How To Use The SPARC Resources
PLANNING YOUR TRAINING
Setting The Stage For Success

Communicate with staff to clarify

- Training goals
- Requirements and expectations, including who should attend and timeline for completion
- Any incentives as appropriate
Plan Your Training – Who Should Participate?

- Managers with decision-making power about at least one of these:
  - Agronomic products and services
  - Company business structure
  - Employee incentives and bonuses
- Farmer-facing staff
  - Sales
  - Agronomists
  - Customer service
Plan Your Training – Which Modules To Include And Budgeting Staff Time

• You may not need to include every module, based on your staff’s existing sustainability knowledge and company goals.

• The time required to adequately address each topic depends on prior staff knowledge and the desired level of detail.
Plan Your Training – Which Modules To Include?

Sustainability 101

- **What it covers:** defines sustainability, explains the growing demand for sustainably-sourced products and explores how sustainability can create business opportunities for ag retailers and their farmer-clientele
- **Who should take it:** anyone that needs the understand the basics of sustainability or could use a refresher
- **Minimum time required:** 20 minutes
Plan Your Training – Which Modules To Include?

Environmental Sustainability Metrics
• What it covers: explains the eight sustainability outcomes measured by the Fieldprint Platform and how these outcomes affect corporate decision making in the supply chain
• Who should take it: all staff and managers
• Minimum time required: 45 minutes
Plan Your Training – Which Modules To Include?

Practices & Services Supporting Sustainable Agronomy

- **What it covers:** relates the environmental metrics to some widespread practices and products that drive continuous improvement.
- **Who should take it:** staff and managers that need to understand how agronomic practices relate to sustainable agriculture
- **Minimum time required:** 45 minutes
Plan Your Training – Which Modules To Include?

**Measuring Sustainability Success**

- **What it covers:** explores how to measure environmental outcomes of the sustainability services provided to farmer customers; and the value that ag retailers can derive by helping farmers and the supply chain collect and manage sustainability data
- **Who should take it:** managers that decide what software the company uses and farmer-facing staff that understand what farm management or precision software their customers use
- **Minimum time required:** 30 minutes
Plan Your Training – Which Modules To Include?

The Farmer Business Case for Sustainability

- **What it covers:** highlights real farmers that have implemented sustainable practices in their operations and achieved economic benefits
- **Who should take it:** managers and farmer-facing staff that could benefit from a greater understanding of the economic impacts of implementing agronomic change on growers
- **Minimum time required:** 30 minutes
Developing a Sustainability Program

- **What it covers:** explores the benefits to an ag retailer of developing a comprehensive sustainability program and offers ideas to communicate the value of the program to employees and customers.

- **Who should take it:** ag retail managers

- **Minimum time required:** 60 minutes
Plan Your Training

Determine how you and your staff members will go through the modules

• Using the online platform
• Standalone slide decks
• As a team
• Individually
• Hybrid of team and individual
Plan Your Training – Determine Needed Resources

For team and hybrid training

- access to company strategic planning, and communications documentation
- a room with adequate seating, writing surfaces and white boards
- audio-visual equipment
ACCESSING TRAINING MATERIALS
Using the Online Platform

Download the Sustainability Training Manual

• Companion to the online modules to train staff on sustainability
• Encourages teams to examine the concepts more deeply
• Offers opportunity to consider the perspectives of customers, staff agronomists and management

Download the manual:
Using the Online Platform
How to access the online modules

• Go to the CCA Classroom on the American Society of Agronomy website
  https://www.certifiedcropadviser.org/education/classroom/classes/666
• Once you have a username and password, log in to the website.
• Select each of the SPARC modules and add it to your cart
Using the Customizable Training Decks and Leader’s Guides

How to access the resources

• Download from www.fieldtomarket.org/sparc
• Contact Kelly Young, Educational Resources Manager at Field to Market, kyoung@fieldtomarket.org
AFTER THE MODULES: WHAT’S NEXT?
Go Forward!

Once your staff completes the SPARC modules, continue to engage staff about how the company will and strengthen your sustainability work.
Download the Know the Issues Guides

- Customize the guides to include your company logo, and encourage your agronomists to keep copies of those resources with them when they visit with farmers.
- The guides can be a useful aid to discussions about how to contribute to improved water quality, reduced soil erosion, or other resource iss
Connect with others in your area or supply chain to further your sustainability support.

That might include:

- Commodity groups
- Agribusiness associations and other ag retailers
- State agencies, Extension, NRCS, SWCD
- Conservation groups
- Food companies and other CPGs
- Independent consultants
Who To Contact For More Information On SPARC

Donnie Taylor, Vice President of Membership & Corporate Relations
Agricultural Retailers Association
dtaylor@aradc.org 202-595-1725

Luther Smith, Professional Dev. & Business Relations Director
American Society of Agronomy
lsmith@sciencesocieties.org 608-268-4977

Kelly Murray Young*, Educational Resource Manager
Field to Market
kyoung@fieldtomarket.org 202-871-7554
* Can help you design a custom training for your staff.
Thank you!

Sustainability Programming for Ag Retailers and CCAs (SPARC)

A COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVE BROUGHT TO YOU BY

WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MIDWEST ROW CROP COLLABORATIVE