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**Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State**  
**Minnesota Public Benefit Corporation / Annual Benefit Report**  
*Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 304A*



Read the instructions before completing this form  
Must be filed by March 31  
Filing Fee: \$55 for expedited service in-person, \$35 if submitted by mail

The Annual Benefit Report covers the 12 month period ending on December 31 of the previous year.  
Notice: Failure to file this form by March 31 of this year will result in the revocation of the corporation's public benefit status without further notice from the Secretary of State, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 304A.301

1. File Number \_\_\_\_\_
2. Corporate Name: (Required) Vetiver Solutions SBC
3. The public benefit corporation's board of directors has reviewed and approved this report.
4. In the field below, enter the information required by section 304A.301 subd. 2 or 3 for the period covered by this report, (see instructions for further information): Note: Use additional sheets if needed. (Required)

See attached.

5. I, the undersigned, certify that I am the chief executive officer of this public benefit corporation. I further certify that I have signed this document no more than 30 days before the document is delivered to the secretary of state for filing, and that this document is current when signed. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

Jesse Abelson

Signature of Public Benefit Corporation's Chief Executive Officer

2/24/23

Date (Must be dated within 30 days before the report is delivered to the Secretary of State for Filing)

**Email Address for Official Notices**

Enter an email address to which the Secretary of State can forward official notices required by law and other notices:

info@vetiversolutions.org

Check here to have your email address excluded from requests for bulk data, to the extent allowed by Minnesota law.

**List a name and daytime phone number of a person who can be contacted about this form:**

Jesse Abelson

Contact Name

952-201-4288

Phone Number

**Entities that own, lease, or have any financial interest in agricultural land or land capable of being farmed must register with the MN Dept. of Agriculture's Corporate Farm Program.**

Does this entity own, lease, or have any financial interest in agricultural land or land capable of being farmed?

Yes  No

# Annual Benefit Report

of

## Vetiver Solutions

A Minnesota Specific Public Benefit Corporation

March 2023

## **History**

Vetiver Solutions began in Minnesota in 2016 and is composed of a team of passionate individuals with a vision for a better world. Our company grew out of a semester-long project in a Grand Challenge Course offered at the University of Minnesota. After completing the Acara challenge, in March 2017, we were awarded our initial funding through the University of Minnesota to implement the Vetiver Solutions pilot project— a business that turned vetiver grass into a cash crop: improving soil quality of farm fields and roads in rural Haiti while simultaneously providing Haitian farmers with a new source of income. This support from the Acara Institute and later the Institute on the Environment (at the University of Minnesota) allowed our team to make two more trips to Moreau, Haiti for research and development of vetiver fiber products.

In spring 2018, we participated in the Schulze Entrepreneurship Challenge, winning the Social Impact prize and Fourth Place overall and \$25,000 in cash prizes. This incredible award allowed Vetiver Solutions to officially launch as a public benefit corporation in Minnesota.

During one of our trips to the village in January 2019, our partners, the Moreau Farmer's Association, proposed another way to grow our business and support their sustainable farming efforts — bee products. They recently began keeping bees to supplement their income and improve the health of their crops. The Farmer's Association in Moreau is a cooperative group that works together to provide for the community and innovate solutions for the environmental and economic challenges they face. We decided that honey and bee products were in-line with our mission of promoting sustainable farming practices and we began purchasing small amounts of honey and beeswax from the Farmers Association in 2019.

In 2020, we expanded our partnership with beekeepers in Moreau by purchasing our first bulk order of honey and beeswax (over two-hundred pounds of total raw material) and shipped it from Haiti to Minnesota. This involved purchasing these natural products from new farmers in the community, working with a logistics company in Port-au-Prince, and growing our Minnesota-side operations to support more production of final goods. We continue to expand and evolve to meet the needs of the community in rural Haiti. We incorporate vetiver, honey, and beeswax into many different types of products, continually investing in sustainable farming that improves soil health and reduces the effects of deforestation. Additionally, the entire beekeeping operation continues to be completely community-developed and community-run.

## **Specific Benefits**

Vetiver Solutions was incorporated on June 5th, 2019 as a Specific Benefit Corporation with a Specific Public Benefit under Minnesota's Public Benefit Corporation Act (the "Act"). Pursuant to Section 304A.101 of the Act, Vetiver Solutions' public benefit purpose as stated in its Articles of Incorporation is:

- Promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Haitian communities through the sales of Haitian-based products;
- Decreasing poverty and malnutrition through community projects and local partnerships;
- Partnering with local organizations to promote self-sustainability; and
- Raising awareness of the beauty of Haiti within local Minnesota communities

With regard to the period covered by this report, January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022, Vetiver Solutions pursued the specific public benefit purpose stated in its articles of incorporation in the following ways:

**1) Sustainably decreasing poverty and malnutrition**

We strive to alleviate poverty and malnutrition by creating reliable income opportunities for our Haitian partner community. We purchase all our beeswax and honey from Haitian farmers, increasing sustainable income and promoting long-term environmental sustainability. In 2022, we spent \$3,126.98 in Haiti. Of the funds we spent in Haiti, 100% of these funds went directly to individuals in Moreau, with the goal of decreasing the poverty rate in Moreau. Through our Community Development Fund, our partner farmers have begun a micro-credit program for members of the Farmers' Association. This year they extended credit to 22 farmers for investment in their land, agricultural yields, and other beneficial projects to their land. Since 2019, we have now invested over \$13,000 into the community of Moreau.

