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Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative



Final Report

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Executive Summary

Sustainability is of critical importance to the global farm and food sector. As the growing population's need for food, fibre, and fuel continues to put pressure on a shrinking agricultural land base, farmers will need to continuously adapt and improve their management practices. Sustainable agricultural practices can help alleviate this pressure. To help encourage adoption of such practices, tools and on-farm assessments have been developed and implemented in local, national, and international contexts.

This demand for evidence of sustainability has resulted in the development and implementation of a multitude of commodity-specific standards, programs, and tools. To varying degrees, this has created confusion, redundancy, duplication of efforts and an increased cost across the global farm and food sector.

With the creation of many standards, programs and tools used to capture sustainability efforts, it is important, now more than ever, to harmonize sustainability efforts, to ensure that:

- Risk is managed in meeting the global demand for safe, healthy, and sustainable agri-food products,
- Confidence is maintained or enhanced in the ethics and quality of agri-food products, and
- Market access is a possibility for producers based on the sustainability requirements.

The Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative, led by a collaboration of Ontario's farm organizations, food/beverage processors, academia, and non-government organizations, aims to achieve the harmonization of sustainability efforts of Canadian farmers through an online platform. This report highlights the work that has been done to date, and the necessary next steps in order to achieve the goal of fostering cohesion in sustainability efforts across the country.

Disclaimer:

The views expressed in the report are the views of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and do not necessarily reflect those of the governments of Canada and Ontario.

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Steering Committee

Ontario Agri-Food Technologies – Gord Surgeoner
Ontario Federation of Agriculture – Keith Currie (Past: Don McCabe)
Farm & Food Care Ontario – Brian Gilroy (Past: John Maaskant)
President’s Council – Keith Currie (Past: Scott Graham)
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario – Clarence Nywening
Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association – Mack Emiry
Provision Coalition – Chair, Robert Cash
Provision Coalition – Cher Mereweather
Arrell Food Institute (University of Guelph) – Paul Uys
National Farmers Union (Ontario) – Emery Huszka
OMAFRA (observer) – Colleen Fitzgerald-Hubble (Past: George McCaw)
AAFC (observer) – Adriana Zeleney

Working Group

Ontario Federation of Agriculture – Dave Armitage
Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association – Harold Rudy
Farm & Food Care – Bruce Kelly
Retired Associate Dean, OAC, University of Guelph – Terry Daynard
Ontario Agri-Food Technologies – Gord Surgeoner
Provision Coalition – Cher Mereweather
Arrell Food Institute (University of Guelph) – Paul Uys
Organic Council of Ontario – Hugh Martin
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario – Suzanne Armstrong
National Farmers Union (Ontario) – Don Ciparis

Past Working Group Members

World Wildlife Fund – Canada – Susan Evans
Richard Ivey School of Business, UWO – Erin Cheney

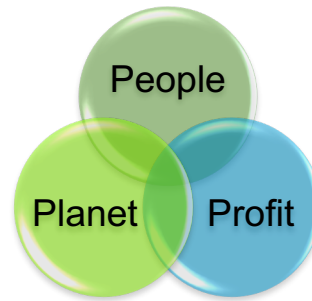
Project Management Team

Wilton Consulting Group – Bronwynne Wilton
Synthesis Agri-Food Network - Rob Hannam
Orion GBSC – David Smith
Wilton Consulting Group – Megan Racey

1.0 Introduction

Sustainability is of critical importance to the farm and food sector in Ontario. As the demand to meet the food, fibre and fuel needs of a growing population continues to put pressure on a shrinking agricultural land base, farmers will need to continuously adapt and improve their management practices. In the past, sustainability was often associated with environmental management of resources such as soil, water, biodiversity, and air. While the environmental factors (or planet) are still critically important, the definition of sustainability has broadened, now including people (or social) and profit (or economic); expanding farm management issues to topics such as labour codes, training, succession planning, animal welfare, and community engagement.

*"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
(Brundtland Report, 1989)*



Simultaneously, there is increasing pressure across the value chain for demonstration of sustainable production practices. This demand for evidence of sustainability has resulted in the development and implementation of a multitude of commodity-specific standards, programs, and tools which is creating confusion across the sector. Therefore, a need exists for a simplified and streamlined approach that will help farmers meet the market demands for evidence of sustainable production methods as well as to drive continuous improvement across the sector.

The Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative (SFFI) was originally conceived as a system that would simplify the process of meeting sustainability requirements. The initiative has been supported and developed through a collaboration of Ontario's farm organizations, food/beverage processors, academia, and non-government organizations. The goal was to develop a framework or platform that will facilitate communication and reporting across various commodity-specific programs to create a whole farm, whole value chain approach based on a common set of practices, allowing for sustainability actions implemented on farms to be recognized throughout the value chain.

To assist with meeting this long-term goal, funding was obtained through *Growing Forward 2*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, to complete a number of deliverables including a comprehensive stakeholder consultation process. One of the project deliverables was completed by Deloitte Canada, while Synthesis Agri-Food Network¹ and Orion Global Business Sustainability Consultants were hired to collaboratively manage this stakeholder engagement phase as well as the development of a draft model (or models) for how SFFI could function. This

¹As of September 1st 2017, Project Management team expanded to include Wilton Consulting Group

report is a summary of the activities completed by the Synthesis/Orion/Wilton Group project team. This report also includes recommendations for the next phase of the initiative as well as resources to help the SFFI project working group maintain momentum and apply for external funding sources.

1.1 Project Objectives

Three overarching objectives were identified by the working group prior to the start of the project, and were therefore outlined in the agreed upon contract:

- 1) Guide farmers in the identification of needs/opportunities for improvement in sustainability – in this project a particular focus will be on environmental factors related to greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change including carbon credits.
- 2) Streamline increasing requirements for documentation by food manufacturers, retailers and other customers for assurance that farm products have been produce in a sustainable way. The latter will sometimes require verification processes and the use of third-party certification to meet the corporate requirements of other in the food value chain.
- 3) As part of the streamlining process for both farmers and downstream customers in the supply chain, investigate the extent to which existing programs can be integrated within the SFFI approach in a seamless manner and demonstrate that integration outcome, to the fullest extent achievable, in pilot applications with at least two external programs.

1.2 Project Deliverables

The following deliverables were identified based on the funding application and agreement:

- 1) Engage a consulting firm with subject matter expertise to undertake a standards comparison and gap analysis to evaluate global whole Fam, commodity and/or food safety standards against the Environmental Farm Plan, Grow Your Farm Profits, and Canadian laws and regulations to identify gaps
- 2) Formation of a committed advisory team to provide the leadership and sounding board for content in development of the SFFI.
- 3) Through a competitive process, recruit the Project Manager to serve in the key role; the Project Manager will be responsible for leading consultations with the user community (farmers and their customers), writing the content for modules, integrating the results of the gap analysis in Activity 1, and developing a comprehensive blueprint for launching an interactive sustainability platform.

- 4) Develop a minimum of two SFFI modules and test the approach of each one with a robust sample of supply chain users including farmers and downstream customers (processors, retailers, food service providers). A third initiative will be to show the integration of at least two existing programs with the SFFI. The programs will be chosen after analyzing the results from Activity 1 and consulting with stakeholders.
- 5) Provide administration and reporting for the project including logistical support for meetings.

These deliverables and how they evolved throughout the course of the project will be further discussed in this report.

2.0 Background

2.1 From Farm, Food and Beyond to SFFI

Prior to the engagement of the stakeholder consultation team, the initiative was first presented as “Farm, Food and Beyond”. This name highlighted the fact that the agri-food system in Ontario and Canada is diverse and inclusive of a wide variety of commodities and services. Examples of non-food commodities include non-edible horticulture, landscape and nursery, biomass, bioenergy and fibres. These non-food commodities impact productivity and can contribute to agriculture’s growing green economy. Through early consultations with key informants, the project name was changed from “Farm, Food and Beyond” to “Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative (SFFI)” in order to provide more prominence to the core concept of the initiative – sustainability.

Prior to the engagement of the stakeholder consultation team, but as part of the overall project, the accounting and consulting firm, Deloitte Canada, was engaged to map the contents of the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and Growing Your Farm Profits (GYFP) against 25 different performance areas across Planet, People, and Profit.

This activity meets Deliverable 1 as listed above so it is included in this report, however, it is important to note that this work was completed by a different firm.

This Deloitte Gap Analysis (see [Appendix A](#)) has been an important resource for this initiative as it is a thorough comparison of the Environmental Farm Plan, Grow Your Farm Profits, and Canadian laws/regulations against a limited set of global sustainability standards (i.e. Roundtable for Responsible Soy; Field to Market Fieldprint Calculator). It is important to note that the Deloitte study was strictly a content analysis and did not compare verification or implementation requirements for each of the programs. The Deloitte study examines three performance areas: planet, people and profits and a summary of the report is available on the project website at www.sustainablefarms.ca.

3.0 The Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative

SFFI is a collaboration of Ontario's farm organizations and food and beverage processors that fosters a full-scope, whole-farm, whole-value chain, sustainability system. The system enables trust, transparency, equivalency, and mutual benefit for the sector. SFFI is focused on the three pillars of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. There is an emphasis within SFFI on developing a pre-competitive, data-sharing platform to help achieve its vision. A key benefit of the initiative is to help the sector proactively manage risk to meet the global demand for safe, healthy, and sustainable agri-food products. A mission statement and clear objectives for SFFI (see below) were developed through the stakeholder consultation process.

3.0.1 The SFFI mission statement

To facilitate continuous improvement in sustainability across the entire agri-food industry; ensuring confidence and trust in the consistency, ethics, and quality of Canadian agri-food products.

3.0.2 SFFI Objectives

The objectives of SFFI are to:

1. Increase transparency, trust, and sustainability of Canadian agricultural value chain;
2. Reduce duplication and manage costs of assuring sustainability of primary production;
3. Develop sustainability competencies and capacity-building across the industry and;
4. Be a forum for knowledge exchange, mutual benefit and networking.

3.1 Key messages informing the development of SFFI

SFFI can be described as the following:

- A collaboration of Ontario's farm organizations and food/beverage processors
- Full scope, whole-farm, whole-value chain sustainability system
- Fosters trust, transparency and mutual benefit
- Focused on three pillars of sustainability: economic, social, and environment
- Emphasis on developing a pre-competitive data sharing platform
- Help to manage risk to meet global demand for safe, healthy, and sustainable agri-food products

It is important to note that SFFI is not a new standard. The aim is to develop an architecture to provide connections, cohesion, and compliance across multiple existing programs and plans based on the following principles:

- Whole Farm, Whole Value Chain

- Use Existing Programs: Build onto Environmental Farm Plan, and integrate requirements and compliance from relevant standards (including international)
- Neutral (or Agnostic): enable broad range of requirements, from education / BMPs to 1st, 2nd, 3rd party audits to performance outcomes
- Assessment Equivalency: benchmark relevant standards
- Assurance / Verification Harmonization: simplify and streamline
- Easier & Affordable Assurance/Verification Mechanism: enable data sharing and online reporting

SFFI is necessary for several reasons. First, large food companies (brandowners) continue to seek farm-level, performance assurance in order to meet demands for greater transparency from consumers. This is further compounded by increased demand from governments (i.e. the next policy framework has both public trust and environmental sustainability as two of the six key areas). As the momentum to develop sustainable food and farming systems continues to grow, the landscape of sustainable agriculture codes and standards (which are commodity specific) continues to become increasingly complicated to navigate. Thus, we need to find a way to drive synergies in the system and to streamline requirements for farmers.

