

A Pathway to Understanding Producer Adoption of *Brassica carinata* in the Southeast United States



UPDATE ON SPARC OBJECTIVE 6.2

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SPARC Objective 6.2

Document the Drivers of Adoption & Assess Stakeholder Needs

- “Assessment of the barriers and facilitators of carinata adoption by farmers in the SE US will be assessed using a combination of focus groups, in-person paper and tablet-based surveys, and non-hypothetical economic experiments.” – SPARC Narrative

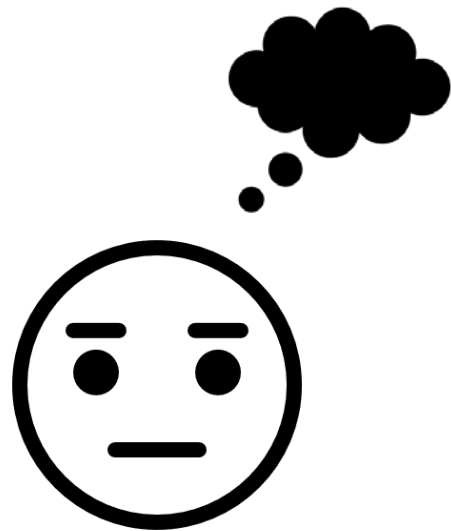
Outline

- **What steps are we taking to better understand the adoption of carinata in the Southeast United States?**
 - **Establishing a Plan of Action**
 - **Creating a Conceptual Framework**
 - **Highlights of previous, current, and future activities**



Photo Credit: Chris Bliss

Thinking Like a Social Scientist



- History of region and people?
- Costs involved?
- Methods of communication?
- Their biases?
- Hopes and fears?
- Burden of responsibility?
- Trust?
- Who reaps the benefit?
- Risks?
- Who holds power?
- Existing relationships?

Plan of Action

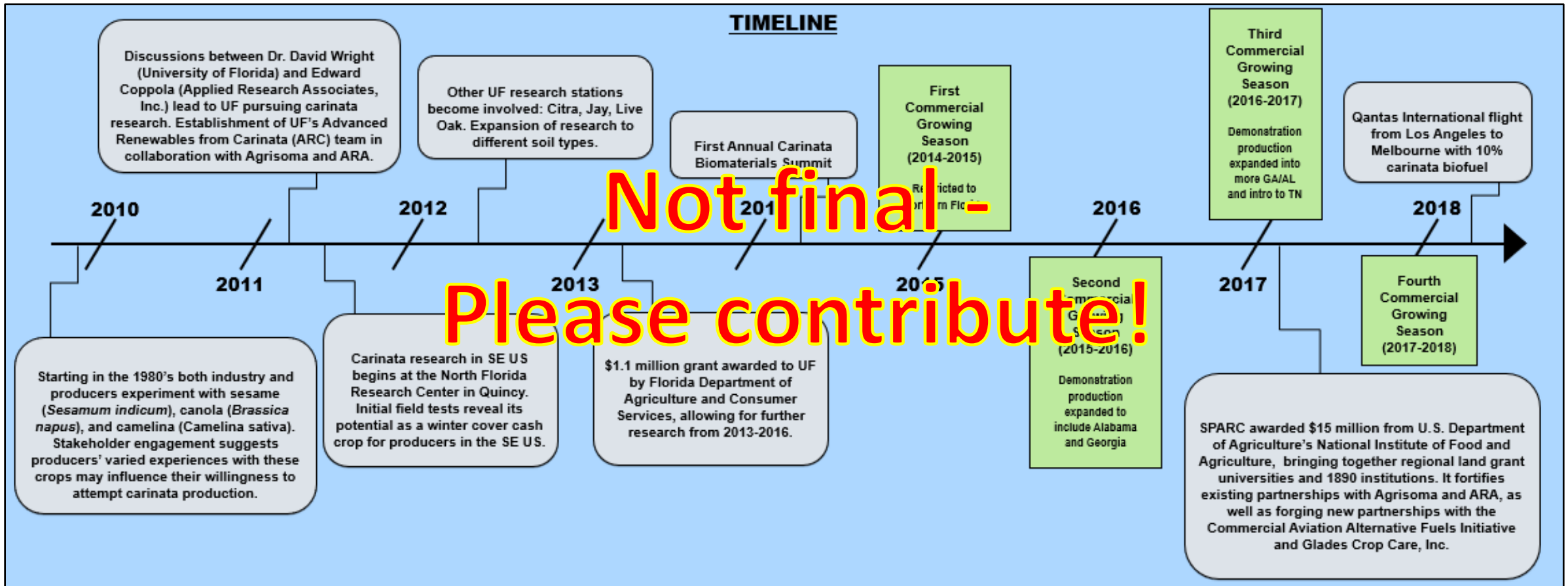
Establishing a framework of understanding *before* directly engaging producers in the Southeast



