



Public Summary and Work Plan – Standards Revisions 2015-2016 extended to 2017

AJP will conduct a full standards revision beginning in spring 2015. This process will seek to update the existing standards, (last revision completed in September 2012), as well as, address any new issues or expanded scopes, as needed.

Justification and Current Scope of the AJP Standards

AJP seeks to maintain a relevant standard for farms and businesses in North America. We invite your input or comments on the standards or scope of our standards! Please contact info@agriculturaljusticeproject.org or fill out our [online comment form](#).

The AJP Standards were originally developed in 1999 in response to the fact that the U.S. National Organic Program standards did not address the people involved in agriculture and the food system. The original AJP coalition developed the standards over four years of stakeholder input—involving farmers, farmworkers, and indigenous, retail, and consumer groups. The resulting standard provided a basis from which the Food Justice Certification program was built. The AJP Standards provide a means to codify in concrete terms what making a legitimate claim of “social justice” means in organic and sustainable agriculture. Amongst the variety of certification programs available to farms and businesses in North America, Food Justice Certification with the AJP Standards remains the only high-bar standard for social justice developed uniquely for the North American context, and coupled directly with organic and sustainable agriculture.

The scope of the AJP Standards is currently to address social relationships and exchanges at every level in agriculture, from farm to table. AJP Standards may currently be applied to farms that are already certified organic and those practicing organic methods. However, AJP feels that there may be many scenarios in which a farm that would fit within the AJP standards scope is not certified organic. For this purpose, AJP is planning to conduct a pilot test of Food Justice Certification on a conventional or non-organic farm. In the meantime, businesses do not have to be certified organic to become Food Justice Certified to the AJP Standards.

The AJP Standards address the following issues:

- Workers’ rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining
- Fair wages and benefits for workers
- Fair and equitable contracts for farmers and buyers
- Fair pricing for farmers
- Clear conflict resolution policies for farmers or food business owners/managers and workers
- Workplace health and safety
- Farmworker housing
- Interns and apprentices
- Children on farms



Work Plan and Timeline for Standards Revisions

The following draft timeline and activities will be implemented by the AJP Board, in collaboration with the AJP Standards Committee and Advisory Council in order to complete the revisions.

Approximate date	Activities
April	Create new AJP Board standards draft .
May 15, 2015	AJP Board Standards Draft translation should be complete, and both English and Spanish versions sent to the Standards Committee for consideration.
July 15, 2015	AJP Draft for Public Comment (English) – based on feedback from Standards Committee and other considerations, AJP revises the draft, completes formatting and prepares for public comment period. Final draft for public comment is approved by SC and AC before translation.
October 9, 2015 – January 20, 2016	First Public Comment Period: Finalized draft for Public Comment is published with Board and AC approval (website) and public notice sent out. Those anticipated to need hardcopies will receive them within 5 days of start of comment period. Organization of any workshops or face-to-face comment collection happens in this time.
January 2016	Domestic Fair Trade Association Annual Meeting – Held a stakeholder luncheon to discuss proposed changes to the FJC Standards and received in-person comments for the first public comment period.
February – March 2016	Development of AJP Board response to comments draft
June – December 2016	Standards Committee and Advisory Council calls to discuss the updated standards draft.
January - February 2017	Second Public Comments Draft (English) based on feedback from Standards Committee, Advisory Council and other considerations, AJP revises the draft, completes formatting and prepares for public comment period. Final draft for public comment is approved by SC and AC before translation.
February 28 th 2017 (English) – 90 days	Second Public Comment Period (English): Revised drafts are published with AC and SC approval to the AJP website. Those anticipated to need hardcopies will receive them within 5 days of start of comment period. Also document stakeholder distribution per AJP Policy Manual page 82-83.
By April 17 th 2017 (Spanish) – 90 days	Second Public Comment Period (Spanish): Revised drafts are published with AC and SC approval to the AJP website. A delayed start to allow for translation of the Spanish version. The full comment period will be 90 days when the Spanish version is complete.
Mid-September 2017	Final Standards Drafts (English & Spanish) developed based on all input.
Fall 2017	Response to Comments Document (English & Spanish) – drafted by AJP Board, approved by Advisory Council and posted to website along with final Standards versions.
Estimated end dates:	Finalized in English and Spanish by Fall 2017 – estimate plus or minus a couple weeks for translation and other issues that may come up.