3.2 What Problem is SFFI Solving?

Growing Need

- There is great value in increasing public trust in the Canadian farm and agri-food industries as governments want clearer assurance of performance and insurance companies want clearer efforts to mitigate risk
- Increasing requirements by food sector buyers, shouldering emerging expectations to be accountable for their supply chains (stronger in EU/UK, percolating into Canada)

On Path for Redundant Complexity, Effort, Cost:

- Numerous initiatives, codes, standards exist and are emerging, some commodity specific and some whole farm, that all seek to fill this void in the need to demonstrate performance through transparency – as they aim to build out the pieces needed to accomplish this, there is a tremendous amount of duplication in what practices are required and how they are assessed and assured
- This will accelerate as the 12 AAFC facilitated Value Chain Roundtables are each being asked to develop / adopt solutions, aiming to build public trust

Implications for Current, Farm-Based Approaches:

- These growing market requirements introduce a new dynamic to the notion of “sustainable agriculture”, which requires updating the current approach – a very different driver to adopting such practices than seeking cost-sharing
- Specifically, it needs to be recognized that strong programs like EFP and livestock codes of practice (animal welfare) need to evolve, challenging the current approach of being (a) voluntary, and (b) opaque (not sharing information)

“Big Data” Solution:

- There are initiatives across many sectors in the global business landscape which are using cloud-based “big data” to drive out costs, redundancies, complexities, and achieve more efficient decision-making solutions
- SFFI will use a similar approach, leveraging learning from other agri-food initiatives and other sectors globally, to develop an appropriate “made-in-Canada” solution

Benefits of the SFFI are widespread. For farmers, this may include (but is not limited to): simplification, cost reduction, flexible, on-farm improvements, market access, and increased public trust. Benefits for other industry stakeholders (processors/buyers/retailers) include: earlier decision making, simplified reporting, cost reduction, ability to report improvements, and increased public trust.

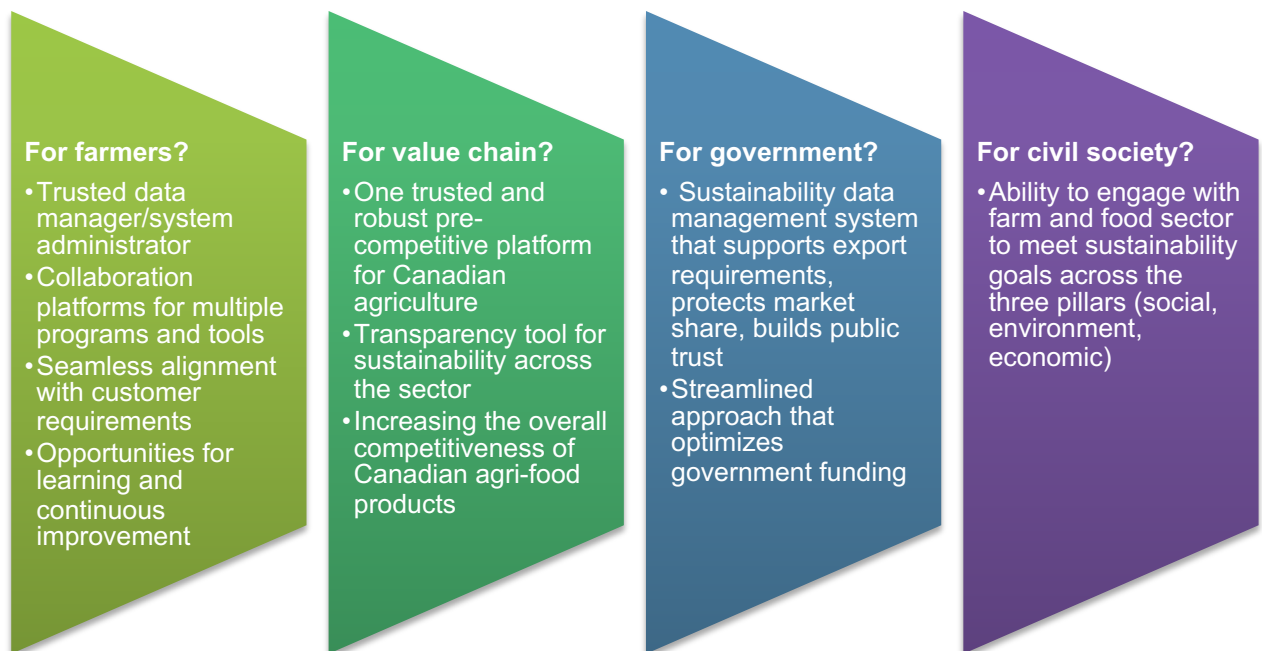


Figure 1. Benefits of SFFI to various stakeholder groups.

3.3 Core competencies to ensure success for SFFI

The SFFI will have four core competencies that will enable it to be internationally recognized as it would interoperate with other international schemes. The core competencies are as follows:

- 1) **Benchmarking** – Expertise and process, so that each Canadian standard does not need to do it;
- 2) **Assurance and verification** – Coordination of services, so that “assessed once, accepted by all” is achieved, whether 1st, 2nd, or 3rd party assessment;
- 3) **Web-based data sharing platform** – Providing a central repository for those who need it for their data to be captured once and shared with those the data owner allows; also able to inter-connect with other data platforms to share data according to user requirements, regardless of geographic location, in Canada or internationally;
- 4) **Web-based reporting dashboard** – Providing a SFFI portal that can be customized to the user’s place in the value chain and business relationships, pulling relevant data to provide the reports it needs; for those who already have another dashboard, no need to use this, just pull data from the data-sharing platform into their dashboard

3.4 The Three-pronged Approach to the SFFI

The national and international sustainability landscape is complex and rapidly ever evolving. Ontario, and Canadian farmers, are facing a wide range of sustainability pressures ranging from ‘not on the radar’ to ‘urgent’. Certain commodity groups are pressing forward with their own strategies. This is leading to the problem of potential confusion in the marketplace, duplication of efforts, and the risk of missing a collaborative approach, the leveraging of funds, etc. Through our stakeholder consultation, we heard there is a lack of consensus on the role of the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and the Grow Your Farm Plan (GYFP) in a Canadian sustainable agriculture initiative. However, recently, there is now an ongoing initiative focus to establish standards through a National EFP approach, which SFFI supports.

Stakeholders along the value chain do not want a piecemeal approach. They strongly support a cohesive, streamlined, national, whole farm, whole value chain solution to help fix the challenges driven by sustainability pressures on the sector.

Following stakeholder engagement and consultation with the working group and steering committee, it was evident that there were multiple pathways that needed to be pursued in developing SFFI and that these must occur some-what simultaneously. The endorsement of this three-pronged approach was based on the findings from the stakeholder consultation process and facilitated discussion with the SFFI working group. The principles behind this three-pronged approach are as follows:

1. **Pilot Project** – The pilot project is necessary to gain insight and feedback into an “SFFI-like” tool. The goal of this project is a proof of concept of SFFI, to demonstrate a sample tool in action, and to learn/improve. A dairy goat sector pilot project is currently under way (please see Activities – section 5.3 for more details).

2. **Canadian scope** – It was evident from discussions that the market wants a national solution, so further engagements and focus need to be on a national scale. The project team has ensured that conversations with stakeholders have covered the entire value chain across the country at both provincial and national levels of these organizations, companies, and associations. As well, the standards and tools investigated are national and international in scale.

3. **International Alignment** – We do not operate in isolation as Canadian producers export and Canadian buyers are controlled by or influenced by international buyers. SFFI needs to be recognized and accepted by international players, which shaped our engagement plan. Work is already under way to meet this international approach. One of such activities is the work that has been done to benchmark the Ontario Environmental Farm Plan and legislation to the FSA. For more information in this activity please see Activities – section 5.3.

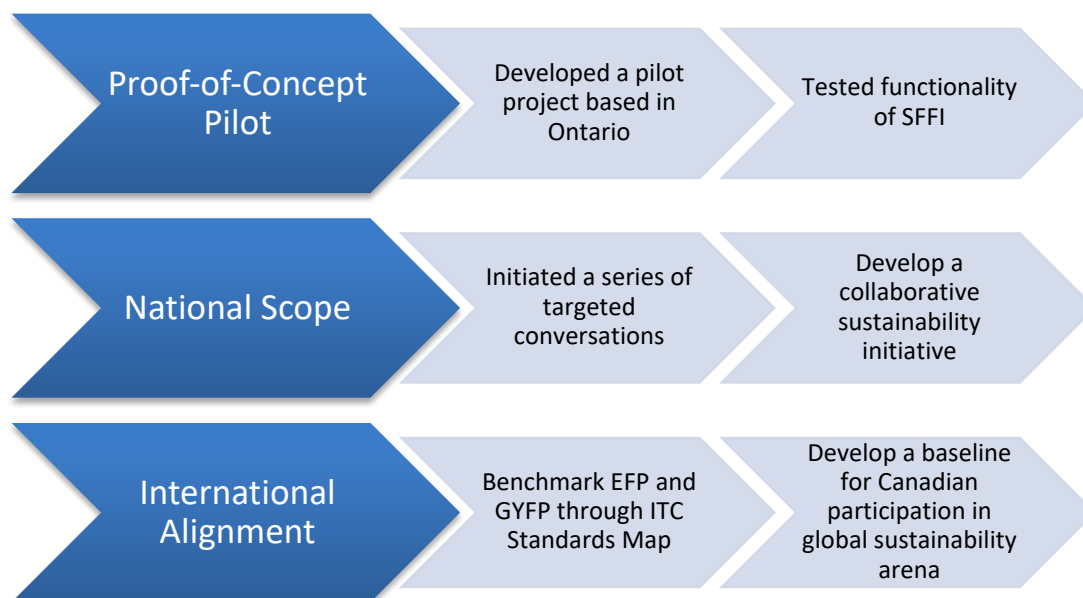


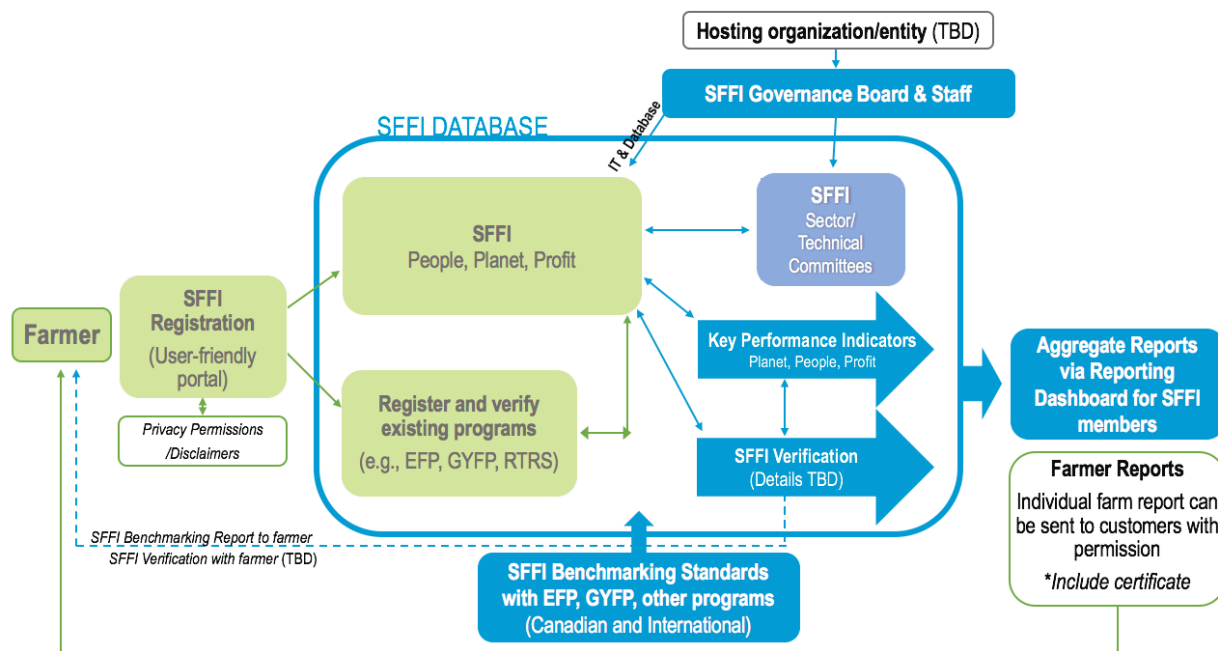
Figure 2. Three-pronged approach for SFFI

3.5 What might it look like?

There is increasing pressure across the value chain for demonstration of sustainable production practices. This demand for evidence of sustainability has resulted in the development and implementation of a multitude of commodity-specific standards, programs and tools, which have

potential to create confusion, redundancy and increase costs across the sector. SFFI aims to address these concerns by offering a simplified and streamlined tool that will help farmers meet the market demands for evidence of sustainable production methods, as well as to drive continuous improvement across the sector. A schematic representation of how the farmer would use the SFFI website can be found [here](#). As well, the wireframe below indicates that the system will do the 'behind the scenes' work to benchmark and establish equivalence with other standards and the products and resources the farmers will be left with as a result of using the system (meets Activity 3).

