emphasised through changes to various Control Points.

- Control Point 1.6 requires businesses to include reference to reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions and implementing climate positive action
- Control Point 1.12 requires businesses to consider GHG emissions from buildings and/or equipment
- Control Point 2.1 references strategies to improve carbon capture and sequestration in the Soil Management Plan
- Control Point 2.2 requires measures to be taken to capture and retain soil organic carbon
- Control Point 4.5 requires GHG emissions to be considered in the Pollution Risk Assessment
- Control Point 6.3 requires that businesses use a carbon footprinting tool to record GHG emissions
- Control Point 6.4 references GHG emissions

5. Soil Health

There have been changes to enhance reference to biological, physical, and chemical aspects of soil health.

- Control Point 2.1 requires businesses to set targets to improve and maintain biological, physical, and chemical attributes of soil health within the Soil Management Plan
- Control Point 2.14 on measuring soil health has been upgraded to Essential

6. Nutrient Management

There have been changes to strengthen nutrient management requirements and how this integrates across all farm management decisions and strategies.

- Control Point 2.3 has been renamed “Integrated Nutrient Management Plan” and requires businesses to integrate this plan with other Management Plans. There are also requirements to base crop nutrient requirements on soil testing, and to calculate nutrient content in animal returns and manure/slurry. The Plan must reference nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium applications and show emphasis on effective use of nutrients, sustainability of nutrient inputs, and strategies to source from more sustainable sources.
- Control Point 2.6 requires availability and effective use of nutrients to be considered in cropping choice and rotation decisions.



7. Water Management

Water Management requirements have been strengthened to focus on water catchment working, water sourcing, monitoring water quality, and optimising water use efficiency.

- Control Points 4.7 and 4.9 are consolidated into Control Point 4.8 and provides clarity on drainage maps and record requirements
- Control Point 7.1 ensures the Water Management Plan references water catchment context, water quality monitoring, targets, action to optimise water use and efficiency, water use related to local availability, and future demand
- New Control Point 7.6 (*Recommended*) requires businesses to justify the sources of water
- New Control Point 7.7 (*Recommended*) requires businesses to monitor water quality

8. Plastic Use in Agriculture

In response to industry concern about plastic pollution, strategies for agricultural businesses to reduce plastic waste was researched. This project scope expanded to address waste management rather than plastic alone.

- New Control Point 4.10 (*Recommended*) requires businesses to have an annual Waste Audit
- New Control Point 4.11 (*Recommended*) requires businesses to have a Waste Audit Action Plan

9. Relevance to Different Systems

The LEAF Marque Standard was reviewed in consideration of relevance to different systems. This included producer groups, livestock businesses, protected cropping businesses, complex business models, and international relevance. There have been changes to various Control Points to increase relevance for these businesses.

- Control Point 1.1 clarifies that one LEAF Sustainable Farming Review should be completed per produce group by the operator of the Quality Management System on behalf of all members in the Produce Group
- Control Point 3.1 was updated to include grassland and forage crops in the Crop Health and Protection Management Plan
- Control Point 5.13 was updated to require businesses to consider ways to minimise feed waste and/or nutrients
- Not Applicable icons were added to Control Points 2.11 and 3.2 for businesses who do not apply nutrients or manures, and those who do not apply Plant Protection Products (PPP's)
- Control Point 1.12 requires that refurbishment or purchase of buildings and/or equipment considers resource use and water management decisions
- Control Point 2.1 was updated to emphasis substrate in the Soil Management Plan
- Control Points 8.7 and 8.14 states “site boundaries” instead of “field” to remove terminology that was not relevant in protected cropping contexts



- Control Point 5.6 was moved to the Landscape and Nature Conservation section and updated to be more internationally relevant (now Control Point 8.29)
- The terms “Environmentally Sensitive Areas” (Control Point 2.11) and “statutory landscape designation” (Control Point 8.1) were removed from the Standard to be more internationally relevant

10. Other

Recommended Control Points

All recommended Control Points within the LEAF Marque Standard were reviewed to assess their role and whether they should be upgraded to Essential.

- Control Points 2.14, 3.20, 4.8, 5.12, 5.13, 7.4, and 8.27 were upgraded to Essential
- Control Point 8.23 (*Recommended*) has increased the area available as appropriate habitats from 5%, to 10%

Crop Health and Protection

The language regarding buffer strips and agrochemical applications was reviewed for international relevance

- Control Point 3.9 was updated to require that buffer zones for agrochemical applications are justified through local best practice guidance, legislation, and product label requirements
- Control Point 3.20 was updated to align with buffer zone requirements in Control Point 3.9
- New Control Point 3.21 (*Recommended*) encourages businesses to take actions to inform neighbouring businesses and the public of agrochemical application activities

Verification Icons

Additional verification icons were added to improve clarity.

- Verbal verification icons were added to Control Point 1.6
- Visual verification icons were added to Control Points 2.3, 3.1, 4.2, and 5.13
- Not Applicable icons were added to Control Point 1.12, 3.13 and 4.3

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