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## **About IATP**

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works locally and globally at the intersection of policy and practice to ensure fair and sustainable food, farm and trade systems. IATP is headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota with an office in Geneva.

# **IATP applauds Stonyfield Farm's purchase of Working Landscapes Certificates**

## **New program pays farmers premium for more sustainable practices**

**MINNEAPOLIS** – The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) applauds Stonyfield Farm's decision to purchase Working Landscapes Certificates (WLC)—a program that rewards farmers by linking sustainable corn production with bioplastics.

The adoption of the WLC program by Stonyfield, the world's largest organic yogurt maker, in conjunction with their introduction of a new bioplastic packaging line, means support not only for better plastic, but also for better farming practices. Through the purchase of WLCs, the company is providing support for more sustainable corn production on over 500 acres in Iowa. IATP created the Working Landscapes program in 2006.

"This innovative, market-based mechanism allows companies to link their purchase of bioplastics to support for more sustainable crop production locally," says Jim Kleinschmit of IATP, who heads the WLC project. "This extra payment makes clear to farmers that companies and consumers care about, and are willing to pay for, more sustainable farming and its benefits for the environment."

The Working Landscapes Certificates program was created by IATP to address a core issue: linking the emerging biobased market to more sustainable farming. Bioplastics, which are currently made from corn, provide a more environmentally sound alternative to petroleum plastics if they support sustainability goals throughout their production, use and disposal. Currently, however, direct sourcing of more sustainably produced feedstock crops for the production of bioplastics is logistically and financially difficult. So the WLC program provides an alternative mechanism for companies like Stonyfield to support farmers who want to grow corn more sustainably.

To be eligible for the WLC program, farmers agree to undertake certain production practices, including: planting only non-genetically modified seed varieties; excluding the use of atrazine and carcinogenic chemicals; and using soil fertility testing and residue management to avoid soil erosion and water quality issues.

These sustainable practices are quantified as a “good”—a Working Landscapes Certificate—that a company like Stonyfield can purchase, in a quantity linked to the amount of corn needed to produce the bioplastics the company uses. Participating farmers were paid \$60 an acre in 2010 to implement these sustainable practices. This payment is in addition to the market price the farmer receives for the corn itself.

“As a company constantly looking for ways to improve its environmental performance, this program builds more sustainable practices into our production,” said Nancy Hirshberg, Stonyfield Farm Vice President for Natural Resources. “Supporting the environment and farmers are two touchstones for our company.”

You can find out more about the Working Landscapes program at: [www.workinglandscapes.org](http://www.workinglandscapes.org). You can find out more about Stonyfield’s involvement in the program at: <http://www.stonyfield.com/MadeFromPlants/>

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