3.5.1 Visual Schematic of SFFI (Wireframe)



4.0 Activities Completed

A full summary of the activities, objectives, and how these were met are described in [Appendix B](#). The following section describes the work completed to meet these activities, mostly addressing Activity 4.

4.1 Stakeholder Consultation Process

The consultation process to date has consisted of:

- key informant interviews
- a farm sector open house and webinar
- two stakeholder workshops (one full value chain and one for food sector).

The stakeholder consultation process has been an important step for developing the draft framework for the Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative. The primary goal is to develop an understanding of the sector's needs to clarify and streamline sustainability initiatives through a consultation process which includes stakeholders across the value chain. We reached out to producers, processors, retailers, food service, non-governmental organizations, and consumer groups to gather feedback and input regarding sustainability with a whole farm approach. Below is a summary of the engagement process to date and key findings.

4.1.1 Stakeholder Interviews

The goal of the stakeholder consultation was to develop an understanding of the sector's needs and to clarify and streamline sustainability initiatives through a process which included stakeholders across the value chain. Consultations are critical in developing draft framework for a Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative that encompasses all three sustainability pillars (planet, people and profit) while reducing duplication and supporting the entire value chain. As such, we reached out to producers, processors, retailers, food service, non-governmental organizations, and consumer groups to gather feedback and input regarding sustainability with a whole farm approach.

The project interview team, Dr. Bronwynne Wilton and David Smith, contacted over 90 food and farm stakeholders, including farm organizations, associations, food companies, and others, across Canada and internationally. Beginning with the farm sector stakeholder consultations, Bronwynne conducted over 26 engagements. David Smith conducted over 25 engagements with the food sector, both provincially, nationally, and globally. The interviews were conducted in person whenever possible, or via the phone. A complete list of contacted stakeholders can be found in [Appendix C](#).

The following tables provide a summary of some of the key opportunities and challenges that were identified through the stakeholder consultation process. A full report of insights gained from the interviews can be found in [Appendix D](#).

Opportunities
Strong interest in national approach from food sector and the majority of farm sector
Receptive to concept of data-sharing and reporting
Several initiatives are already underway – opportunity to learn from their efforts and to share resources

Challenges
Lack of clarity about what exactly SFFI is or will be
Governance – who is in charge, how is it structured, and how are decisions made?
Perceived conflict with using EFP as a component of a sustainability initiative
Funding and management – who will pay for the development and management of SFFI, and who will be responsible for long-term management?

In summary, the farm and food sectors are broadly quite supportive of SFFI and recognize the need for synergies across the value chain and globally. There are still concerns regarding value to the farmer, small vs. large commodity groups, various existing programs in regards to sustainability, and meeting provincial, national, and international value chain needs. There are many questions to be answered regarding data sharing and verification to ensure these requirements are met and successfully adopted from the start. An important limitation with the consultations, especially for the farm sector, is that discussions occurred with staff at the organizations, and not always with elected members of the organization or farmers that the organization represents, therefore, clear communications regarding SFFI will continue to be very important as the initiative progresses towards implementation.

4.1.2 Stakeholder Value Chain Workshop

As part of the stakeholder consultation, the project team held a workshop on October 20th, 2016 in Mississauga. The overall purpose of this workshop was to build an understanding of and recommendations for development of the SFFI to provide an efficient and meaningful approach to sustainability. The SFFI Stakeholder workshop was attended by 46 representatives from across the farm and food value chain as well as leaders in the sustainability field. The workshop provided an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of current sustainability initiatives and platforms in agri-food value chains while gathering feedback and insights on the challenges, opportunities, and “best approach” to share Ontario’s future success at a national scale.

The following are some overall “high-level” messages and take-away points regarding the workshop and feedback from participants.

- There is a need for further clarity on whether SFFI is a stand-alone platform or whether it will be more of a 'collaborator of collaborations'
- There is considerable variability in commodity-group and producer 'readiness' for sustainability standards in both Ontario and Canada more broadly
- Sustainability programs must make sense for stakeholders across the value chain and we have an opportunity now to develop a whole farm, value chain approach – however, the window of opportunity is narrow as we see an increasing number of sustainability standards, codes, and platforms emerging throughout the global agri-food system
- A national approach to sustainability in the Canadian agri-food system is important, however questions remain regarding how to accomplish this vision
- Lively discussion evolved around the topic of data capture and verification and the group was in agreement that for a successful sustainability initiative, data collection must be; Robust, Genuine, Verifiable, Classifiable, Measurable, Secure

Presentations from the workshop can be found on the SFFI website [here](#). The agenda and a summary of the workshop is included in this report and can be found in [Appendix E](#). As well, feedback from attendees based on a post-event survey of the workshop can be found in [Appendix F](#).

4.1.3 Farm Sector Specific Webinar

Following the whole value chain workshops, the project team held sector specific engagement events to further clarify the SFFI vision with input from the value chain. The first one of these events was a farm sector specific open house and webinar.

The Farm Sector Open House and Webinar was held on April 19th, 2017 in Woodstock, ON. The purpose of this event was to learn more about SFFI and update those who were previously engaged at other events, share ideas about the future of the project, and learn more about global sustainability. The advertising posting that was sent to stakeholders and shared across our network can be found in [Appendix G](#). Participants who attended the event in person were provide with infographics which are shared in [Appendix H](#). As well, the one-hour presentation can be found on our website [here](#).

4.1.4 Food Sector Specific Workshop

A Food Sector Workshop was held on June 28th, 2017 in Mississauga, ON. The goal of this event was to identify the “business case” for SFFI, achieve a clear understanding of the SFFI vision and the solutions it presents, and to seek sector feedback on SFFI and level of encouragement. At this Food Sector workshop, we had overwhelming support for the initiative with over 23 national and international companies that attended spanning processing, manufacturing, retail, and restaurants/foodservice; 6 other, related organizations also attended. A full summary of the day is in the [Appendix I](#), but some key points include:

- Most attendees felt they understand the SFFI business case, vision, and how it protects and maintains sustainable ag standards and codes (it itself is not a standard)
- There is robust desire to further support SFFI through participants discussing it with their respective trade associations and sustainable ag initiatives and being on a SFFI advisory committee
- Significant but lesser willingness to pilot SFFI, be on a working group or governance committee

Almost 100% of attendees saw immediate value of this initiative to their company

- 95% found SFFI to be a strong and relevant vision, & seek it to launch in 2-5 years
- 91% of companies would like SFFI to be fully functioning within the next 5 years, highlighting an immediate need for such an initiative

Presentations from speakers can be found on the SFFI website [here](#). The agenda and summary including feedback from participants can be found in [Appendix I](#).

4.1.5 Additional Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement

In addition to the scheduled stakeholder engagement activities that directly aligned with the project contract and deliverables, there was considerable effort put towards other outreach and engagement opportunities. For example, the project manager (Bronwynne Wilton), attended both the 2016 and the 2017 National Environmental Farm Plan Summits in Ottawa. Attendance at these summits was very helpful in terms of networking with other individuals with expertise in agri-environmental sustainability initiatives and issues across the country. The project team also attended, and/or presented, at meetings of the Canadian Roundtable on Sustainable Crops (CRSC), Canadian Roundtable on Sustainable Beef (CRSB), the ITC Sustainable Trade Summit in Geneva, Switzerland, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture Board meeting, President’s Council meetings, as well as periodic OMAFRA staff updates.

4.2 Supplementary Activities

As the project evolved based on stakeholder engagement and meetings with the working group and steering committee, some additional activities were necessary to meet the objectives of the project and to expand the preliminary work completed prior to next steps of SFFI. The following section describes the Benchmarking exercise undertaken within this grant as well as the leveraged additional funding to investigate a commodity-specific module/pilot for an emerging sector that would benefit from a tailored approach to training and planning in sustainability.

4.2.1 Ontario Environmental Farm Plan, Grow Your Farm Plan, & Farm Sustainability Assessment Tool: A Benchmarking Exercise²

To complement the Deloitte study previously mentioned (and the first project deliverable of undertaking a standards comparison and gap analysis), the project team undertook a benchmarking exercise for the Ontario Environmental Farm Plan (EFP), Grow Your Farm Profits (GYFP), and Ontario and Canadian legislation against the Sustainable Agriculture Initiative Platform's (SAI) Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA) tool. This exercise also partially fulfills the second project objective which is to strive for streamlined requirements for documentation by food manufacturers, retailers, and other customers for assurance that farm products have been produced in a sustainable way.

The SAI Platform is the "...primary global food & drink value chain initiative for sustainable agriculture"³. SAI Platform involves stakeholders from all levels of the food chain, and works towards developing, recognizing and implementing sustainable practices for mainstream agriculture⁴. One of the tools that was co-developed through the SAI Platform, by various stakeholders in the agri-food chain, is the FSA. FSA is a tool that producers can use to assess, document, improve and communicate on-farm sustainability. The assessment is used globally by leading food & beverage companies to source sustainably produced agricultural raw materials. The assessment is frequently used as a reference to benchmark existing standards and codes, schemes and legislation.

Benchmarking the EFP and GYFP against the FSA is a way of streamlining requirements for documentation of sustainability efforts. FSA does this by acting as a scoring mechanism which assigns benchmarked standards a performance level of bronze, silver or gold. If a farm attains a silver performance level, it means that that farm has a similar, or comparable operation to any other farm that has also attained an FSA silver performance level. The performance levels act as a way of streamlining sustainability standards by "...providing a single benchmark"⁵ for

² Please contact Project Lead Bronwynne Wilton (bronwynne@wiltongroup.ca) for more in-depth information regarding this project, or a copy of the final report and results.

³ Sustainable Assessment Initiative (SAI). (2010). Retrieved from <http://www.saiplatform.org/about-us/who-we-are>

⁴ Sustainable Assessment Initiative (SAI), 2010, Retrieved from <http://www.saiplatform.org/about-us/who-we-are>

⁵ Sai Platform, 2017, Retrieved from <http://www.fsatool.com/>

comparison purposes. To date, approximately 283 standards and legislation have been benchmarked against the FSA, in approximately 32 countries⁶.

In May 2017, the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA), the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), and the Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative (SFFI) working group collaborated on a project to benchmark the Ontario Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and Growing Your Farm Profits (GYFP) program against SAI Platform’s FSA tool. The goal of this task was to better understand how the sustainability efforts of producers within Ontario compare to those internationally. By virtue of completing this benchmarking exercise, a better understanding was gained on how sustainability standards/ documentation can be streamlined, through the use of scoring mechanisms and performance levels.

