

# FAQs for Companies on FSA

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## 1. What is FSA?

FSA (Farm Sustainability Assessment) is a highly effective new tool providing you - companies in the food and drink value chain around the world - one single, simple **tool to assess sustainable practices** and helping you **source more and more sustainably** grown agricultural products.

It's a free, multi-purpose reference tool that you can use to benchmark your own company code, and/or third party certification schemes and even country/region specific legislation. It can also be used as a self-assessment and way to communicate your expectations to the supply chain, if no standard exists.

Already many global brands, such as Coca Cola, Unilever, McCain and Mondelēz, have adopted FSA and are using it to assess and benchmark sustainable farming practices.

## 2. Why should I consider using it?

Instead of having to assess and verify multiple farm sustainability practices, or benchmark existing schemes, you now – for the first time ever – have one tool that can do this, saving time and resources.

## 3. Do we really need a new standard or a new way of self-assessment?

FSA is not intended to replace existing, accepted, benchmarked standards.

Many SAI Platform members are already using FSA to compare and assess existing standards such as Red Tractor, Rainforest Alliance, Skylark, and ISCC, just to name a few.

## 4. But what real benefit does FSA deliver to companies?

In short, FSA helps you save time and resources by avoiding multiple assessments of farmers' sustainability practices. For example, Coca Cola and Unilever are using FSA to source sustainable sugar beet in Europe. Like many companies they have their own sustainability codes for suppliers, but they are using FSA to communicate expectations with its suppliers. As a result, sugar companies (SAI Platform member companies and others alike) are now actively communicating their FSA performance levels to multiple customers. So FSA is helping to harmonize expectations, and drive action by all those involved in the sustainability supply chain.

## 5. How can using FSA help to deliver measurable impact on the ground?

In a number of ways. While FSA does not measure impacts such as reduced greenhouse gas emissions or water savings, it does focus on practices that should lead to those impacts (and that can be measured). FSA can also be used as a basis for improvement plans that will lead to (measurable) impacts.

## 6. Apart from the potential savings in time and resources, does FSA deliver any other benefits?

Yes. It also provides a valuable way for you to engage with suppliers and producers and creates a basis for developing improvement plans. FSA can also be used to identify potential risk topics (hotspots or trends) in specific supply chain and/or regions and, in some cases, it eliminates often unseen duplication in assessments and verification efforts.

## 7. Does FSA mean we would need to stop using other codes, standards and benchmarks?

FSA is a voluntary tool, and SAI Platform members can use FSA to suit their specific needs. Some companies are using it across all of their supply chains, while others chose to use it in one or two. Other members chose not to use it at all. FSA is not about introducing more standards or pushing any company to abandon what is working for them. FSA is about creating a common, harmonized language and encouraging the voluntary sharing of information about sustainable practices up and down the supply chain, to promote enhanced collaboration and improved practices between all parties.

## 8. Is FSA actually up and running and proven to be effective, or is it a new initiative that has yet to be properly 'road-tested'?

FSA is already being used by over 30 of the world's leading food and drink value chain companies. It has been tested by different companies for different crops around the world and initial results and insights were used to improve and develop the tool. The current version of FSA (FSA 2.0) is being used by companies and farmers in 24 countries across Europe, North and South America, Asia and Africa. It also has been translated in 18 languages. To ensure FSA remains an effective tool, we are committed to continuously improving how FSA works and will continue to do that as more farmers and more companies start using it.

## 9. Who is behind FSA?

SAI Platform developed FSA in response to a need **for a single set of requirements** on which the industry is aligned, and to translate the Platform's Principles & Practices into a practical implementation tool. SAI Platform is a not-for-profit organization with over 75 members from across the food supply chain, and aims to drive sustainable agricultural practices globally.

## 10. Is FSA supported and seen as credible by those outside of the food industry?

FSA was developed with expert input from those in and outside of the industry and that includes representatives from leading NGOs, universities, farmers and their representative groups. We used their advice and input - as well as building on well recognized existing standards and schemes – to develop FSA. We have also tested it in pilots around the world. It is therefore seen as both credible and complementary as a new tool for assessing sustainable agricultural practices.