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WINTER CONFERENCE ADDRESSES ORGANIC MARKETS, PRODUCTION

Keynote to be delivered by PA Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding

Harrisburg, PA: The 2nd Annual Growing Pennsylvania's Organic Farms Winter Conference, focused on advanced organic marketing and production, is slated for December 15-16, 2015 at the Sheraton Harrisburg Hershey. This year's conference hosts Secretary Russell Redding on the 15th to welcome attendees with our kickoff keynote address.

The premier event provides opportunities for learning from experts in organic farming and networking with farmers, trade partners, and professionals to take organic agriculture to the next level. Included in the conference line up this year are marketing sessions led by Lela Reichart, PDA Bureau Chief of Markets; Brian Moyer, Penn State Extension Program Assistant; and Dr. Jonathon Campbell, Penn State University Meats Specialist.

Other educational sessions will cover dairy and livestock, vegetables and fruits, poultry, and field crop production. Dr. Silvia Abel-Caine, Organic Valley Veterinarian, will discuss dairy feed rations and milk quality, and Mr. Jeff Mattocks of The Fertrell Company will provide insight into organic poultry nutrition. Dr. Keith Yoder of Virginia Polytechnic Institute is set to speak on organic control of fruit diseases, and participants can learn about biopesticide use for organic vegetables with Abby Seaman of Cornell University. Cornell University's Dr. Matt Ryan will lead an in depth session on weed management and cover crops, and Dr. Heather Darby of the University of Vermont will provide details on organic grain and forage production, soil health, and nutrient management.

Early bird registration costs \$86 and is open until November 30. Day of registration will cost \$106. Participants can attend a single day for a reduced cost. To register visit www.gpofconference.org or call Darlene Livingston at 717-705-2121 or Michele Brookins at 717-787-5319.

The second annual conference is being coordinated through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture with support from the Rodale Institute, Pennsylvania Certified Organic (PCO), CROPP/Organic Valley, Penn State Extension, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA-certified organic farmers, and PA Farm Link.

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