Ultimately, neither the EFP nor the GYFP yet perform at a bronze level, however, there is potential to meet this level with some changes to the program content and delivery process. The results of the benchmarking for the respective standards are outlined in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1. EFP Benchmarking Results

	<i>Minimum % Essential Questions Answered</i>	<i>Minimum % Basic Questions Answered</i>	<i>Minimum % Advanced Questions Answered</i>
<i>FSA Bronze Performance</i>	100%	75%	0%
<i>Ontario EFP, Ontario Provincial Legislation, Federal Legislation COMBINED</i>	89%	87%	64%

Table 2. GYFP Benchmarking Results

	<i>Minimum % Essential Questions Answered</i>	<i>Minimum % Basic Questions Answered</i>	<i>Minimum % Advanced Questions Answered</i>
<i>FSA Bronze Performance</i>	100%	75%	0%
<i>GYFP, Ontario Provincial Legislation, Federal Legislation COMBINED</i>	89%	73%	37%

The benchmarking results are not a reflection of the quality or extensiveness of the standards (i.e. EFP) being benchmarked. Rather, they are a reflection of the focus of the standard/ program, and how well the data being captured lines up with what the FSA requires. The main focus of the Ontario EFP is the environment (planet), and the main focus of the GYFP is

⁶ Sai Platform, 2017, Retrieved from <http://www.fsatool.com/>

economics (profit). The FSA, however includes all three pillars of sustainability; economic (profit), social (people), environment (planet).

Three main lessons were learned from the benchmarking process.

1. Recommendation vs Requirement
 - Currently, both the EFP and GYFP are voluntary programs which educates and assesses farmers based on scales of risk. The FSA assesses in more binary terms, of yes/no. If the EFP had some way of incorporating general binary assessments in addition to its scales, it would better align with the FSA.
 - Verification is inherent in the FSA as it assesses in binary terms. Although the EFP is a series of recommendations, it may be able to be assessed in a binary way if assessments, updates and verifications are conducted by some kind of EFP technician.
2. The topics of labour conditions and health and safety need to be incorporated into the EFP and GYFP in a more comprehensive way. While these topics currently are not within the scope of the EFP, they are required for all.
3. The FSA requires that only one standard be benchmarked at a time. The GYFP scores well on the FSA due to the fact that it asks if an environmental farm plan has been completed. By asking this, it broadens the number of topics that the GYFP covers, thus better aligning it with the FSA, in comparison to the EFP. This may be an approach for covering multiple sustainability topics, as efforts towards international alignment continue to develop.

4.2.2 SFFI Proof-of-Concept Project

The results of the extensive stakeholder consultation across the agri-food sector highlighted the need for a whole farm, whole value chain approach to sustainability that will minimize the burden on farmers while also aligning with international agri-food value chain systems and sustainability requirements. To continue the momentum and development of the SFFI project, the next logical step in the process was to develop the capacity to test the concept with farmers and stakeholders along the value chain.

As an emerging commodity with high growth and export potential, it was decided that there would be considerable value in working with the dairy goat sector in Ontario for a proof-of-

Project Partners:

- Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA)
- Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA)
- Provision Coalition
- Ontario Agri-Food Technologies
- Mariposa Dairy
- Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Ltd.
- BIO
- AGSI
- 10 Ontario dairy goat producers

concept project. There would also be additional benefits through the knowledge translation and transfer components of this project that would support the continued development of the dairy goat sector in Ontario.

Dairy Goat Proof-of-Concept Project Objectives:

- 1) To further develop the SFFI platform concept and how it will help to proactively mitigate risk for producers
- 2) To engage with an emerging commodity value chain to work through a proof-of concept SFFI model – the dairy goat sector has been identified as a high potential candidate for this initiative
- 3) To use the results and key learnings from this demonstration project in order to inform the further development of the whole farm, whole value chain SFFI sustainability platform

Project Outcomes:

- A draft SFFI branded, on-line platform is being developed and tested by the emerging dairy goat commodity sector through a value chain approach
 - Includes input from international sustainability standards (Farm Sustainability Assessment 2.0⁷& Unilever Sustainable Living Plan⁸), the Ontario Environmental Farm Plan (EFP), dairy goat producers, GayLea, Mariposa and Costco
- In-depth stakeholder consultation and analysis of how a concept like SFFI can help to identify, manage, and mitigate risk to the sector is being conducted
- Engagement with an emerging sector such as the dairy goat industry will support this sector in terms of knowledge sharing as well as through the development of a functional sustainability platform that meets their current and potential domestic and international market access needs

Project Support:

- *Gay Lea Foods; in-kind support for the project through Kevin Weaver, Dairy Goat Industry Advisor and Ove Hansen, Director, Member Relations*
- *Mariposa Dairy; in-kind support through Bruce Vandenburg*
- *Provision Coalition; in-kind support through Provision Coalition staff*
- *BIO; in-kind support through Mike McMorris and Betty-Jo Almond*
- *AGSI; in-kind support through Christopher Cameron and staff*

The SFFI proof-of-concept project is graciously funded by *Growing Forward 2*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, through OMAFRA and will be completed in February 2018.

⁷ <http://www.fsatool.com/>

⁸ <https://www.unilever.com/sustainable-living/our-approach-to-reporting/our-metrics/>

4.2.3 Verification Case Study

As verification is a topic that will require further investigation, we worked with Environmental Business students at the University of Waterloo to do preliminary investigation into the methods for an effective and efficient verification process. The students reviewed the methods of 15 existing sustainability and farm standards, consulted with experts in the field to identify criteria for analysis, and reviewed the standards based on the criteria discussed. The students reviewed the following standards:

- Roundtable for Responsible Soy
- Dairy Farmers of Canada - Canadian Quality Milk On-Farm Food Safety Program Workbook
- Dairy Farmers of Canada proAction Initiative
- Grape Growers of Ontario and Wine Council of Ontario Viticulture Sustainability
- Marine Stewardship Council
- Forest Stewardship Council
- Sustainability Guide and Self-Assessment for Fruit and Vegetable Production
- ISCC+ Farmer Audit
- Canadian Organic Standard
- Field to Market Fieldprint Calculator
- The Sustainability Consortium (WalMart)
- Environmental Farm Plan
- Unilever Sustainable Agriculture Code
- Origin Green
- SAI Platform - Farm Sustainability Assessment

Based on their consultation with experts, the students determined that the follow criteria were important to consider when evaluating a verification process: **1) Cost 2) Burden on farmers 3) Transparency 4) Continuous Improvement 5) Alignment with International Guidelines 6) Impact**

Based on their work, the students recommended the following for a SFFI verification process:

1. Verify farms using a tiered-system (participant, bronze, silver, gold)
2. Determine audit frequency using a risk-based approach
3. Use a combination of first-, second-, and third-party audits
4. Allow for group verification
5. Use a representative approach to sampling, coupled with risk-based groups
6. Treat minor, major, and critical non-conformities differently, with a unique corrective action plan for each
7. Follow best practices for auditor competency from ISEAL Alliance Assurance Code and GSCP Auditing Competence Guidelines

This work was presented to the working group as a learning opportunity and for future discussion; however, no decisions have been made and this will likely be a topic for consideration moving forward.

4.2.4 Communication Work

Various communication and Knowledge Transfer activities have been completed as part of this project. These include various presentations at workshops and events, hosting two workshops and an open house, the continued development and maintenance of a website (www.sustainablefarms.ca), twitter account (@SustainableFarmFood), info-sheets on other agri-food initiatives, and infographics describing the project and its objectives. The website has shared resources, presentations, webinars, info about SFFI, and contains an FAQ page. The Twitter account has grown to over 500 followers in the past two years and continues to engage users across the value chain.

5.0 Next Steps: Moving from Framework to Implementation

5.1 Funding

SFFI will work towards securing funding from external sources to continue the momentum towards achieving a whole farm, whole value chain approach to sustainability that will minimize the burden on farmers as while also aligning with international agri-food value chain systems and sustainability requirements. We expect it will cost \$3.5 – \$4.5 million over a five-year period to develop and implement a national agri-food sustainability platform. These costs will likely include:

- Administration costs to manage the organization
- Secretariat services for management of executive and technical committees
- IT development and maintenance of the platform
- Communication and knowledge sharing
- Relationship management with stakeholders and international sustainability standards and tools

Additionally, work already under way will continue including the proof-of-concept pilot project which will conclude in February 2018.

5.2 SFFI Structure

Decisions regarding governance and membership are still required in order to make SFFI self-sufficient and sustainable in the future. It will be important to address equivalency across the value chain and ensure equal representation. Key questions that must be addressed include the definition of membership, how voting will happen and what this process will look like, how 'vetoes' will work, which potential organizations could host/hold SFFI, and how the chair would be elected. Considerations about verification and auditing will also need to be discussed and resolved. As well, the name SFFI will need to be further investigated. Another potential name that has been brainstormed by the working group is the 'Canadian Agricultural Sustainability Initiative (CASI)'.

5.3 Proposed Governance and Membership Structure

Through extensive stakeholder consultation, it was determined that an initiative of this scope and context requires a national not-for-profit organization to govern its implementation. The structure of SFFI will be developed as a 'made in Canada' sustainability platform. In order to achieve this goal, we have reviewed key concepts and best practices from organizations such as Field to Market (U.S.) and Grow Green (Ireland). Membership should be representative of the value chain and could elect a board of directors. We believe it will be the role of the national organization to establish governance and membership, however, some general suggestions are provided below.

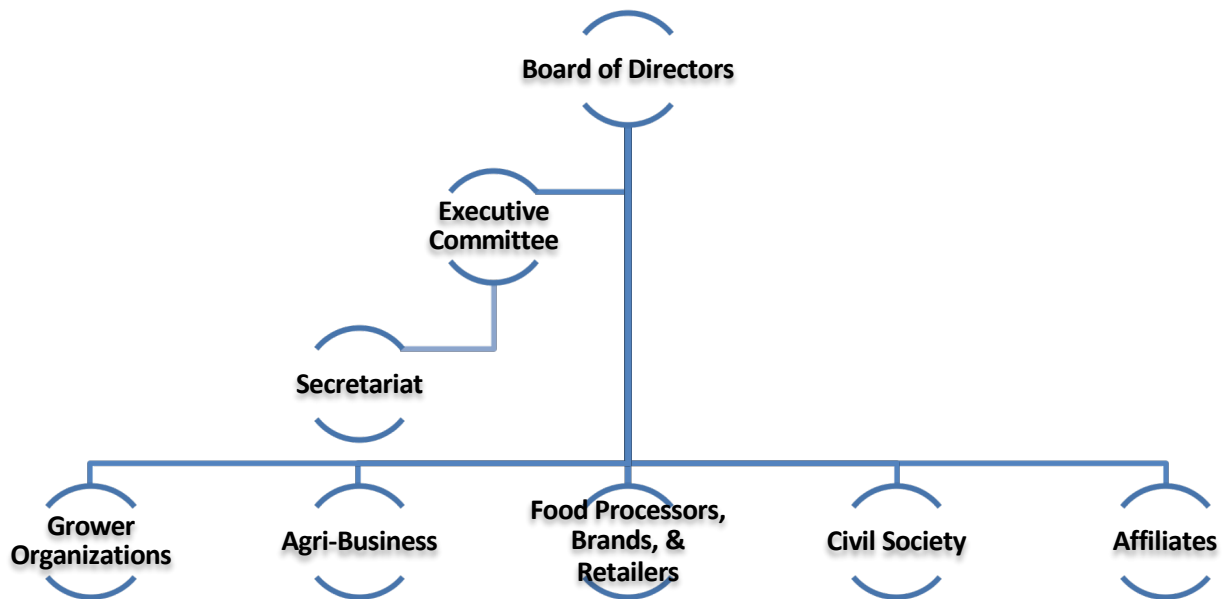


Figure 3. Proposed governance structure of the SFFI platform.

5.3.1 Membership Across the Value Chain

The board could consist of twelve directors elected from active members in good standing within each of the four categories:

Name of group	Who the group represents	Number of voting members
Farm organizations	General farm organizations and commodity-specific	3
Agri-business	Input companies, cooperatives, and grain handlers	3
Food Processors, Brands & Retailers	Buyers of agricultural products	3
Civil Society	NGO's and Trusts	3
Affiliates	Research, academia, government policy makers, and extension	Non-voting

5.3.2 Technical Committees

The board may establish technical or standing committees to oversee program aspects and make formal recommendations. Committees can include members as well as outside subject matter experts. Some examples may include verification and metrics, education and outreach, farmer awards and recognition.

