

**SLO** stands for **S**ustainable, **L**ocal, and **O**rganic. Our general definitions of these words help explain how the standards for our Co-op Members are derived.

**Sustainable:** Meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the needs of future generations. Balances people, planet, and profit as needed to maintain an agricultural enterprise.

**Local:** A 17 county region of northeast Wisconsin defined in SLO Farmers Co-op By-Laws.

**Organic:** Using production methods aligned with those in the National Organic Program or pledging to move toward those standards as part of a farm business plan approved by the SLO Standards Committee.

**SLO Farmer Standards for Membership:**

As a member of the SLO Farmers Co-op, we agree to comply with these membership standards to create sustainable, healthy growth for the Co-op members, the Co-op and the broader community.

1. **People:** Family farms are valued. Owners work side-by-side with workers and compensate labor fairly. Options for workers to share management and ownership shares are encouraged. Farms must show community involvement.
  - a. We agree that the basis of this cooperative is the support of small and mid-size family farms.
  - b. We agree that we work with the employees of the farm and perform many of the same tasks.
  - c. We strive to pay our employees a living wage.
2. **Food Safety:** Farms must have a food safety plan filed with the Co-op or be striving to complete food safety plan within one (1) year of membership.
  - a. We agree to obtain and provide copies to the Co-op any necessary licensing and permits required by the various local and state health departments. We also agree to ensure that our meat processors have the appropriate licensing in place and provide a copy to the Co-op.
  - b. We agree to carry at least \$1 million dollars of farm liability insurance coverage on our own farm.
3. **Planet:** Land and water are valued. A farm system that values soil health is fostered. Specific crop production practices that reflect soil, plant, and water quality are listed below:
  - a. Organic matter is maintained and increased through compost, cover crops and/or green manure practices annually, and adding soil amendments that enhance the naturally occurring microbes in the soil.
  - b. Animal/green manures are the main nitrogen sources.

- c. No synthetic fertilizers are allowed.
- d. No synthetic herbicides or pesticides are allowed. (They's Orchard is grandfathered from this standard provided they implement an IPM program.)
- e. Seeds must be non-GMO.
- f. Buffers are installed along all waterways.
- g. Space for wildlife habitat is encouraged.
- h. Row crop fields must be rotated bi-annually and preferably annually to a different species.
- i. Perennial, managed pastures are used for livestock and there is a goal of no soil loss from the farm.
- j. Cover crops are used, or fields/beds are fallowed appropriately.
- k. Minor exceptions to any of the standards above must be pre-approved by the board and are noted on any sales made from the farm that has the exception.
- l. Must have a written Sustainability Plan or Statement of commitment to sustainability

**4. Animal stewardship:**

- a. Animals must have access to clean water daily.
- b. Animals must be kept in herds or flocks, not isolated or tethered continuously.
- c. Animals must have clean bedding and water and appropriate shelter.
- d. Animals must have enough pen space to engage in natural behavior.
- e. Pen manure must not be more than ankle deep except in rare circumstances.
- f. Antibiotic use is not allowed except in emergencies.
- g. Hormones are not allowed.
- h. Chemical deworming and fly control are strongly discouraged and must be documented; natural products are allowed.
- i. All veterinary treatments, (ie. vaccines, dehorning, castration) must be documented.
- j. During the growing season:
  - i. Animals must have access to the outdoors, and clean fresh grass, daily.
  - ii. Ruminants must get at least 50% of their daily dry matter intake from managed pasture.
- k. Feedlot production is not allowed.
- l. We agree to use non-GMO feeds for all livestock. We further agree to maintain proof of purchase of this non-GMO feed or proof of growing and using such feed
- m. Comply with grass-fed standards.