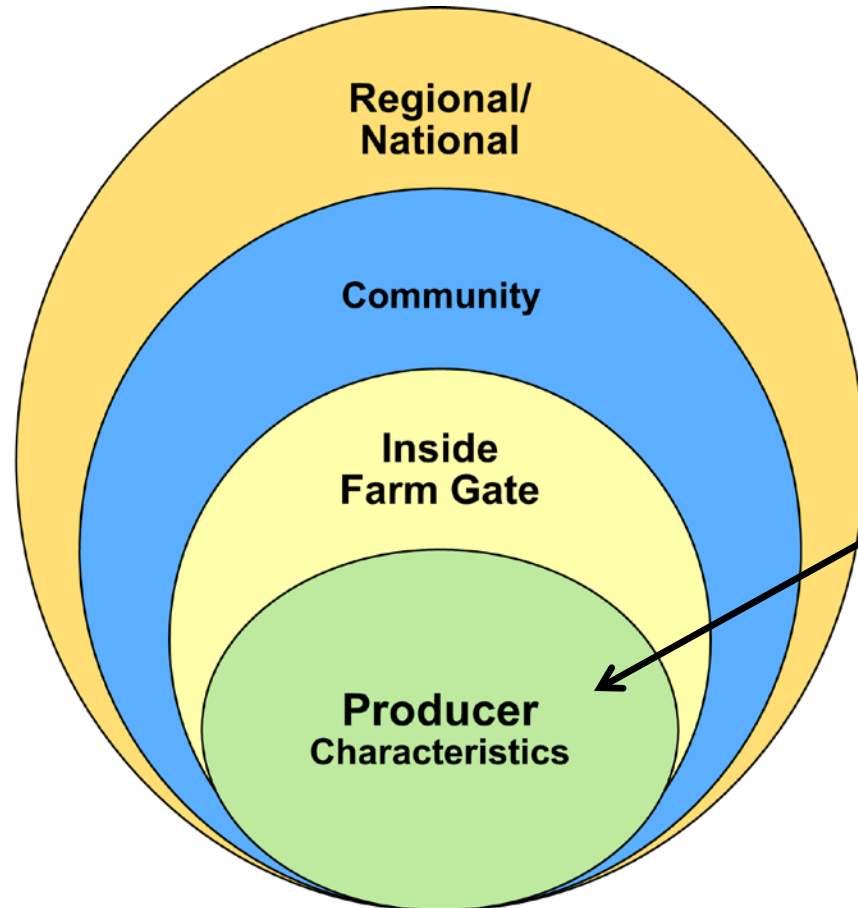
Completed: Key Informant Interviews

- **Obtaining *qualitative* information from professionals involved with SPARC and carinata production at various points of the value chain**
 - 15 participants. Interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes each.
- **Themes of Questions**
 - Thoughts on carinata and on barriers/opportunities for producers; who is the ideal producer and why?
 - Drivers and impediments of establishment
 - Perceptions on Extension responsibilities and role of industry
 - Their definitions of success for SPARC and carinata in the SE US