6.0 Conclusion

SFFI is a collaborative working group, which includes Ontario's farm organizations, food/beverage processors, academia, and non-government organizations. The goal of SFFI was to develop a framework or platform that would facilitate communication and reporting across various commodity-specific programs to create a whole-farm, whole-value chain approach based on a common set of practices, allowing for sustainability actions implemented on farms to be recognized and transparent throughout the value chain.

Through stakeholder interviews and a workshop, a farm sector webinar, a food sector workshop, a benchmarking exercise with an international standard, a proof-of-concept project, and a verification case study, SFFI has achieved its objectives, and gained valuable insight as the agri-food sector moves forward in the realm of sustainability. Interviews, workshops and webinars confirmed that there is a need for ways to support members of the value chain as they take opportunities to make their operations more sustainable. SFFI work also revealed the nuances of capturing sustainability efforts; how sustainability is defined and the breadth of its scope will affect how well requirements for documentation can be streamlined. As the proof-of-concept project within the dairy goat sector moves forward, it will provide lessons on how existing programs can be integrated within the SFFI approach.

Moving forward, SFFI will work towards securing funding from external sources to continue the momentum it has generated. Decisions regarding governance and membership of SFFI are still required as the initiative continues to develop. Ultimately, SFFI has generated a depth of information on the practicalities of capturing sustainability efforts. This information and the framework that SFFI has created will serve as the foundation as the agri-food sector moves forward into a world where the documentation of sustainability and the mitigation and management of risk are a necessity. Sustainability is the future for the agri-food sector, and with SFFI, the future is now.

7.0 Appendices

Appendix A: Deloitte Gap Analysis

Deloitte.

Environmental Farm Plan and Growing your Farm Profits Gap Analysis

January 2016



See summary report [here](#).

Appendix B: Activities Completed

The table below contains a high-level summary of the completed activities for the SFFI project from December 2015 to October 2017. A summary table is below and the activities are further described throughout the section.

Activities		Planned Outcomes	'Where we are Now'
Activity #1	Engage a consulting firm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gap analysis report (excel) and presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Deloitte Study was completed (see Appendix A)
Activity #2	Formation of Advisory Cmt + Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monthly advisory committee meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering committee and working group was established early in the project - The working group met on a monthly basis
Activity #3	Recruit Project Mgr + Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Mgr. to deliver two modules & blueprint for launching SFFI including delivery methods and roles of delivery organizations - Development of wireframe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Synthesis Agri-Food Network (Bronwynne Wilton and Rob Hannam) and Orion (David Smith) were engaged to manage the overall project and to conduct the stakeholder engagement process - A concept model of the wireframe was developed through this process (section 3.5.1)
Activity #4	SFFI Modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum of two modules developed to demonstrate how two existing programs can be integrated into SFFI - Two facilitated workshops 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The development of modules evolved throughout the course of the project - OMAFRA agreed to use their resources to investigate a climate change module

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We leveraged additional funding to investigate a commodity-specific module/pilot for an emerging sector that would benefit from a tailored approach to training and planning in sustainability (section 4.2) - Two facilitated workshops were held, one in the fall of 2016 and one in early summer 2017 (section 4.1)
Activity #5	Administration & Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports submitted to AAC on time - Expenses tracked and reported - Minutes maintained for each advisory committee meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reports have been submitted, expenses tracked, and minutes of all meetings have been recorded

Appendix C: Stakeholder Consultation Contact List

Canadian Based Companies
A&W
Campbell's
Cargill
Federated Coop
General Mills
Loblaws
Maple Leaf
McCain
McDonald's
Metro
Nestle
Sobeys
Tim Horton's
Unilever
Walmart Canada
Canadian Trade Associations
Food & Consumer Products of Canada
Retail Council of Canada (RCC)
Ontario Trade Associations
Food and Beverage Ontario
Ontario Dairy Council
Ontario Independent Meat Processors
Baking Association of Canada
Canadian Beverage Association
Canadian National Millers Association
Canadian Oilseed Processors Association
Ontario Craft Brewers
Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Processors Association
Wine Council of Ontario
International Sustainable Agriculture Initiatives
Agroknow GODAN
Canadian Sustainable Agriculture Initiatives
Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Crops (CRSC)
Canadian Roundtable on Sustainable Beef
National Farm Animal Care Council
Clean Farms
AgEco
Farms at Work
Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance

Caledon Countryside Alliance
Greenbelt Foundation
Greenhouse Water Management
CanadaGAP
Labour Issues Coordinating Committee (LICC)
MyPick – Verified Local Farmer
International Companies
Ahold
Asda
Carrefour
Danone
Delhaize
General Mills
Kellogg
Kraft-Heinz
Nestle
Pepsico
Tesco
Unilever
Walmart (US & global)
Canadian NGOs
BC SPCA
Ducks Unlimited
Sustain Ontario
The Nature Conservancy of Canada
World Wildlife Fund
Commodity Groups and Agriculture Organizations
Ag Energy Co-operative
Agri-Technology Commercialization Centre
Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AAFC)
ANL Labs (London)
Bean Growers of Ontario
Beef Farmers of Ontario
Bioindustrial Innovation Canada
Bio-Amber
Canadian Horticulture Council
Canadian Produce Marketing Association
Chicken Farmers of Ontario
Christian Farmers' Federation of Ontario
College of Business and Economics, University of Guelph
Conestoga Meat Packers
Dairy Farmers of Ontario
Dairy Farmers of Canada

Egg Farmers of Ontario
Farm and Food Care Ontario
Flowers Canada (Ontario)
Foreign Agriculture Resource Management Services (F.A.R.M.S.)
Ginseng Ontario
Grain Farmers of Ontario
Grape Growers of Ontario
Landscape Ontario
Maple Lodge Farms
Maple Leaf
Mushrooms Canada
Ontario Agri Business Association
Ontario Agriculture College, University of Guelph
Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc
Ontario Apple Growers
Ontario Beekeepers' Association
Ontario Broiler Hatching Egg and Chick Commission
Ontario Canola Growers' Association
Ontario Federation of Agriculture
Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers
Ontario Hatcheries Association
Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association
Ontario Pork
Ontario Potato Board
Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers
Ontario Produce Marketing Association
Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency
Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board
Organic Council of Ontario
Turkey Farmers of Ontario
Union des Cultivateurs-Franco-Ontariens
Veal Farmers of Ontario
VG Meats
Vineland Growers Co-op
Academia and Research
Livestock Research and Innovation Corporation
Vineland Research and Innovation Centre
University of Guelph
Brock University
Trent University
Ivey School of Business
Financial Community and Insurance / Other
Agricorp

Royal Bank
Farm Credit Canada
Meridian Credit Union
Libro Financial Group
The Sustainability Consortium
ITS / FSA Tool (SAI platform)

Appendix D: Stakeholder Consultation Interview Insights

Beginning with the farm sector stakeholder consultations, Bronwynne conducted over 26 engagements. Results from these discussions will be summarized into the following categories: Awareness and engagement of sustainability, Objectives and challenges, Engagement with recognized standards, Verification, and Data sharing.

Firstly, overall, a majority of farm sector stakeholders were aware of the term sustainability; however, there was significant variability in the meaning or definition of the term. Some contacts focused on one pillar, while others had an all-encompassing definition clearly defined for the organization. As well, there was significant range in the engagement with existing or emerging sustainability programs across the value chain.

Similarities in the variability between organizations and contacts were seen in regards to objectives and challenges related to engaging with sustainability. Objectives for engaging in sustainability can be summarized by the following themes: financial viability, “doing the right thing”, meeting market demands, meeting consumer demands, and being proactive before regulations or policies enforce change. Different organizations felt various pressure points to engage in sustainability including, animal welfare, farm labour codes, financial profitability, environmental regulations, and buyer demands. However, not all contacts felt these same pressures and some mentioned not feeling the need to meet these demands.

Challenges to sustainability were also variable depending on the commodity or organization size and capacity. Cost in creating or engaging with sustainability initiatives was commonly seen as a significant challenge. As well, it was mentioned that sustainability metrics or requirements are not always driven by science, but rather, by activist groups or consumer demands. This leads to frustration at the producer level. At the farm level, there is limited capacity to take on additional work, so it was frequently mentioned that the value to the farmer needs to be adequately addressed and identified. Specifically related to SFFI, some of the farm sector had concerns about the competitive nature of sustainability programs and would not want to contribute to that. As well, they mentioned that they would not want to create a system that would unfairly limit participation or create a market advantage for certain farmers/producers. And similar to our own group’s concerns, the farm sector echoed that they would not want to see a duplication of efforts and were, therefore, strongly supportive of an integrated approach so the farmer or producer would have one point of entry.

With regards to engagement with currently recognized standards, it seemed that smaller commodity groups were not as highly engaged, whereas larger commodity groups are much more actively engaged. For smaller groups, they were concerned that sustainability will be another barrier for producers who do not have a strong profit margin. There are multiple other farm audits, food safety, and other program that farmers must comply with such as CanadaGAP, HACCP, milk inspections, trade council programs, animal care codes, etc. which greatly impact producers time and sometimes impact their expenses as well. There were strong concerns from all groups that there will be overlap and duplication of efforts between already

necessary inspection programs and sustainability initiatives that will lead to further confusion and unfairly distributed expenses. This led to the notion of needing a unifying platform to streamline the sustainability process.

Responses from commodity groups regarding the need for verification in sustainability was surprisingly supportive. There were multiple comments that there simply has to be verification in order to be a trusted and meaningful initiative. There was recognition that times are changing and farmers will need to adapt. However, verification schemes still must make sense for the farmers and costs should be borne throughout the value chain, including consumers. A streamlined and integrated verification process is critical, in particular for farmers with multiple commodities. It was also mentioned that ideally, an effective verification scheme would also add value for the farmer, for example, extension advice or resources. There was no strong consensus on a specific verification scheme, but it should be noted that a combination of self-reporting, 2nd party and 3rd party audits, sample percentage and pass-fail elements could all be included.

And finally, the farm sector strongly supported the need for data sharing as, again, commodity groups recognized that times are changing and this is the reality of doing business. It would be crucial to get privacy and permissions correct from the start in order to facilitate participation and it is also important to note that data sharing would be at the aggregated level. Again, the notion of value for the farmer to encourage data sharing was mentioned frequently. Potential value-added components that will benefit farmers could be benchmarking reports, performance metrics, ideas for improvement, etc. There was recognition that data sharing will be perceived as a barrier to some producers as there is wide variability (mostly generational) in adoption of data sharing technologies. For very small commodity groups, where there are only a select number of farmers producing specialty products, there was a larger concern for confidentiality, as it would be easier to identify specific farms and producers.

Beginning with international companies, there is a strong focus on shifting to drive aggregate level performance improvement through data sharing. This will also help to drive transparency across the value chain to consumers. Currently, international companies are involved in some pre-competitive collaborations to drive improvement projects at scale, including improvements such as macro level impacts on soil, biodiversity, water, and GHGs. This is being achieved through farm level data and then aggregated based on commodity. Large international companies are focusing on reducing the overlap and redundancies through equivalencies and harmonization of national and international sustainability programs that currently exist. They are seeking actionable implementation and are working to standardize indicators, metrics, KPIs, and assessment questions. This is being done to create the equivalencies among various schemes and move toward simplification of assurance/verifications processes. There is still lots of work to be done internationally to equivocate existing initiatives and work to drive collaboration globally.

In regards to our initiative, international food companies are broadly quite supportive and are strongly encouraging us to build leverage points with key international initiatives (i.e. SAI Platform and The Sustainability Consortium). Overall, it is important to note that international

companies and those key initiatives are much further ahead than Canada is in this, and has very deep engagement and momentum.

