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-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-

Pennsylvania Organic FarmFest Announces 2015 Education Offerings

Since its inception in 2012 FarmFest has set the bar for delivering high-powered inspirational educational programming, and this year we are excited to build upon our history to bring several innovative speakers to the stage once again. FarmFest offers keynotes and workshops on a variety of agricultural and sustainable living topics on Friday and Saturday, August 7 and 8 at the Grange Fairgrounds in Centre Hall, PA. Gates open at 9:30 AM on Friday and 9 AM on Saturday. New this year is the PCO Member Day, held Friday August 7, and includes a dynamic slate of speakers.

The educational programs begin at 1 PM after the PCO Annual Meeting on Friday with a keynote address by Mike Smith, Pennsylvania's Executive Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. A native Pennsylvanian, Mr. Smith graduated Indiana University of Pennsylvania and provides strategic counsel while managing the day-to-day operations of the department. Following the keynote, Gary Zimmer returns to FarmFest with his unique flair for advancing sustainable approaches to soil and health, and is sure to inspire the audience with his style. The inspirational founder of Midwestern BioAg, Gary provides biological agriculture consulting and services to farmers nationwide.

PCO is also excited to have Andre Leu take the stage on Friday afternoon. Currently the president of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, Andre has been published in magazines, newspapers, and journals on many areas of organic agriculture including climate change, the environment, and the health benefits of organic. He is the author of *The Myth of Safe Pesticides*, and his talk will be an event not to miss at FarmFest.

Coach Mark Smallwood is also among the lineup to hit the Main Stage at FarmFest. Friday afternoon, join the inspirational Executive Director of the Rodale Institute for his unique vision of moving organic and sustainable agriculture into the mainstream

Saturday of FarmFest is the day for delving into the nuts and bolts of sustainable living, and will begin at 11 AM with a keynote presentation by Gary Zimmer, followed by an exciting series of educational workshops presented by Penns Valley's own Spring Creek Homesteading. At 10 am, Joshua Lambert will give a presentation on Food Preservation without canning: using drying, fermentation, and alcohol to put food by, followed by Garrett Morrison with a talk on Home Mushroom Production at 11 AM. At noon, join Jacki Bonomo to learn about Permaculture as an

Approach to Homestead Level Food Production, followed by Laura Young of Spring Mill's Rising Spring Meats, a PCO-certified organic meat processor, at 2 PM. Spring Creek, a founding partner of FarmFest's educational programming, supports local self-sufficiency by supporting new, renovated, and expanded food gardens and orchards, urban farms, community greenhouses, kitchens, bakeries, farmers markets, and workshop programs in the homesteading arts. You won't want to miss a minute of this informative line-up!

As an added bonus, FarmFest presents our afternoon keynote presentation by Ken Roseboro, editor and publisher of *The Organic & Non-GMO Report* and *The Non-GMO Sourcebook*. Ken has been called "the nation's reporter on all issues surrounding genetically modified foods" by Acres USA, one of the country's best-known magazines on sustainable agriculture. Be sure to attend this informational session to learn more about GMO's, labeling, and organic issues. Ken's talk will be held in association with the GMO-Free PA Annual Meeting to be held on Saturday at FarmFest, and includes, in addition to the annual business meeting, a workshop and Q&A on GMO's and how you can be a part of the conversation.

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. To learn more about FarmFest visit farmfest.paorganic.org or call Erin at 814-422-0251.

Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO) is a non-profit organization that educates and certifies organic growers and handlers in Pennsylvania and the surrounding region. PCO certifies more than 700 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 PCO or to apply for organic certification, call 814-422-0251 or visit our website at www.paorganic.org.