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--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--



PCO hosts the First Annual Pennsylvania Organic FarmFest, August 3 & 4

Centre Hall, PA — Come celebrate the growing and vibrant organic community at the first ever Pennsylvania Organic FarmFest! Roughly 80% of United States households are buying organic foods and the desire to know where and how your food is grown is the new priority for consumers.

At the forefront of the local and regional organic movement is Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) which marks its 15th year of certifying organic farms. To commemorate this success, PCO is hosting the Pennsylvania Organic FarmFest at the Grange Fair Grounds in Centre Hall, Pennsylvania on August 3 & 4, 2012.

Executive Director Leslie Zuck wants to thank the community of growers, consumers, and non-profits that have promoted organic values over the years. “We are excited to provide the opportunity for our friends in the ever-growing organic community to come together and celebrate 15 years of organic certification.”

FarmFest celebrates organic growers and consumers through education, live music, a farmers market, an arts and crafts show, exhibitions, hands-on demonstrations, and a number of diverse activities for children and adults.

This two-day event is FREE to the public and promises to attract visitors from across the state. Friday’s festivities begin at 4:30pm and go until 10:30pm. Saturday’s festivities begin at 11am and end at 10:30pm. In keeping with organic values of conservation, FarmFest is working to be a zero-waste event. According to PCO Director of Outreach and Education Lee Rinehart, “This festival is a great way to showcase organic farmers and food service folks. We’re also making it fun, packing the day with workshops on organic farming, great music, and wonderful food.”

FarmFest borrows from popular events such as the Grange Fair and Ag Progress Days by creating an atmosphere that celebrates farmers and the community with a focus on sustainable and traditional farming practices.

“It’s our hope that people will have fun and learn something new, and come away with a vision of community,” adds Rinehart.

Grow

FarmFest offers free educational programming related to backyard farming/gardening and organic growing methods and technologies. Saturday’s workshops focus on topics such as soil conservation, raising chickens, beekeeping, and organic gardening. Friday and Saturday, festival participants can participate in a workshop entitled “Using the Sun to grow (almost) Year-Round in Pennsylvania” which provides detailed information on how to power a green-house/high tunnel using solar power.

Play

Kids activities include a petting zoo, bike rides, community art projects, games, and more. However, the fun is not limited to children. There are games and hands-on projects for the whole family throughout the festival.

Shop

FarmFest is also providing a marketplace for arts and crafts vendors from across Pennsylvania. Artists are handpicked and independent, selling original, creative, and fun handmade wares. Farmers from central Pennsylvania will be selling a variety of homegrown & raised foods. Food vendors serving delicious, healthy, and locally sourced food will be open during festival hours.

Celebrate

Music is a big part of the FarmFest celebration. On Friday night, August 3, crowds will be entertained by local Penns Valley favorite, Chicken Tractor. Mountain Minstrelsy headlines Friday's festivities, featuring music directed by Marah core members David Bielanko and Christine Smith based on a collection of song lyrics from Henry Shoemaker's book "Mountain Minstrelsy" (as sung in the Backwoods Settlements, Hunting Cabins and Lumber Camps in the "Black Forest" of Pennsylvania, 1840–1923).

Saturday's music line-up includes State College bands Tyne and the Fastlyne and Pure Cane Sugar. Headlining Saturday are the lively Hoots & Hellmouth as well as the band Cabinet, both offering soulful, original roots music that will keep you on your feet.

Camp

[Camping](#) is available for everyone for a small cost. Individuals or families can bring their own tents or they can bring their RVs. A limited number of the famous green army tents are available as well.

Campers are encouraged to bring musical instruments and stories to share. Webster's Café will be on site to sell coffee and breakfast on Saturday morning.

Dogs are allowed but must be on a leash and comply with our dog policy.

Partner

This year's FarmFest is hosted by Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) and has many major sponsors such as the Pennsylvania State University's College of Agricultural Sciences, Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), Lady Moon Farms, Organic Valley Family of Farms, Organic Unlimited, and Perdue Agribusiness. A number of exhibitors will provide information related to organic agriculture, sustainable living, health and nutrition, energy conservation and more.

Partnership and exhibitor opportunities are still available.

Pennsylvania Certified Organic is a non-profit organization that educates and certifies organic growers and handlers in Pennsylvania and the surrounding region. PCO certifies more than 500 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.

To learn more about the First Annual Pennsylvania Organic FarmFest, Pennsylvania Certified Organic, or to apply for organic certification, call 814-422-0251 or visit our website at www.paorganic.org.