Canadian food companies are beginning to focus on sustainability standards and initiatives, especially animal welfare. McDonald's is a very strong leader in the field of sustainability for Canada and is pushing their large suppliers such as Cargill, McCain and Coca-Cola to meet their demands. Other Canadian food companies are working towards this as well, and are broadly supportive of the SFFI concept. However, they are generally focused on their own value chain and the idea of an integrated sustainability program, such as SFFI, is much further ahead than they are currently working towards.

Finally, Canadian food processors have very strong market-focused priorities (i.e. sales, profits, quality, access) and have witnessed many sustainability programs come and go with little success. For example, GFSI still has not hit critical mass of deployment, despite long promised efficiencies. They are working to balance sustainable agriculture with other "triple bottom line" challenges. They were generally supportive of SFFI and had insightful questions about how SFFI avoids duplication. Overall, Canadian food processors are ready to engage further as the initiative develops further.

Appendix E: Stakeholder Workshop Summary

Below is the report written based on the success of the event and feedback throughout the day and after the event.

Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative – Stakeholder Workshop SUMMARY OF EVENT

Held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Mississauga on October 20th, the SFFI Stakeholder workshop was attended by 46 representatives from across the farm and food value chain as well as leaders in the sustainability field. Overall, the workshop was an interesting and interactive event. It is our pleasure to share with you the meeting proceedings. In addition to highlights from the day's presentations and discussions, you will find copies of the presentations delivered by the speakers. We thank you for your continued support in our initiative. The successful day would not have been possible without your participation.

Below you will find an executive summary of the day, the agenda of the workshop, and a summary of the key components from each section of the day. Full feedback reports from the post-event survey can be found in *Appendix D*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following are some overall “high-level” messages and take-away points regarding the workshop and feedback from participants.

- There is a need for further clarity on whether SFFI is a stand-alone platform or whether it will be more of a ‘collaborator of collaborations’
- There is considerable variability in commodity-group and producer ‘readiness’ for sustainability standards in both Ontario and Canada more broadly
- Sustainability programs must make sense for stakeholders across the value chain and we have an opportunity now to develop a whole farm, value chain approach – however, the window of opportunity is narrow as we see an increasing number of sustainability standards, codes, and platforms emerging throughout the global agri-food system
- A national approach to sustainability in the Canadian agri-food system is important however questions remain regarding how to accomplish this vision
- Lively discussion evolved around the topic of data capture and verification and the group was in agreement that for a successful sustainability initiative, data collection must be; Robust, Genuine, Verifiable, Classifiable, Measurable, Secure

AGENDA

Workshop Purpose: To build understanding of and recommendations for development of the Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative (SFFI) to provide an efficient and meaningful approach to sustainability.

Objectives:

1. To present an overview of the vision of the Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative, including an update on stakeholder consultations to date.
2. To develop a shared understanding of current sustainability initiatives and platforms in agri-food value chains.
3. Gather feedback and insights on challenges, opportunities and the “best approach” for Ontario agri-food that can be expanded/shared nationally.
4. To provide a networking opportunity for leaders across the value chain with an interest in sustainability.

9:00am	Registration - coffee and refreshments available	Megan Racey
9:30am	Welcome and overview of the day	Bronwynne Wilton
9:35am	Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative Overview	Rob Hannam
9:45am	Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative – Stakeholder Consultation Update	David Smith and Bronwynne Wilton
10:15am	Break – coffee and refreshments available	
10:30am	Perspectives across the Value Chain Panel #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan Kees, Global Director of Sustainability, Unilever • Brian Nash, Director of Sustainability, Ingredient • Q&A Discussion 	Moderated by David Smith
11:10am	Breakout Session #1 – Finding common ground for the best path forward.	Small group discussions
12:00am	Lunch	
1:00pm	Recap and Report back from Breakout Session #1	Bronwynne Wilton
1:15pm	Perspectives across the Value Chain Panel #2 – Tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mathieu Lamolle, International Trade Centre (via video) • Jean-Michel Couture, Dairy Farm Plus • Angela Pearson, Canadian Field Print Initiative • Cher Mereweather, Provision Coalition 	Moderated by Bronwynne Wilton
2:00pm	Breakout Session #2 – How could it work: building the functionality wish list.	Small groups discussion
2:45 pm	Summary of Breakout Session #2 and Group Discussion on Next Steps	Rob Hannam David Smith
3:15pm	Wrap up and closing remarks	Bronwynne Wilton
3:30pm	Adjourn and Safe Travels Home	

SUMMARY OF THE EVENT

A. Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative Overview and Stakeholder Consultations Update

Both of these presentations were well-received. **70%** of the post-workshop survey respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they had a better understanding of SFFI following the workshop. However, there still remains some confusion regarding whether SFFI is a 'new' program or platform or if it is simply an aggregator of existing programs. There were also questions regarding the level of urgency for different commodity groups to meet sustainability requirements. In some instances, the demand from the value chain is quite strong and the timelines are short, however, in other cases, producers are not seeing the pressure. This leads to the question of how SFFI will gather producer buy-in if there is not a market demand or another type of incentive for participation. In contrast, from the international food sector perspective, sustainability programs are the 'new normal' way of doing business and this will start to impact Canadian producers.

Key take-aways:

- There is a need for further clarity on whether SFFI is a stand-alone platform or whether it will be more of a 'collaborator of collaborations'
- There is considerable variability in commodity-group and producer 'readiness' for sustainability standards in both Ontario and Canada more broadly
- Sustainability programs must make sense for stakeholders across the value chain and we have an opportunity now to develop this whole farm, value chain approach – however, the window of opportunity is narrow as we see an increasing number of sustainability standards, codes, and platforms emerging throughout the global agri-food system

B. Perspectives Across the Value Chain #1

To provide the international perspective of sustainability across the value chain, both Jan Kees Vis, *Global Director Sustainable Sourcing Development at Unilever*, and Brian Nash, *Director of Sustainability at Ingredion*, presented on behalf of their companies. Their presentations provided insight on how their companies are striving for a more sustainable future through their goals, vision, programs, and partnerships. Their success was highlighted by the progress each company has had so far. Finally, they also provided insight on their opinions of SFFI and its potential success.

69% of post-workshop survey respondents agreed they had a better understanding of global and international sustainability

Both presentations can be found on the [SFFI website](#). Jan Kees Vis' presentation can be found [here](#) and Brian Nash's presentation can be found [here](#).

C. Breakout Session #1 – Finding common ground for the best path forward

Breakout session one was meant to initiate a discussion regarding how to begin and develop the SFFI. Questions to answer included; How can SFFI help the industry meet sustainability

requirements? How can the EFP and GYFP programs evolve and become the planet/profit pillars of SFFI? And is there value in pursuing equivalency between EFPP/GYFP and other standards (national, international, etc)? Overall, groups and participants agreed that an initiative like SFFI is needed, as long as it emphasizes all three pillars of sustainability (people, profit and planet). SFFI can help the industry meet sustainability requirements by providing broad collaboration for users at all levels of the value chain. The initiative is valuable and could build upon the EFP and GYFP to include all three pillars of sustainability in a more holistic, whole-farm and value chain approach. There are strengths already in the content of some initiatives that exist in Canada, as highlighted by the Deloitte Gap Analysis, which could be built upon. However, SFFI would need to ensure it meets the needs of both the market and the farmers. And, in order to get buy-in from producers, there was a strong consensus that there has to be value back to the farmer with the right motivators incorporated in to the platform design. The initiative would need to be relevant to each commodity group in each province, make sense to the producer and the group would need to be clear on what it is and why it is important. While there was agreement that the initiative would need to be national, it was not clear how this could be approached. If the initiative was national, it would not be a linear approach to get the whole value chain in line as there would need to be time for some parts to catch-up and meet the necessary requirements. It was agreed upon that the initiative would need to eventually be national and benchmarking would be valuable in order to compete and compare with international standards and programs.

A national approach to sustainability in the Canadian agri-food system is important however questions remain regarding how to accomplish this vision.

There were still concerns and questions regarding what SFFI is exactly (ie. Is it a benchmarking dashboard for all sustainability programs or is it replacing the sustainability programs from other groups?). As well, there were concerns already being discussed about who will pay for this initiative and the verification component. There was also talk about how to properly capture data and manage data with the right protocols and protection. The group saw priority in finding out exactly with our standards are, getting alignment across the value chain and commodity groups, and then working to fill the gaps.

D. Perspective Across the Value Chain #2 – Tools

The second panel was arranged in order to share current sustainability tools that are being used by various commodity groups in different parts of the value chain. Mathieu Lamolle, *Market Analyst and Standards Map / Trade for Sustainable Development, from the International Trades Centre* provided a [video](#) in which he explained the ITC Standards Map, how they benchmark sustainability standards all over the world, and he explained their sustainability tool, in collaboration with SAI platform, the FSA tool. Jean-Michel Couture, *Project Director at Groupe AGÉCO*, presented about [Dairy Farms Plus](#), a sustainability platform tool developed by the Dairy Farmers of Canada. Dairy Farms Plus is an innovative and interactive online tool developed to support Canadian dairy farmers in meeting their sustainability goals across the farm. Angela Pearson, from *Serecon*, presented about the Canadian Field Print Initiative, an easy-to-use, farm-level measurement tool that allows growers to confidentially assess their

environmental performance, using their own field data. Her presentation can be found [here](#). Finally, Cher Mereweather, *Executive Director at Provision Coalition*, presented about the development of their online sustainability portal for food manufacturing companies. Her [presentation](#) also touched upon the opportunities and challenges in developing such a tool.

E. Breakout Session #2 – How could it work: building the functionality wish list

Breakout session 2 focused on three categories (data capture, verification and reporting) and the features the SFFI must-have, should have and/or would be nice to have, in each of the categories. However, in reality, this breakout session varied in topic more and participants had less time to develop conversations and discuss ideas due to time constraints of the day. When the groups were brought together, some time was spent recapping the SFFI goal that it is not a new standard and it is not competing with other initiatives or standards. As well, there was a lot of discussion regarding the logistics of data collection, data access/privacy and protection, who the data is for, who the initiative is for, data types, acquiring “good”, reliable data we can trust, and willingness to share data.

Verification was also a topic of discussion as participants wondered about the many factors related to practical, feasible and representative verification schemes. Verification, potentially by a 3rd party audit, is felt to be necessary in order for an initiative like this to be trusted, for data to be verified, and help farmers regain and re-establish trust as well as minimize risk. The market pressures aren't necessarily that strong for all commodity groups, which is why participants felt so strong in making sure the farmers see the value and feel empowered. As well, engaged farmers who understand their benefits will be more willing to volunteer to share their data. There was a strong sense that information needs to be provided back to the producer/farmer and education could be a key component, across the value chain, to making this type of sustainability initiative successful.