Ongoing: Timeline of Carinata in SE US



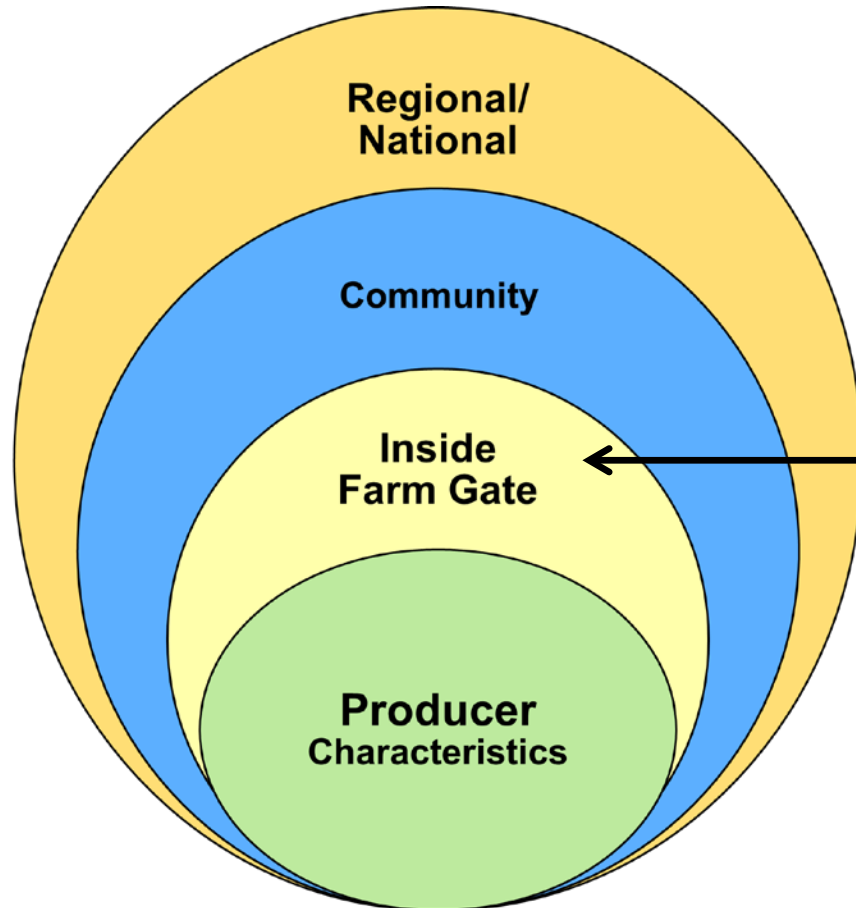
Conceptual Framework – Scales of Barriers and Opportunities for Adoption



The Producer Level

- Personality – is he/she risk averse? Feelings on “green” technology? Innovative?
- Previous experience & biases
- Finances
- Education
- Existing relationships and how information tends to be obtained

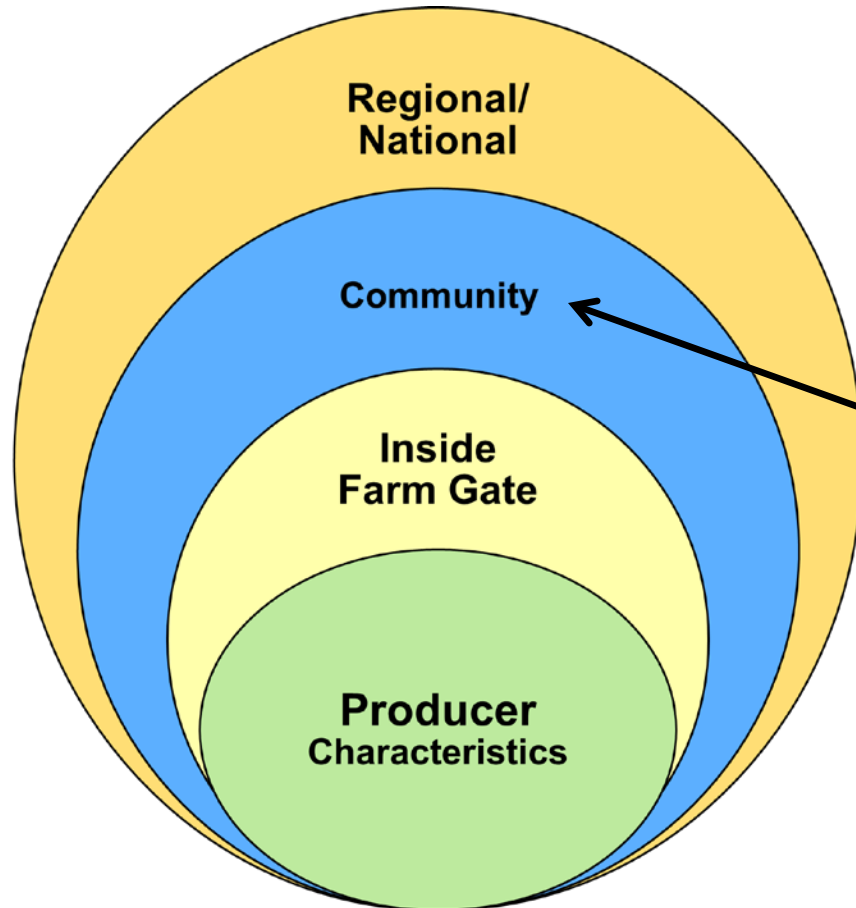
Conceptual Framework – Scales of Barriers and Opportunities for Adoption



