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Organic, Farmer-Owned Co-op

First to Receive Domestic Fair Trade Certification

REGINA, Saskatchewan, Canada—June 07, 2010—Farmer Direct Co-operative Ltd. (FDC), a farmer-owned business of 70 certified organic family farms is the first business in Canada and the United States to receive domestic fair trade certification. “People usually associate fair trade with coffee, sugar, bananas and other crops from the global south, but fair wages to farm workers and fair prices to farmers are just as much a concern in industrialized nations like Canada and the United States,” explains Murray Horkoff a FDC farmer-owner from Kamsack, SK. “Now organic consumers can purchase fairly traded, flax, wheat, beans, peas, lentils and other crops grown in the Northern Hemisphere,” adds Horkoff.

FDC is now both certified organic through Pro-Cert Organic Systems (www.pro-cert.org <<http://www.pro-cert.org/>>) and certified fair trade through Quality Certification Services (www.qcsinfo.org <<http://www.qcsinfo.org/>>) making FDC the first company eligible to carry the fairDeal seal on their members’ products. “Most of society is unaware that farm workers in many states and provinces are not protected under Federal, State or Provincial Labour laws. Since farm workers have no recourse under law they are often exploited. Therefore, organic consumers are now demanding organic foods that are fairly traded,” states Keith Neu a FDC farmer-owner from Hudson Bay, SK. “We are proud to be able to offer certified organic, fairly traded food to these families.”

Along with fair prices to farmers and living wages to farm workers the fairDeal, an organic industry supply chain non-profit and product seal, was founded to incorporate fair trade, pay equity and other additional ethical standards into organic agriculture. The fairDeal seal on products is an easy way for shoppers to know that their purchase supports certified organic farming methods and fair business practices. “If we truly believe in democracy and fair trade then we must economically organize ourselves in ways that are democratic and fair. Support for organic family farms and pay equity are fundamental to any system of fair trade. But it has to be easy for consumers,” adds Gene Davis, FDC's President who farms out of North Portal, Saskatchewan. “That's why if consumers are looking for certified organic, certified fair trade food where all companies involved practice pay equity they need only look for one seal—the fairDeal.”

To purchase fairDeal grains or for more information about Farmer Direct Co-op please contact Jason Freeman, General Manager at 1.306.352. 2444 or jason@farmerdirect.coop

For more information on the fairDeal, please contact Marla Carlson, Program Manager at 306.352.2496.

About Farmer Direct Co-operative Ltd.

Founded in 2002, Farmer Direct Co-operative Ltd. is a farmer-owned business that provides the world with ethically grown and traded food. Its co-operative of 70 certified organic family farms and 120,000 acres of farmland produce high quality, 100 percent certified organic, grains, oilseeds, pulses and meats for food manufacturers, distributors and food service providers in Canada, the United States, European Union and Japan. FDC is a bulk supplier of organic grains specializing in containers, truckloads, railcars and 25 lb grain bags to retailer bulk bins. For more information, visit www.farmerdirect.coop <<http://www.farmerdirect.coop/>> .