Key principles for data collection for a successful sustainability initiative:

- ✓ Robust
- ✓ Genuine
- ✓ Verifiable
- ✓ Classifiable
- ✓ Measurable
- ✓ Secure

F. Summary and Next Steps

Key challenges identified:

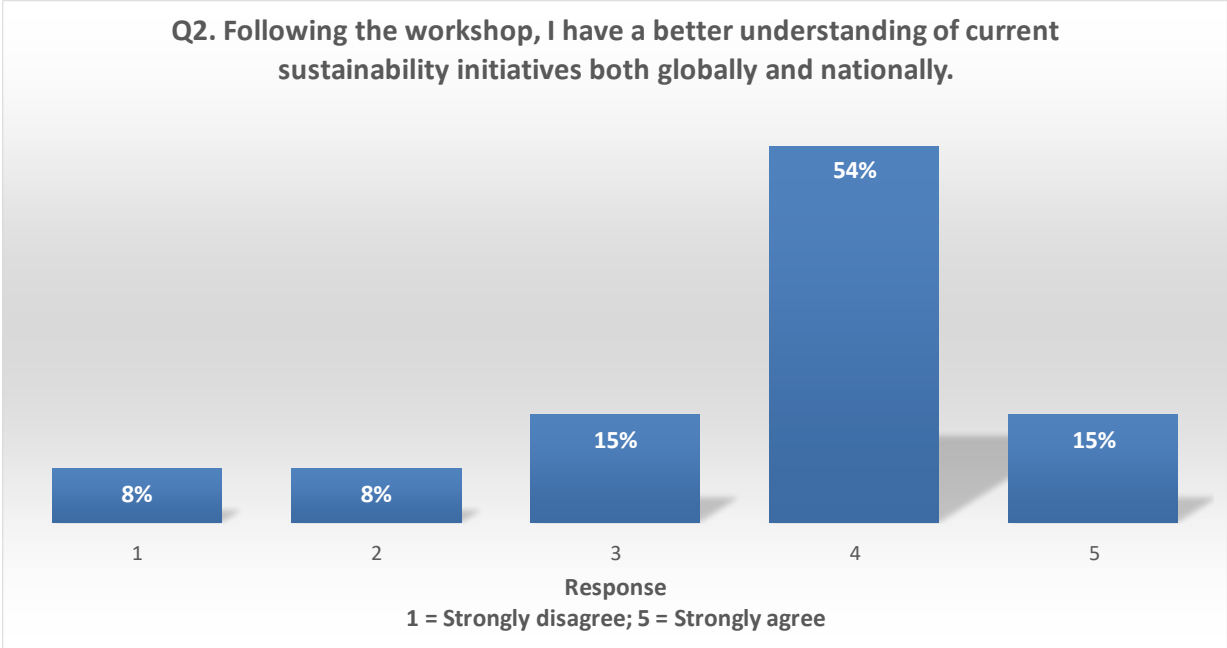
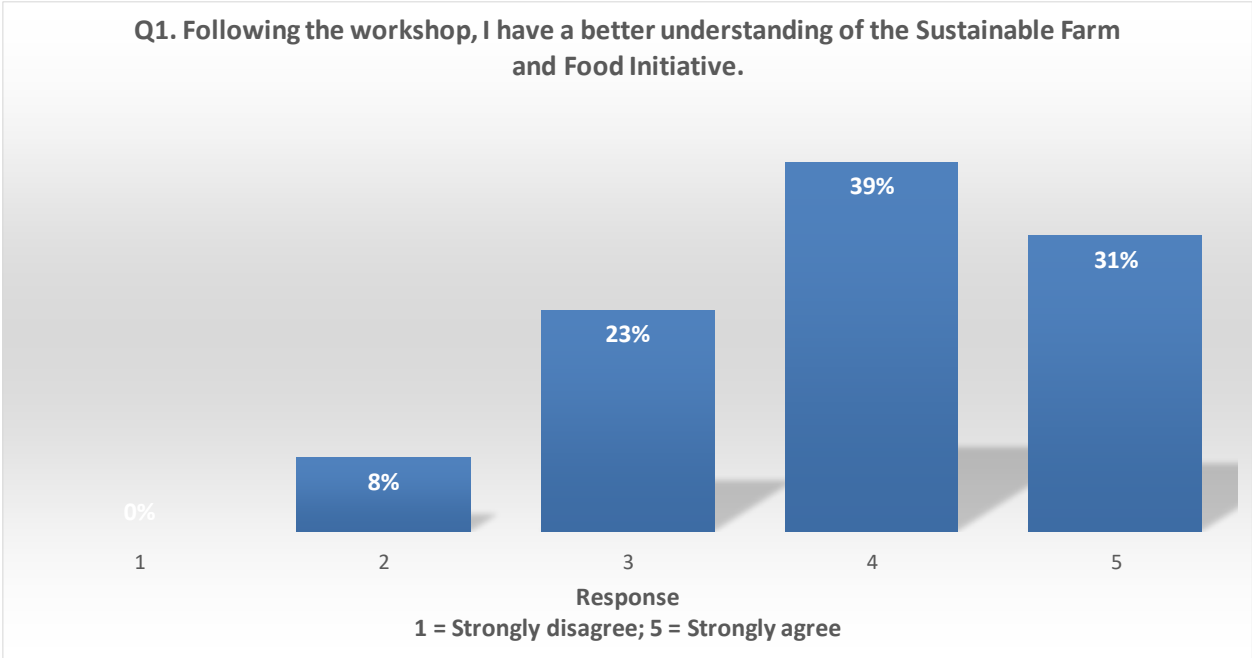
- ✓ What will the end result actually look like and what type of “tool” are we building?
- ✓ How will this initiative be funded?
- ✓ What would verification look like and who would manage this aspect?
- ✓ How would data be captured and managed appropriately?
- ✓ Who will provide the governance structure and oversight for this kind of initiative?
- ✓ How can the tension between a national approach and an Ontario approach be managed?
- ✓ Who is this initiative for? Who are the ultimate consumers?
- ✓ What are the potential benefits to consumers of this initiative?

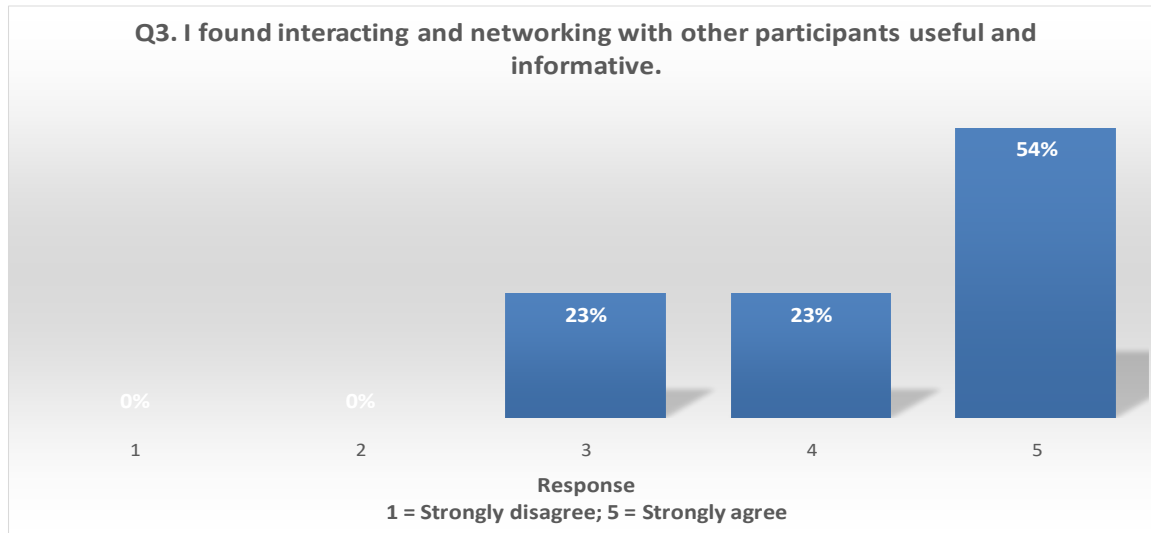
Key opportunities identified:

- ✓ An initiative like SFFI can help the industry meet value chain sustainability requirements
- ✓ The emphasis on a whole farm approach is positive
- ✓ The collaboration across the value chain is positive
- ✓ EFP and GYFP could be important foundational pieces for SFFI

Appendix F: Stakeholder Workshop Post-event Survey Responses

N = 13 survey respondents





Q4. Please provide any additional comments or feedback you may have about the workshop.

Summary of Responses

- Larger tables or smaller breakout groups to facilitate better discussion and networking
- Remains some confusion about the value and purpose of SFFI
- Model must incorporate all 3 pillars and work at all levels
- Valuable, practical and essential initiative
- Honesty and transparency are necessary
- Tight agenda made it difficult to clearly understand issues at stake
- Good mix of industry and producers

Q5. Please provide any additional comments or feedback you may have about the SFFI.

Summary of Responses

- Problem in adoption – producers need to see value and SFFI has yet to demonstrate this
- Great presenters, knowledgeable and engaged participants, good national and international perspectives
- Initiative to help with verification, which will build trust and help re-establish place in value chain
- Poor choice of venue and timing (middle of harvest) for producers – works better for industry
- Difference between necessary and desired standards needs to be set to reduce redundancy
- Need to be proactive, as this initiative is!
- Large food production capacity does not equate to superior position to set standards
- Continue collaboration with existing/developing platforms
- Message and purpose of SFFI still unclear and how it fits within CAN sustainability landscape
- Is there potential for SFFI and CRSC work together?

Appendix G: Open House Poster

Are you interested in sustainability across the agri-food value chain?
If so, we invite you to attend:

SUSTAINABLE FARM & FOOD initiative Open House & Webinar



Project Description: The Sustainable Farm and Food Initiative (SFFI) is intended to be a whole farm, whole value chain approach to meeting the increasing demands for demonstration of on-farm sustainability practices. SFFI will provide the on-line platform that will help the industry meet the need for a one-stop approach to sustainability. This open house and webinar will also feature guest speaker, Nick Betts, from Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform, to provide an overview of the SAI Platform and an introduction to the global sustainable agriculture context.

***For more information about the project, visit:** www.sustainablefarms.ca

Who should attend?

Ag associates, initiatives & organizations
Commodity groups
NGOs
Academic & Researchers
Government staff

Why should you attend?

- Learn about SFFI progress / updates
- Share your ideas about the future of the project
- Network with others interested in sustainability across the farm sector

April 19th, 2017

Quality Hotel & Suites

580 BRUIN BLVD

WOODSTOCK, ON | N4V 1E5

Agenda:

2pm Open House
2:30pm Presentation & Webinar by Bronwynne Wilton
(Registration: <http://bit.ly/2nBF1YQ>)
3pm Q&A
4:30pm Presentation by Bronwynne Wilton
5pm Q&A

Contact:

(519) 822-7272
Bronwynne Wilton | bronwynne.wilton@synthesis-network.com
Megan Racey | megan.racey@synthesis-network.com

Appendix H: SFFI Infographics



**SUSTAINABLE
FARM & FOOD
initiative**

Who does it help & how?

Farmers

- One data collection system
- Trusted data manager / system administrator
- Seamless alignment with customer requirements
- Opportunities for learning & continuous improvement



Value Chain



- One trusted & robust pre-competitive platform for Canadian agri-food sector
- Seamless alignment with requirements of other value chain stakeholders

Government

- Sustainability data management system that supports export requirements, protects market share, builds public trust
- Streamlined approach that optimizes government funding



Civil Society



- Ability to engage with farm & food sector to meet sustainability goals across the three pillars (social, environment, economic)

www.sustainablefarms.ca



SUSTAINABLE FARM & FOOD initiative



Project Description:

The **Sustainable Farm & Food Initiative (SFFI)** is intended to be a whole farm, whole value chain approach to meeting the increasing demands for demonstration of on-farm sustainability practices. SFFI will provide the on-line platform that will help the industry meet the need for a one-stop approach to sustainability.

As the needs of a growing population for food, fibre, & fuel continue to put pressure on a shrinking agricultural land base, farmers will need to adapt, improve, & verify their management practices. Sustainable agricultural practices can help alleviate this pressure & is of critical importance to the farm and food sector in Ontario. The three most accepted pillars that encompass sustainable agriculture are economic, social, & environment.

Simultaneously, there is increasing pressure across the value chain for demonstration of sustainable production practices. This demand for evidence of sustainability has resulted in the development & implementation of a multitude of commodity-specific standards, programs, & tools, which have potential to create confusion, redundancy, & increased costs across the sector.

Therefore, need exists for a simplified & streamlined approach that will help farmers meet the market demands for evidence of sustainable production methods as well as to drive continuous improvement across the sector.

To learn more , please visit:

www.sustainablefarms.ca

@sustainfarmfood 

To find out how you can support
this initiative, contact:

(519) 822-7272

Bronwynne Wilton

bronwynne.wilton@synthesis-network.com

Megan Racey

megan.racey@synthesis-network.com

SUSTAINABLE FARM & FOOD initiative



Who's been contacted?