Additionally, after learning about the future goals of our partner farmers, we committed to supporting the Moreau community in working toward increased sustainability in agricultural practices. As a result, we created an Agricultural Development Fund to further invest in farming and environmental initiatives in Moreau -- from beekeeping training to soil testing. Our amazing partner farms have many ideas and goals for improving agriculture in rural Haiti. To work with the farmers to sustainably scale their agricultural yields, skills, and resources, we began allocating a portion of our annual product sales to our new Agricultural Development Fund. We will draw from this fund in agreement with the Farmers' Association for additional investment in farming-related projects.

**2) Sustainable business partnerships**

We have formed several sustainable partnerships, both in Haiti and in Minnesota. Through a local non-profit, MIJABA, we successfully funded the installation of solar panels on the local school in 2019. In 2020, we helped to fund the installation of tile flooring in a local community center. This flooring provides the community with a resilient space for gathering that is not at risk of flooding, which is especially important during hurricane season in Haiti. In 2021, we funded the expansion of the solar panel system on the local school, funding the purchase and installation of additional panels and four additional batteries. In 2022, we funded a pilot program for micro-credit for community members. The entirety of these funds were donated to MIJABA from Vetiver Solutions through our community development fund. These projects are chosen by the community and our only requirement is that the project benefits the community as a whole. Beyond that requirement, the community is welcome to choose any project they feel fills the greatest need in the community and/or will provide the largest benefit for the community.

In addition, we have formed a partnership with SPAM FC Scholarship Foundation, a Minnesotan organization that has supported soccer teams in Moreau with funds to rent a soccer field as well as many in-kind donations of soccer gear. Since 2018, the SPAM FC Scholarship Foundation has been financially supporting the rental of a soccer field for the community in a nearby village. SPAM FC Scholarship Foundation continues to support our work with donations on an annual basis.

Finally, in 2022, we became official members of the Fair Trade Federation. The Fair Trade Federation is a global network of “fair trade enterprises fully committed to equitable and sustainable trading partnerships” and endeavors to create equity, justice, and dignified livelihoods for all. We are very excited about this membership and are looking forward to creating sustainable partnerships with like-minded organizations.

### **3) Sales of Haitian-based products**

2022 was our second full year of sales of Haitian-based products nationwide. From January 1 to December 31, 2022, we sold over \$14,350 in Haitian-based products. This includes more than 14 gallons of Haitian honey and over 20 pounds of Haitian beeswax used in personal care products. Combined, we spent over \$2,000 on raw materials, purchasing straight from the farmers of Moreau. Supporting bee-based products in Haiti is incredibly important as bees play a vital role in the farming ecosystem. Overall, we estimate that we are supporting more than 50 hives. We have already purchased another order from the farmers in Moreau and will ship the raw materials once conditions are safe and appropriate.

### **4) Raising awareness**

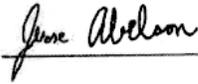
Through our website and social media channels, we share our story, products, and educational content about Haiti with our customers and followers. In 2022, we engaged 9,999 unique web visitors who viewed our online store, blog posts, and news updates. By posting 91 Facebook posts in 2022, we reached 15,887 unique users, while our 71 Instagram posts reached 6,665 unique users. These digital platforms allow us to reach thousands of people around the world each year to share the natural beauty of Haiti, highlight sustainability initiatives, and raise awareness of the history of Haiti.

### **Ongoing Challenges**

This year posed many challenges to our company. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and unrest in Port-Au-Prince, we were unable to travel to Haiti in 2022 to work with the farmers of Moreau in person, and instead relied heavily on cellular communication to check in with our partners. Additionally, due to the unrest in Port-Au-Prince, we were only able to complete a single shipment of beeswax and honey to the US. We are thus limited to our existing inventory and are unsure when we will be able to complete another shipment of products. As a result, we have not been able to continue research and development efforts to expand our product offerings, instead conserving limited raw materials for sales. Until safety is assured in travel between Moreau and Port-Au-Prince, we cannot ask our partners to travel in order to ship the already-purchased order of honey and beeswax.

**CERTIFICATION BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The undersigned, being all the directors of Vetiver Solutions, hereby acknowledge and certify that we have reviewed and approved the enclosed Annual Benefit Report.



Jesse Abelson, President



Dalton Schutte, Vice President



Leeore Levinstein, Vice President



Elizabeth Alonzi, Treasurer



Rebecca Desens, Secretary



Van Hong, Board Member

**SUBMISSION**

I, the undersigned, certify that I am the Chief Executive Officer of this public benefit corporation. I further certify that I have signed this document no more than 30 days before the document is delivered to the secretary of state for filing, and that this document is current when signed. I further certify that I have provided all required information and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath.

*Jane Wilson*

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**Work Item 1378086600037**  
**Original File Number 996937300028**

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
FILED  
**03/08/2023 11:59 PM**

*Steve Simon*

Steve Simon  
Secretary of State