



SUSTAINABILITY FROM THE GROUND UP

# Certification 101

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THE GREEN WINE  
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## Why Certification?

- Created to add validity & credibility to a claim
- Consumers do not always believe a claim
- Certification was developed to reassure audience receiving the claim or story

## What is Certification?

- Set of standards which must be met
- Procedures and protocols to ensure standards are adhered to



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## Ways to Develop a Certification Program

- **Self certification – create your own standards and audit process**
- **Independent certification – create your own standards and arrange for independent audit**
- **Third party certification – independent entity accredits the standards and audit process is also independent**



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## Ways to Develop Certification Standards

- Pay a consultant to write them
- Stakeholder group develops the standards
- Stakeholder group develops standards and has them peer-reviewed
- Stakeholder group develops standards, has them peer-reviewed and then third party accredits them
- Third party develops that standards, has them peer reviewed



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## Who is the Most Credible Certifier?

- **Government?**
- **Non-government organization?**
- **Self-certification is least credible and third party certification is the most?**
- **Transparency is very important**



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## 3 Types of Certification Programs:

- Process-based
- Practice-based
- Performance-based



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## Process-Based Certification

- **Certified one is participating in the cycle of continuous improvement**
  - ❖ Use an assessment tool to assess sustainability of one's operation
  - ❖ identify areas of concern
  - ❖ Develop action plan to address concerns
  - ❖ Re-assess operation to determine if action has been successful
- **Examples: SWP Certification, ISO 14000**



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## Practice-Based Certification:

- Adhere to a set of required practices
- Assumption is made the practices improve one's sustainability
- Auditor verifies practices are being carried out
- Examples: Lodi Rules, Napa Green, SIP, Biodynamic, Organic, etc.



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## Performance-Based Certification:

- **Standards are specified levels of performance e.g. water use, energy use, etc.**
- **Auditor ensures performance levels have been met**
- **Examples: There are no active programs but certification is moving in this direction – e.g. WalMart's 15 questions for suppliers**



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## Observations on Certification Types:

- **Process-based**
  - no implied level of sustainability
  - continuous improvement is required
- **Practice-based**
  - assumption is practices improve sustainability
  - can be constraining?
  - difficult to add standards
- **Performance-based:**
  - based on outcomes
  - flexible?
  - continuous improvement?



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# Thank You

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