

RSB – ROUNDTABLE ON SUSTAINABLE BIOMATERIALS
Certification Protocol for SAI Gold

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Approved for Certification

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A. Introduction

The Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform is a global initiative of the food industry for sustainable agriculture. In 2002, Nestlé, Unilever and Danone created the SAI Platform, a non-profit organization to facilitate sharing of knowledge and best practices to support the development and implementation of sustainable agriculture practices involving stakeholders throughout the food value chain. Today, the SAI Platform counts more than 90 members.

SAI Platform develops tools and guidance to support global and local sustainable sourcing and agriculture practices. Using its Principles and Practices as a starting point, SAI Platform created and tested the Farm Sustainability Assessment (FSA). FSA covers all crops produced for food and beverage agricultural ingredients and consists of around 100 questions based on farming practices recognized by the food and drink industry plus a scoring mechanism that can be used for on-farm assessments. FSA scores sustainable agriculture on 3 performance levels:

- **Bronze** refers to a minimum 100% coverage of “essential” and 75% “basic” questions
- **Silver** refers to a minimum 100% coverage of “essential”, 80% “basic” and 50% “advanced” questions
- **Gold** refers to a minimum 100% coverage of “essential”, 100% “basic” and 75% “advanced” questions

Based on an independent benchmark, SAI Platform recognizes that operators certified against the RSB standard reach automatically the “Silver” status.

B. The aim of this document

This document sets out the conditions operators shall meet for complying with the “Gold” Level of the FSA. This document shall also serve as basis for auditors to verify compliance of operators who wish to make an additional “SAI Gold” Claim.

C. What this guidance covers (Scope)

This guidance document is valid worldwide and sets out requirements for biomass producers.

D. Note on using this standard

The requirements in part E of this document are considered to be normative. This protocol shall only be applied in addition to a regular RSB certification.

E. Requirements for Biomass Producers

Level of Compliance: Biomass producers shall meet 100% of the Basic-Level Criteria and three of the Advanced-Level Criteria as listed below:

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
FSA4	The operator shall plan her/his activities to support the long-term economic viability of the farm	Small-scale farmers in lower income countries should at least be able to explain verbally how their activities contribute to the long-term economic viability of their farm.	Long-term economic viability should also take into account social and environmental aspects.	Basic	
FSA6	The operator shall have a business plan to optimize the long-term economic viability of the farm	Small-scale farmers in lower income countries should at least be able to explain their plan verbally. An alternative can be a written community plan that addresses yield, income, etc.	<p>A business plan can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An approach to optimize sustainable yields and input efficiency (efficient use of chemicals, soil optimization, optimal irrigation management, crop rotation, etc.). - A risk mitigation strategy to survive shocks such as environmental shocks (e.g. drought), social shocks (e.g. riots) and economic shocks (e.g. price fluctuations). - Market requirements. <p>A business plan is applicable to a single farm or a group of farms under one management.</p>	Advanced	

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
FSA5	If the operator has only one source of income, the operator shall have considered the risks to come to an informed decision.		Having more than one source of income may increase the economic viability of the farm. This may include multiple crops, different customers and non-farming activities.	Advanced	
FSA7	The operator shall keep records of yields, costs, income and profitability of the farm.		These records are important to monitor the economic viability of the farm and provide input to define management plans.	Basic	
FSA11	The operator shall maintain equipment and machinery to ensure their proper, efficient functioning.	This question can only be answered with 'not applicable' if the operator does not use equipment or machinery on the farm.		Basic	
FSA12	The operator shall use crop rotation where applicable.	This may not be applicable for trees and perennials.	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crop rotation (annual or other intervals); this may include cover crops and grazing. - Rotation of cultivation and fallow ground. - Multiple plots with rotational cultivation. <p>Rotation benefits productivity and biodiversity and provides potential diversified income sources.</p>	Basic	
FSA14	The operator shall ensure that new planting material and/or grafting material is of high quality and from trustworthy sources.		This includes certified material or material that can be traced back to its propagation source. This can be from reputable seed producers, neighbors, and cooperatives.	Basic	

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
FSA17	The operator shall take into account the optimum plant spacing for the operator's local situation.		<p>The choice of plant spacing can take into account any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimize the use of plant protection inputs and fertilizer leakage - Optimize yield per hectare - Optimize crop quality and homogeneity - Facilitate harvest <p>Intercropping (planting two or more crops in proximity) and companion planting could be considered to improve and stabilize farm income and benefit biodiversity.</p>	Advanced	
FSA18	The operator shall keep records of planting and/or grafting material used.	These records include: 1. Variety name, variety vendor (variety source and batch number if applicable). 2. Location, date of application, and quantity used per area.		Basic	
FSA25	The operator shall ensure that organic and inorganic fertilizers are of high quality and from trustworthy sources.	This question can only be answered with 'not applicable' if the operator does not use fertilizer on the farm.	<p>Quality relates to issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chemical composition - Concentration - Availability of application manual / directions 	Basic	
FSA26	The operator shall prevent using untreated sludge and untreated sewage sludge on the field.		This does not refer to animal manure.	Basic	

