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-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

### **FarmFest 2014 offers Educational Programs for Farmers/Homesteaders**

FarmFest 2014 welcomes prominent organic grain producers and marketers Mary-Howell and Klaas Martens of Lakeview Organic Grain and consumer health advocate Maureen Diaz of the Weston A Price Foundation & Farm-to-Consumer Legal Defense Fund to the Keynote stage on Friday and Saturday, Aug 1 and 2, at the Centre County Grange Fairgrounds in Centre Hall, PA.

Mary-Howell & Klaas Martens own and operate Lakeview Organic Grain in Pen Yan, NY, and have been farming organically since 1993. They farm about 1,400 acres of organic corn, soybeans, small grains (wheat, spelt, barley, oats, triticale), field peas, winter peas, dark red kidney beans and edamame soybeans. In addition to organic grains, they raise organic cows, pigs and chickens. Mary-Howell is at the mill every day, in charge of the business end of the feed business and the seed division of Lakeview.

Maureen Diaz is a Weston A. Price Foundation educator and author, and writes and speaks regionally on issues related to health, real food, raw milk, food policy, and food sovereignty. Maureen specializes in artisan bread, lacto-fermentation, and nutrition for healthy families.

The event was established in 2012 to provide opportunities for farmers and consumers to come together in a casual, outdoor environment to learn and get inspired. "It's a great opportunity to get valuable information to grow your business," says Chris Lent, an NCAT educator and farmer from Northeast Pennsylvania. "FarmFest offers an exciting opportunity for connection that is growing rapidly, working to strengthen the farm community throughout Pennsylvania and the Northeast. It's the perfect place for farmers to come together in a supportive environment to find new resources."

Make plans to attend FarmFest this year and get inspired by these innovative speakers.

***Transitioning to Organic Grain Production Field Day/Workshop***

FarmFest features a free Organic Grain Production Field Day workshop from 1-4pm on Friday August 1<sup>st</sup> sponsored by Pennsylvania Women's Agriculture Network and Natures Best Organic Feeds, and focuses on providing all the information a farmer needs to make a successful transition to organic production and marketing. Come hear Steve Smelter, Mary-Howell and Klaas Martens, Joel Steigman of Small Valley Milling in Halifax, PA and Ned Fogleman of The Fertrell Company in Bainbridge, PA discuss organic grain production and get your questions answered. Learn the basics of organic certification and begin the process at this informative workshop. To register for the free Transition to Organic Field Day contact Lee Rinehart at (814) 470-9734.

### ***Homesteading and Agricultural Workshops***

Our Spring Creek Homesteading and NCAT workshops were a highlight of FarmFest last year and this year proves to be even better. Spring Creek Homesteading offers sessions on:

- Enjoying Backyard Honey Bees with Sylvia Feldman
- Backyard Composting with Alexa Schriempf
- Fermentation as Food Preservation with Scott DiLoreto
- Cold Frames as Season Extenders with Joshua Lambert

The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), home of ATTRA, the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, offers two sessions including:

- Scaling Up: Managing the Growth of a Farm Business with Chris Lent
- Organic Soil and Crop Management with Norm Conrad

Learn about the crop and pasture weeds and how grazing livestock provides control without pesticides:

- Weed Identification demos with Penn State University College of Ag Sciences
- Pasture and Grazing Management with PCO's Lee Rinehart

### ***FarmFest Includes Educational Activities for the Whole Family***

Participate in the children's and families educational activities sponsored by Organic Valley in partnership with Wegmans. Take part in blacksmithing demonstrations with Bob Vernon, a Penns Valley blacksmith and organic inspector, and interact with local sheep producers and wool spinners at the Fertrell Wool Village. There's something for everyone at FarmFest, with plenty of local food vendors, entertainment, and local artisans in the HomeMade and HomeGrown Market, a bustling center of activity that has become an established part of FarmFest.

FarmFest is a fun, free, community-building event that fosters knowledge of organic agriculture and sustainable living through educational opportunities, local foods, lively entertainment, and interactive family activities.

FarmFest is open Friday Aug 1 from noon till 10:30pm, and Saturday Aug 2 from 9am till 10:30 pm. It's free to the public and offers a wide array of activities for the whole family, including camping opportunities and evening entertainment. Make plans to attend FarmFest 2014 to learn, listen, eat, and enjoy the day with old and new friends!

For more information visit the website at <http://farmfest.paorganic.org/> or call Lee Rinehart at (814) 470-9734. We look forward to seeing you and your family there!

FarmFest is sponsored by Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO), a non-profit organization that educates and certifies organic growers and handlers in Pennsylvania and the surrounding region. PCO certifies more than 600 farming and food production operations, including produce, field crops, herbs, wild crops, dairy products, poultry products, value-added products, livestock, mushrooms, maple, snack foods, coffee, tea, cosmetics, and more. PCO is accredited by the USDA and offers certification to the USDA, Canadian and European Union organic programs. To learn more about PCO or to apply for organic certification, call 814-422-0251 or visit our website at [www.paorganic.org](http://www.paorganic.org).

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