The Farm Level

- Existing rotation of crops
- Available equipment
- Available labor
- Land and soil characteristics
- Farming practices – tillage, irrigation, pesticide & fertilizer use, cover cropping
- Presence of cattle / need for animal feed

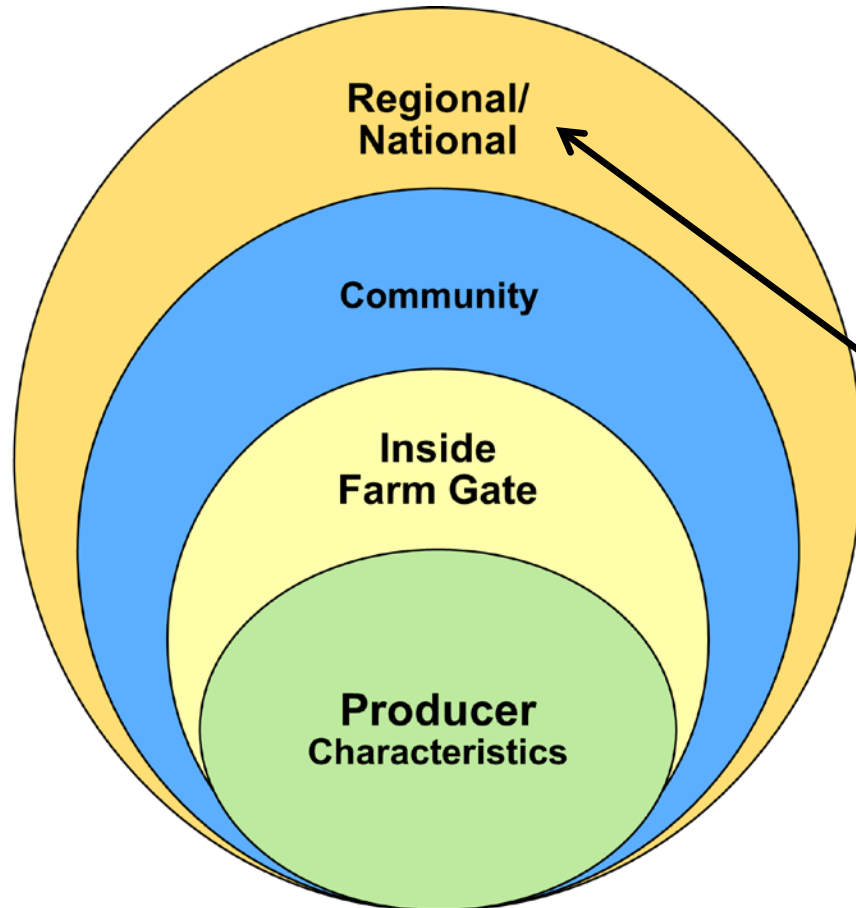
Conceptual Framework – Scales of Barriers and Opportunities for Adoption



The Community Level

- Membership in community organizations
- Presence and involvement of University Extension
- Location of infrastructure – buying/selling points, appropriate grain silos
- Local policies