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
FSA36	The operator shall minimize side effects of crop protection product use by using selective pesticides (rather than broad spectrum), targeted application and/or seed dressing.		Selective' means effective for the specific pest, but not damaging or lethal to a much wider range of organisms (which would be 'broad spectrum'). 'Targeted application' means to aim specifically at the pest at the right time (instead of indiscriminate spraying for instance). 'Seed dressing' is the application of a protective chemical coating to the seeds.	Advanced	
FSA37	The operator shall prevent pest resistance by varying the type of chemicals.		Pest resistance may result in a need to increase frequency or strength of the chemicals and should be avoided.	Advanced	
FSA38	The operator shall avoid crop disease cross-contamination		Contamination can be avoided by removing infested or diseased plant material from the field or by chopping and burying it in the soil and disinfecting pruning and propagation equipment.	Basic	
FSA43	The operator shall maintain and calibrate fertilizer application equipment on a regular basis.		Large farms may have a documented maintenance plan.	Basic	
FSA52	The operator shall reduce, reuse, and recycle waste and by-products of harvesting and processing.		An example of re-use is: - Composting organic debris on-farm and re-using it for soil conditioning (where there is no risk of disease transmission). - Selling your crop by-products to alternative markets.	Basic	

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
			- Use your crop by-products for alternative purposes.		
FSA53	In the case of irrigation, the operator shall periodically assess irrigation water quality and properly manage it, based on the analysis results	<p>Frequency of analysis must be determined by a risk assessment. Analysis includes items as identified in the risk assessment. This can refer to chemicals, mineral content and/or microbiological composition.</p> <p>This question can only be not applicable when no irrigation is used.</p>	Such analysis can be done for a group of farms that are using the same water source(s).	Advanced	
FSA55	In the case of irrigation, the operator shall have a water management plan to optimize water usage, water quality, and water availability and to reduce waste water.	<p>This water management plan is updated at least once a year. It takes into account:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The timing and amount of irrigation in relation to crop requirements. 2. The added value of irrigation in relation to the yield and quality of crops produced. 3. Predicted rainfall and evaporation, using either daily rainfall records or weather forecasts to plan irrigation schedules. 4. An inventory of water resources. <p>This includes at</p>	This can be a separate plan or a chapter in an overall farm management plan. An alternative can be a written farmer group or community plan.	Advanced	

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
		<p>least two of the conditions below:</p> <p>a. Avoiding depletion of water sources, beyond the recharge capacity of the watershed /catchment.</p> <p>b. Cooperate with other water users in the catchment to balance the needs.</p> <p>c. Diversify the sources of water to reduce impact and to ensure water access continuity across seasons.</p> <p>Small-scale farmers in lower income countries are at least able to explain their plan verbally.</p> <p>This question can only be not applicable if no irrigation is used.</p>			
FSA62	In the case of irrigation, the operator shall maintain irrigation records.	<p>These records include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Date of irrigation 2. Quantity of water used 3. Location of use 4. Purpose of water 5. Origin of the water (groundwater, rainfall, surface water, etc.) <p>This question can only be not applicable if no irrigation is used</p>		Advanced	
FSA73	The operator shall discuss with customers the best timing		This can be applicable to the single farm or a group of farms (e.g. cooperative).	Basic	

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
	for crop deliveries to ensure good prices and to maintain quality.				
FSA85	The operator shall follow national law and / or international standards (ILO Conventions) for paid holiday leave, paid sick leave and paid parental leave for your permanent and temporary workers.	<p>This includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holiday leave is not used as a substitute for sick leave. 2. Permanent employees have at least two weeks of paid leave per year (or equivalent for shorter contracts). You follow the most stringent regulation. <p>This question can only be 'not applicable' if the operator does not have any permanent or temporary workers.</p>	The term “Permanent and temporary workers” refers to all workers hired directly and through subcontractors.	Basic	
FSA91	The operator shall encourage and support workers to have health insurance?	This question can only be 'not applicable' if the operator does not have permanent or temporary workers.	<p>Health insurance can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - long term compensation in case of disability - Payment of medical costs <p>Support may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating awareness about available insurance - Providing information about available insurance <p>Permanent and temporary workers refers to all workers hired directly and through subcontractors.</p>	Advanced	

Code	Criteria	Additional Requirements	Recommended practices and guidance	Level	Evaluation by Auditor
FSA104	The operator shall provide regular medical checks for all workers (including the farmer) that have a higher risk of health issues associated with their work.	<p>Non-job-related medical testing as a condition of employment (except lawful drug test) is prohibited.</p> <p>Regular checks are at minimum annual checks for general health issues. These checks are performed on all workers that work with crop protection products.</p>	Workers that have a higher risk are e.g. pregnant women, elderly workers, workers with an existing medical condition, etc.	Advanced	
FSA112	The operator shall take measures to reduce disturbance from noise and odor to the neighboring community.		<p>Adequate measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informing the community about spraying practices, including fertilizer, pesticides and manure. - Planning operations at times that minimize disturbance. 	Advanced	