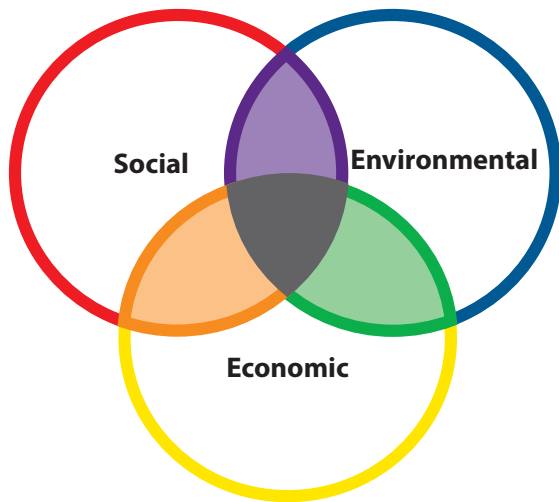


Three Elements of Sustainability

Sustainability is a balanced approach incorporating social, economic and environmental components.



For the sustainability effort in agriculture to be practical, the process must start with you the grower. By documenting your practices and level of sustainability, you can:

- ✓ **Create** a baseline for your farm and the larger industry.
- ✓ **Determine** advances and changes that have already occurred.
- ✓ **Push** for continual improvements.
- ✓ **Stay ahead** of the regulatory curve.
- ✓ **Ensure** access to different markets.
- ✓ **Identify** research questions for further advancements.
- ✓ **Promote** a positive image of agriculture to the larger community.

What has been achieved:

- ✓ Development of regional workgroup.
- ✓ Review of national and international sustainability standards.
- ✓ Harmonization of standards' questions.
- ✓ Development of protocols for whole farm cash grain and soybean specific sustainability program.

What needs to be done:

- ✓ Need to start measuring progress in sustainability.
- ✓ Need to look at changes over time in the last 10 years.
- ✓ Need to effectively communicate the outcomes of our efforts.

For more information about the NSSI, contact:

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The National Soybean Sustainability Initiative

the soybean industry leading the way ...

*We have two choices,
we can let those outside
agriculture determine
what farm sustainability
looks like, or we, as
stewards of the land
and rural America, can
determine our fate.*



“Being sustainable is more than being able to put a crop in year after year. It is maintaining and improving the world we live in. Better soils, cleaner water, more efficient ways of doing things, being an integral part of the local community are all parts of being sustainable.”

Chuck Prellwitz, Soybean Farmer

What is the **NSSI**?

NSSI's mission is to develop a roadmap of soybean management systems that will help producers to achieve verifiable sustainability outcomes, improve the environmental services and productivity of their farms, help their rural communities thrive, and satisfy performance expectations of the value chain. These efforts will operate at the farm level; incorporate a framework of tools and technical information from a wide base of expertise and programs; and, with the support of regional and national experts, communicate sustainable soybean management systems.

Why is the **NSSI** necessary?

- 1 NSSI is producer-driven.** This bottom-up approach allows producers to be at the table in designing sustainability assessments that are regionally- and soybean-appropriate, scaled to cause change at the field level, founded on the best available science, and balanced among the social, environmental and economic sustainability pillars. The alternative—those outside agriculture determining producers' fate— isn't appropriate or sustainable itself.
- 2 NSSI is complementary to other sustainability programs and not redundant.** The assessment-based approach implemented by NSSI will cover the gaps that currently exist in outcome-based programs. Several of these gaps exist because outcomes are difficult, expensive, or invasive to quantify. The combination of assessment- and outcome-based data will create a holistic sustainability message.
- 3 NSSI efforts will streamline sustainability efforts with customer expectations.** This approach will reduce redundant requests for sustainability metrics and provide a balanced way forward that includes producers in the developmental stage, thus ensuring that the process is not overly cumbersome. The request for such information continues to grow despite down economies, suggesting a resilient and long-term commitment by customers to developing such programs.
- 4 NSSI will result in a communications conduit to customers and the general public.** Industrial sustainability efforts have successfully focused on communicating improvements over time. Agriculture has yet to develop such a plan or communicate the gains already achieved by producers in typical sustainability parameters. The assessment-based approach, combined with appropriate outcome-based programs and a solid communications effort, will deliver a message of long-term commitment to sustainability by agricultural communities.