Conceptual Framework – Scales of Barriers and Opportunities for Adoption



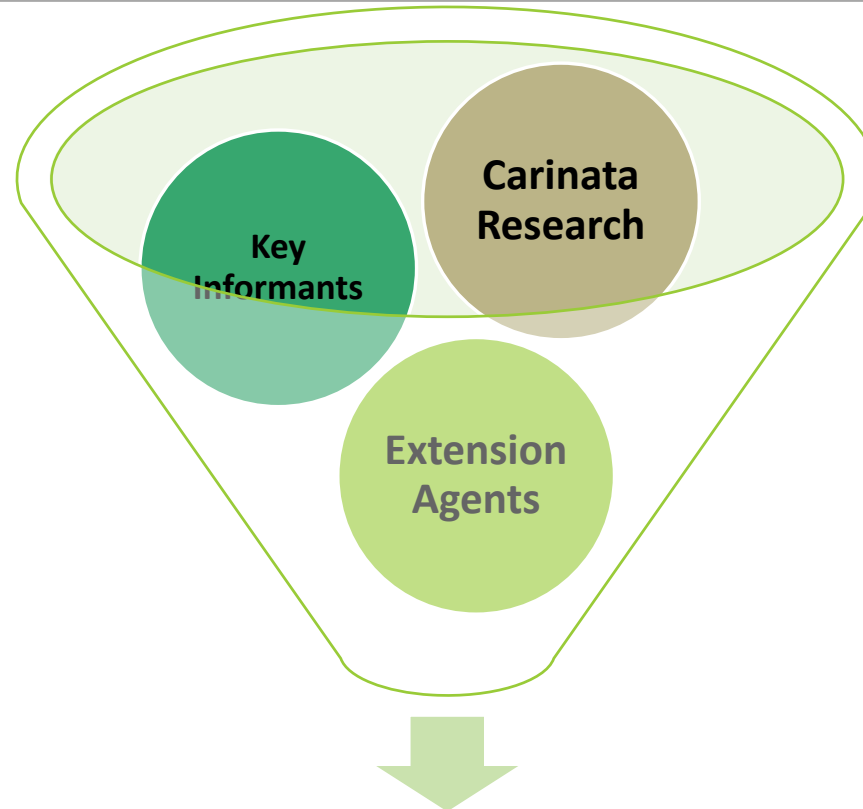
Regional/National Levels

- **Overarching policies**
- **Overall carinata value chain and its effect on selling price**
- **How and where carinata is being used**

Current Work: Engaging Extension Agents

- **Obtaining *qualitative* and *quantitative* information from Extension faculty in carinata growing regions in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida**
 - Short survey with a ranking activity coupled with a 30 minute interview
 - Aiming to engage approximately 20 agents
- **Themes of Questions**
 - Their role in the adoption of new crops/technology
 - Relationships with producers and private sector
 - Their view of producers in their regions adopting carinata
 - What they as agents need to be successful

Next Step: Engaging Producers in the Southeast



Effective Engagement with Producers (early adopters, non-adopters, failures, successes)

Next Step: Engaging Producers in the Southeast

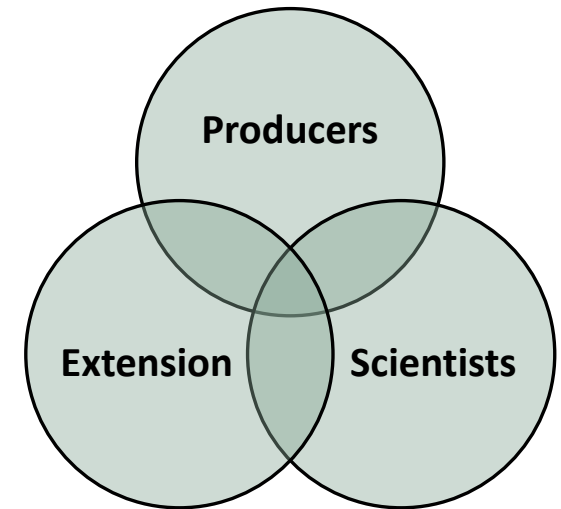
- **Planning to gather information via surveys, interviews, and focus groups with producers in Florida, Alabama, and Georgia**
- **Who will we approach?**
 - Carinata early adopters
 - Producers that attempted carinata production but no longer do so
 - Attendees of producer meetings and Carinata Field Days
 - Members of the Tri-state Climate Learning Network

Tri-state Climate Learning Network

- **Row crop stakeholders from GA, AL, and FL that have been meeting biannually since 2010**
 - An incubator of new ideas for row crop agriculture in the tri-state region
- **This year, Tri-state meeting will be combined with a carinata field day in Tifton, GA on April 17**
 - Talks on climate will be intermixed with a carinata field visit and focus group discussions on barriers and opportunities for producers in the tri-state region



**ALABAMA
FLORIDA
GEORGIA**



Future Work: Establishing a Carinata Community of Practice (C-CoP)

- A means for carinata early adopters to exchange skills, technical knowledge, experiences, and stories
- Initial integration through the Tri-state Climate Learning Network
- Potential through repeated meetings:
 - Building trust among producers and participating stakeholders
 - Allow for demonstrated know-how

Contact

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