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Sustainable Biomaterials Collaborative Applauds Stonyfield Farm's Adoption of Working Landscape Certificates

Washington, DC – This week Stonyfield Farm, the world's leading organic yogurt company, announced the introduction of corn-based plastic for its multipack yogurt containers in conjunction with its purchase of "Working Landscape Certificates," a purchasable offset program that promotes sustainable corn production practices. Stonyfield Farm is the first major buyer of Working Landscape Certificates.

"Stonyfield Farm knows that how corn- or other biomass used in plant-based plastics is grown is a major factor in whether or not the plastic is good for the planet," stated Brenda Platt, co-chair of the Sustainable Biomaterials Collaborative, a network that has developed sustainability guidelines for biobased plastics along their entire lifecycle. According to these guidelines, to be considered green, biobased plastics must be derived from sustainably grown and harvested feedstocks, be manufactured without hazardous inputs and impacts, and be reused, recycled, or composted at the end of their intended use. Working Landscape Certificates (WLCs) are endorsed by the Collaborative as a tool for bioplastic buyers to support better farming systems.

"We applaud Stonyfield for its leadership and hope others will follow its lead in helping farmers transition away from genetically modified and petro-chemical crop production. We are also pleased with Stonyfield's commitment to develop recycling systems for bioplastics," added Platt.

Stonyfield's adoption of WLCs alongside its other sustainability practices sets a new bar for businesses aiming to contribute to sustainability through better packaging by working to align with the SBC's biomaterials guidelines.

WLCs are a purchasable offset used to financially support farmers who agree to raise the crop under prescribed sustainability criteria. For corn this means not using GMO seed, eliminating carcinogenic chemical and atrazine use, and other practices that promote better environmental quality. Under the WLC program, Stonyfield pays a per acre premium that goes to farmers who will take specific and measurable steps to raise corn according to sustainable production standards verified by a certification entity. The acreage is based on how much corn-derived plastic Stonyfield will buy for its yogurt cups. This year, Stonyfield's purchase of WLCs for its corn-based containers will bring 500 acres into sustainable corn production. The WLC program was established by the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), a SBC founding member, as a first, crucial step to create truly sustainable biomaterials.

“Stonyfield Farm is excited to purchase Working Landscape Certificates and put into business practice a core principle of the Sustainable Biomaterials Collaborative that biomaterials need to be grown and harvested sustainably,” said Nancy Hirshberg, Vice President of Natural Resources for Stonyfield Farm. “Linking sustainable farming practices with our use of bioplastics fits with our commitment to healthy food, healthy people and a healthy planet.”

“Working Landscapes Certificates offer an innovative mechanism for buyers of bioplastics to help corn farmers make more sustainable farming decisions,” said Jim Kleinschmit of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP). “Stonyfield’s purchase of WLCs illustrates to farmers and others that there is market and financial support for more sustainable crop production associated with bioplastics.”

“This bold move by Stonyfield forges new ground to advance the use of sustainable biomaterials as a pathway to a new economy that values economic, social and environmental benefits,” stated David Levine, executive director, American Sustainable Business Council and member of the Sustainable Biomaterials Collaborative.

About the Sustainable Biomaterials Collaborative

The Sustainable Biomaterials Collaborative is a network of sustainable agriculture, environmental health, clean production, recycling, and other public interest organizations working together to spur the introduction and use of biomaterials that are sustainable from cradle to cradle. A project of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, the SBC seeks to advance the development and diffusion of sustainable biomaterials by creating guidelines, engaging markets, and promoting policy initiatives.

www.sustainablebiomaterials.org

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