FARM SECTOR	FOOD SECTOR
<p>55 Companies / Associations / Organizations</p>	<p>38 Companies</p>
<p>26 Engagements</p>	<p>25 Engagements</p>

What we know so far...

- General awareness of the term 'sustainability' but significant variability of the meaning
- Broad range in engagement - from none to advanced
- National & international 'sustainability' landscape is complex & evolving rapidly
- Farmers will potentially be facing a wide range of sustainability requests
- Certain commodity groups are pressing forward with their own strategies
- Need for one unifying platform to simplify & streamline the 'sustainability process'
- Strong support for a cohesive national, whole farm, whole value chain solution

Challenges → Opportunities

Overlap & duplication of efforts

Some commodities do not have capacity to develop their own approach

Potential for confusion in the marketplace

Concerns about competitive nature of sustainability programs

Additional costs for farmers

Develop a collaborative, pre-competitive approach

Develop a whole farm, whole value chain approach that meets the needs of all commodity groups

Coordinate efforts across the sector

Focus on pre-competitive platform

Leverage existing strengths to develop solutions that work for everyone

Whole value chain approach open the potential for sharing costs across the supply chain

www.sustainablefarms.ca

Appendix I: Food Sector Workshop Summary

SFFI Food Sector Workshop – Mississauga, June 28, 2017

1. Executive Summary

- 23 significant food sector companies participated, spanning processing, manufacturing, retail, and restaurants/foodservice; 6 other, related organizations also attended
- 24 attendees completed the post-meeting survey, which found:
 - 95% of them find SFFI to be a strong & relevant vision, & seek it to launch in 2-5 years
 - Most attendees felt they understand the SFFI business case, vision, and how it protects and maintains sustainable ag standards and codes (it itself is not a standard)
 - There is robust desire to further support SFFI through participants discussing it with their respective trade associations and sustainable ag initiatives and being on a SFFI advisory committee
 - Significant but lesser willingness to pilot SFFI, be on a working group or governance committee
- Lots of good Q&A showed good engagement by attendees and helped to clarify the vision for SFFI – what it intends to do and what may be out of scope

2. Attendees – 38 representing significant companies spanning the food sector:

Retailers – Loblaws, Sobeys, Walmart, Longo's. Regrets: Metro, Costco, Federated Coop

Restaurants & Foodservice - A&W, Aramark, Cara (Swiss Chalet, Harveys, Milestones, Kelsey's, Casey's, East Side Mario's), McDonald's, Gordon Foodservice. Regrets: Restaurant Brands International (Tim Horton's, Burger King, Popeye's)

Manufacturers –Grupo Bimbo (Canada Bread), Maple Leaf, McCain, Nestle-Purina, Weston, Danone, Burnbrae, Myers Natural Foods (US). Regrets: Bonduelle, General Mills

Processors – Cargill, Bunge, Ingredion, ADM, Koornneef Produce

Other – OMAFRA, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, GS1, Packaging Association of Canada, Provision Coalition, University of Guelph. Regrets: Food & Beverage Ontario, Canadian Produce Marketing Association.

3. Agenda Synopsis (see detailed version on final page)

SFFI Overview – David Smith, Orion GBSC (project consultant co-manager) presented the food sector “business case” for SFFI; its positioning “protecting and maintaining” relevant standards & codes while driving efficiencies in delivery of transparency / improvement oriented system to marketplace; and some guidance on what the SFFI vision could look like and examples of implementation; plus some examples of what funding model and governance model could look like.

Highlighting the Risk: Multiple Standards and Assessment / Web Tools – GroupeAgeco presented and referenced the large and growing number of overlapping Canadian sustainable

agriculture initiatives, which reinforced the business case presented by David; Dairy Farms Plus screen shots were shown as an example of farm level tool (but not built as a supply chain tool)

Food Sector Panel – short presentations from McCain (Potato Sustainability Index), McDonald’s, Loblaw’s (with Provision) – each talked about their sustainable ag approach, and how SFFI could be leverageable for them.

4. Key Findings (based on feedback from 24 post-meeting completed surveys)

- There was near unanimous consensus, 95%, that SFFI is a good direction and relevant to participating companies sourcing needs and a desire for it to launch within 2-5 years
- Overall there seemed to be an understanding of what the SFFI vision is all about: based on survey results, the understanding of (a) the business case, (b) the vision, and (c) how SFFI protects & maintains other standards, codes – all scored average of about 3.75 on a 5 point scale, and about 66% of respondents gave each of those 3 aspects (a, b, c) a 4 or 5 rating
- It is a big, broad vision with many aspects new to many participants, so lots of questions and wish-lists that this can be a “silver bullet” to solve all agri-food public trust challenges (the danger of being a “Swiss Army Knife” trying to do everything and getting bogged down as a result) – see section #4 below for key questions discussed
- As they say, “the devil is in the details” as SFFI evolves
- The written survey provided specific on interest levels in SFFI engagement going forward, which can be built upon once funding is secured for the next phase of the project
 - A robust set of attendees expressed interest in: (a) discussing SFFI with their respective trade associations and sustainable agriculture initiatives, and (b) participating in SFFI’s advisory committees
 - A smaller set of attendees expressed interest in: (a) doing a SFFI pilot; (b) participating in SFFI working group; and (c) participating in SFFI governance committees
 - Most participants are already over-committed to industry committees, so time availability will be tight, and will need to be efficiently used when asked
 - When appropriate (i.e. after funding secured), the best next step, based on discussion, may be to invite food sector to a real working session of 1 to 1.5 days where there can be deep dives into exploring many of the issues/details, without asking for participants to commit to an ongoing role

5. Key Discussion Points / Needs for Clarification

Full Supply Chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment made that this focuses on farm level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ David mentioned that is where most key issues are, and that SFFI would aggregate data through the supply chain so that end buyers would get data from their suppliers, and on down to farm • Some interest in capturing data on key issues at processing / manufacturing level
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cher talked to Provision’s set of tools and Loblaws plan to leverage them ● At some future meeting, Provision’s tools should be introduced as part of the total potential solution for large end buyers, along with any other relevant solutions (i.e. EcoVadis, etc.) for discussion on approaches and what SFFI takes on
Perception of SFFI – A Standard? Adding Complexity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Despite articulating SFFI as not a new standard, and building from exiting programs like EFP and livestock animal welfare codes of practice, there seems to still be some confusion about this ● Refining key messages (perhaps referring to it as a “platform”), consistency of message, and further conversations should help clarity ● Part of the challenge may be that SFFI is a big new vision that isn’t easy to “get” if not exposed to some relevant initiatives, so it can be harder to understand and harder to realize the consequences of pursuing the status quo (i.e. many overlapping initiatives) without SFFI
“Local”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As expected, for some companies this is a large part of their “sustainable ag” approach today, so seeing some aspect of SFFI on that would help ● It would seem to be relatively easy to spec into SFFI some data capture to enable tracking and reporting which province/% sources come from
Consumer Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There seemed to be fairly wide views for a “wish” that SFFI somehow take on a public communications role, to help address growing public trust issues (someone mentioned a product rating system like GoodGuide, and others suggested some things that sound like what Canadian Centre for Food Integrity and other aim to do) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ David referenced thinking about SFFI as like GRI – a template that can be used to help <u>enable</u> effective, credible public communications, but that the content (i.e. data and “stories”) come from the participants (producers and buyers); He also noted that SFFI does not own the data, so it would be up to data owners to decide how to use ● This is a significant potential risk for SFFI, trying to be the “Swiss Army Knife” solving all issues and needs – risking diverting it from its focus, increasing its costs, and creating more duplication with others (when it is trying to reduce it) ● Further discussion and education will be necessary, including looking at other relevant examples of non-consumer facing initiatives like GFSI, SAI Platform, Field to Market, Global Social Compliance Program
Food Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Was asked whether SFFI addresses food waste? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ David referenced most Canadian food waste happens from processor level to consumers, and that Provision’s work on food waste could be leveraged, rather than incorporating in SFFI

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioner later agreed that the SFFI vision is important and should not be encumbered with a lot of extraneous aspects like food waste and consumer communications
Pre-competitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to be sure to differentiate <u>between</u> (a) pre-competitive systems like SFFI’s vision (and like GS1, GFSI, etc.) which enable companies to efficiently make competitive progress on issues, and (b) pre-competitive issues based on farming practices like antibiotics, pesticides, GMOs – these are likely to remain as competitive issues in the foreseeable future, even if ideally there could be senior executive discussions to think of them as somewhat like food safety, which has become a pre-competitive issue
Strategic Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David referenced the need to create partnerships for collaborative visions with initiatives like NEFP, CRSC, CRSB, SAI Platform, and that those in attendance involved in those initiatives could talk-up the need for collaboration with SFFI • The survey also asked if participants would talk-up SFFI with their respective trade associations, such as RCC, FCPC, Restaurants Canada • It was noted by some discussion that farm sector associations, especially national ones like Chicken Farmers of Canada, Dairy Farmers of Canada, Canadian Pork Council, also need to be partners
“If you build it they will come”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David shared his view that creating SFFI could help accelerate adoption of sustainable sourcing among Canadian food sector companies • Several attendees confirmed this view, saying it would help significantly with discussions with senior Canadian management
Launch Sequencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments made and seemed to be fairly widely agreed that SFFI could not launch as a “big bang” covering all ag sectors and geographies at once • As always, there are early adopters who take on new initiatives in a pilot and then sequential way, and SFFI is likely to do so – i.e. some food sector companies deciding to require SFFI in some key commodity supply chains; as well, some ag sector groups may see SFFI as an efficient way to move forward on their approaches to their supply chains, so could lead in launching SFFI too



Canadian Sustainable Farm & Food Initiative
Food Sector Workshop, June 28th 1-4pm
Hilton Garden Inn, 1870 Matheson Blvd., Mississauga, ON

Agenda

Vision: An efficient, pre-competitive, collaborative Canadian sustainable agriculture transparency, assessment, and assurance solution for Canadian food sector companies.

Meeting Objectives:

1. To proactively identify the business case: threats & opportunities. Learning from food safety / GFSI.
2. To achieve clear understanding of the SFFI vision and how it delivers the solution sought.
3. To articulate how SFFI protects and maintains other sustainable agriculture initiatives, while driving efficiency in value chain implementation.
4. To seek food sector feedback on SFFI and gauge level of encouragement.

<p>Introduction & Workshop Objectives, SFFI Overview – David Smith, Orion GBSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business case: Key issues / public trust; risks of redundancy, costs • <u>Not</u> a new standard: Driving improvements through proactive transparency • Model: efficient farm level assessment & assurance: collaborative, pre-competitive • Benchmarking, equivalency, & protecting/maintaining integrity of sustainable ag initiatives • Questions & Discussion 	<p align="right">1:00 – 2:00pm</p>
<p>Activation Insights: Web-based Canadian Sustainable Agriculture Tools – Jean-Michel Couture, GroupeAgeco</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling a variety of emerging Canadian sustainable agriculture online solutions – viewing the risk of redundancies • Articulating how the SFFI vision weaves together a food sector solution 	<p align="right">2:00-2:30pm</p>
<p>Food Sector Company Perspectives: Canadian sustainable agriculture and view to leveraging SFFI while protecting & maintaining integrity of standards, codes, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retailer: Loblaws, Jennifer Lambert + Provision Coalition, Cher Mereweather • Restaurant: McDonald’s, Jeff Fitzpatrick-Stilwell + CRSC / CRSB • Manufacturer: McCain, Eric Ritchie + Potato Sustainability Initiative 	<p align="right">2:30 – 3:30pm</p>
<p>Group Discussion – David Smith, Orion GBSC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback / input • Next steps for SFFI 	<p align="right">3:30 – 4:00pm</p>