



News Release
For Immediate Release

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Organic Pioneers to Receive Organic Trade Association's Highest Honor, the Organic Leadership Award

Greenfield, MA – May 11, 2009 – Fresh on the heels of announcing double-digit growth for the organic industry, the Organic Trade Association (OTA) has named the recipients of its prestigious Organic Leadership Awards: Canadian organic advocate Paddy Doherty of British Columbia; and America's first and most influential organic rice growing family, Eldon, Wendell, Harlan and Homer Lundberg of California.

"Paddy Doherty and the Lundberg brothers are hard-working, committed organic heroes whose determination, passion and vision have helped the organic industry survive and thrive despite often difficult and challenging times," said OTA Executive Director Christine Bushway.

The 2009 Organic Leadership Award recipients will be honored at the OTA Annual Dinner and Dance on Wednesday, June 17, during the All Things Organic™ Conference and Trade Show in Chicago. The award trophy, a hand-blown glass "inhabited planet" by artist Josh Simpson, has been presented since 1997, when Sen. Patrick Leahy was the recipient.

This year, OTA is presenting the Organic Leadership Award in two categories: "Achievement in Growing the Organic Industry" to Paddy Doherty for helping to develop the organic standards and system in Canada; and "Achievement in Growing Organic Agriculture" to the Lundberg brothers for pioneering organic rice farming and increasing the number of organic acres and farmers.

Paddy Doherty: the Catalyst for Canada's Organic Sector

For nearly two decades, Paddy Doherty has focused on developing the organic sector in Canada, while continuing to farm organically on his family farm in Quesnel, British Columbia. Known for his resourcefulness in bringing diverse communities together, Doherty for nearly a decade managed the historic pan-Canadian effort to develop an organic regulation for Canada.

"As both an organizer and an advocate, Paddy has been instrumental in bringing the organic sector together in Canada. Over many years, he helped to create uniform, national organic standards and a regulation for Canada," said Bushway. "His vision will become a reality this June when Canada's Organic Products Regulations are implemented."

Doherty wrote the Interpretive Guide for the Canada Organic Standard, was the first chair of the government-advisory Organic Value Chain Roundtable, and is a member of the Canadian General Standards Board Technical Committee on Organic Agriculture. Doherty also helped to found the Organic Federation of Canada. He has also held key posts with the International Foundation for Organic Agriculture Movement (IFOAM), Accreditation Criteria Committee, and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) Committee on conformity assessment.



The Lundberg Brothers: America's Leading Organic Rice Farming Family

“The Lundberg brothers are organic farming pioneers who developed farming practices that for the first time enabled rice to be grown organically in the U.S.,” explained Bushway. “The Lundbergs encouraged many farmers to go organic, thus increasing the amount of land under organic management. They also helped build many of the organic farm and trade organizations that have become a solid part of the organic business community.”

The Lundberg brothers began as a small niche player with 80 acres dedicated to organic rice. Today that acreage has expanded to 5,000. It also includes an additional 9,000 acres of land they contract to local farmers who were attracted to the Lundberg's positive approach to business. About 70 percent of the acreage is organic.

Lundberg Family Farms has become the top grower and marketer of rice and rice products in the natural foods arena. They offer a wide range of organic and eco-farmed rice and rice products under the Lundberg Family Farms® brand name. Although the four Lundberg brothers have made way for the third generation, they balk at the notion of retirement. Harlan and Homer are still actively involved with the company's research farm, while Eldon is a tireless promoter of the Lundberg brand. Wendell regularly serves as the family representative to local community groups and all four brothers serve as goodwill ambassadors to the company's employees, suppliers and customers. www.lundbergfamilyfarms.com

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) is the membership-based business association for organic agriculture and products in North America. Its 1,700 members include growers, shippers, processors, certifiers, farmers' associations, distributors, importers, exporters, consultants, retailers and others. OTA's mission is to promote and protect the growth of organic trade to benefit the environment, farmers, the public and the economy.

www.ota.com

Note to Media: Award recipient interviews and photos, a past recipient list, award criteria and the OTA's 2009 Organic Industry Survey executive summary are available upon request to Sue McGovern sue@mcgov.com, tel. 781 648 7157.

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