



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contact: Stacy Kraker

541.246.1856, skraker@organicgrown.com

OREGON ORGANIC COALITION BESTOWS AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE ON FIVE OREGON INDIVIDUALS AND COMPANIES

Oregon District 43 State Representative, Lew Frederick, Gives Keynote at Luncheon Celebrating Oregon's Organic Food Trade

PORTLAND, Ore. - September 16, 2014 -- The recipients of the 2014 Oregon Organic Coalition (OOC) Awards For Excellence were announced today at a celebratory luncheon at the Ecotrust Building in Portland. More than 80 representatives from Oregon's farming, retail, academic, political and food production communities honored these organic innovators. A highlight of the annual Organically Grown in Oregon Week, the event featured a keynote address by Lew Frederick, Oregon State Representative and advocate for organic and family farms.

Awards were given to individuals and organizations that demonstrated innovation in organic practices, service to the industry, expansion of organic business opportunities and overall achievement in the state's organic industry. This year, OOC recognized accomplishments in furthering the quality and growth of organic food in five areas: processing, retail, wholesale distribution, organic policy, and farm crops. The following individuals and organizations were honored with OOC Awards of Excellence:

Processor: Columbia Gorge Organic

Columbia Gorge Organic began in 1975 when the Stewart family purchased a 95 acre farm. Since 1989 they have been committed to organic production and farming practices-maintaining their family ownership and distributing their well-known line of organic juices, juice blends, smoothies and CoGo bars on a national scale. They're committed to developing fair, sustainable partnerships with farms and distributors to provide excellent service and quality products. As an innovative processor, expanding the organic trade through sustainable sourcing and relationship building, Columbia Gorge Organic received the Award for Excellence as an Organic Processor.

Retailer: People's Food Co-op

Dial 503-ORG-ANIC and you'll be connected to one of the boldest food cooperatives in Oregon that has supported the organic and natural foods industry since their early origins in the 1960s. Over the past 44 years, People's has evolved but has maintained a strong core mission despite competition, financial challenges and organizational changes. People's stands out as an innovative retailer with a strong

commitment to sourcing organic products and produce from reputable sources and local suppliers and farms. Not only do they seek to provide excellent service and quality goods to their customers, but they treat their employees well. Their turnover rate is low, at roughly 13% with 4.6 average years of service, they pay well above minimum wage and offer a 100% employer health insurance program. Their steadfast commitment to organics is reflected in the percentage of organic produce in their produce department, roughly 99%. For their diehard commitment to providing organic foods to the community and supporting local farms and vendors, People's Food Co-op received the Award for Excellence as an Organic Retailer.

Wholesaler: Hummingbird Wholesale

Hummingbird Wholesale started in 1972 under the name Honey Heaven as a local specialty shop in Eugene, OR, but gradually changed into a wholesale model, until Charlie and Julie Tilt purchased the business in 2003. Today it remains a small, family-owned and operated business with an innovative approach to actively supporting farmers, especially local and regional producers. They have implemented a zero waste policy, working with the Sustainable Food Trade Association to increase their sustainability performance and reporting. With continued growth, they expanded their capacity to include a large warehouse, office space, production facility and public store front, employing more people, supporting more producers and supplying more organic commodities. For their continued and outstanding efforts to support Oregon's organic trade, Hummingbird Wholesale received the Award for Excellence as an Organic Wholesaler for a second time.

Farm (Crops): Fry Family Farm

Suzie and Steve Fry have been growing organically in the Rogue Valley since 1990-but despite their increased scale, they've maintained a strong familial community. As a diversified farm, they've taken an innovative approach to wholesale and supplying Oregon's market with organic flowers to CSAs, local businesses, and retail markets where mostly conventional flower bouquets are offered-in addition to the numerous crops they grow. They've gone beyond organic certification to also become Salmon Safe certified, ensuring that their farmlands are preserving natural habitats for native species to thrive for generations to come. On their Medford farm is a 25,000kw solar panel barn that powers irrigation and refrigeration systems. At Fry Family Farm, everyone is family-they want all aspects of their farm to support a holistic approach, from treating employees with equality and respect to protecting the environment. For their commitment to organic farming with an ethical and sustainable approach, Fry Family Farm received the Award for Excellence as an Organic Crop Farmer.

Organic Policy Analyst (Individual): Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador

Born and raised in Oregon, and student in the agricultural sector at Oregon State University, Lindsay Fernandez-Salvador has supported organic farming research and policy throughout her career-even helping Spanish-speaking farmers navigate the organic certification process. During her tenure at the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI), she has worked on many innovative projects, including organic inspection training on inputs, and developing a risk-based system to identify companies at greater risk of having non-compliant or fraudulent products. She has been a valuable leader in Oregon's organic community by offering educational opportunities through presentations and trainings with Oregon Tilth and the National Center for Alternatives to Pesticides. By representing the technical needs of organic operators, certification agencies and input manufacturers, she has helped ensure that their needs are met in policy discussions-therein helping expand and serve the organic community. She has been nationally recognized for her achievements by the National Organic Program. For her service in organic input and technical education, organic farming policy development and advocacy for small,

Latino farms that influence and benefit Oregon's organic trade, Lindsay received the Award for Excellence as an Organic Policy Analyst.

Organically Grown in Oregon Week is presented by the Oregon Organic Coalition, with generous support from Organically Grown Company, Oregon Tilth, Ashland Food Co-op, Bridges Organic Produce, EcoTrust, GloryBee Foods, New Seasons Market, Organic Valley, OMRI, Yamhill County Mushrooms, Coconut Bliss, Café Mam, Hummingbird Wholesale, Mountain Rose Herbs, and Simpatica Catering.

About the Oregon Organic Coalition

The Oregon Organic Coalition (OOC) is a trade support organization, working to advance the development and growth of the organic industry and community in Oregon. The OOC consists of a wide array of key players in Oregon's Organic Industry-volunteers from farmers to wholesalers and processors, as well as organic certifiers, scientists, consumers and retailers. The OOC acts as an organizing body, providing direction and endorsement of activities in promoting Oregon's organic trade, such as the re-enlivening of OGOW every September and advocating for continued federal support for organic research at Oregon State University.

###

Media Contact

Name: Stacy Kraker

Title: Marketing Manager, Organically Grown Company

Phone: 541-246-1856

Email address: skraker@organicallygrown.com