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For Immediate Release
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Robin Chesmer Receives the Farmland Preservation Award at the Big E

Hartford, Connecticut --- Robin Chesmer of Graywall Farm in Lebanon has received the Farmland Preservation Pathfinder award in recognition of his work to promote the preservation of farmland in Connecticut. He was honored at the Big E on "Connecticut Day," receiving his award from Governor Rowland on behalf of the Connecticut Trustees of the Eastern States Exposition (Big E)

"We need to aggressively save farmland now, otherwise Connecticut's not going to be the same. Land is going fast, if we don't save it now, there won't be any left to save. I'm very honored to receive this award--it's truly an honor to receive this recognition along with Terry Jones. I feel strongly about agriculture. It is important to the state in so many ways-- economically, environmentally, and in terms of our quality of life," said Chesmer. "I'm glad people recognize the importance of agriculture because there is a lot of development pressure now. Agriculture is a business with a lot of benefits. Connecticut couldn't be the same without it. The country wouldn't be the same without it. People need to recognize those basics."

Chesmer's farm is a Connecticut Dairy Farm of Distinction with 580 head of Holsteins (300 milking) and a few Brown Swiss. Chesmer has given talks around the state about farmland preservation. His presentation called, "The Dirty Truth," focuses on saving dirt, soil and land. He provides regular testimony at state and local public hearings on farmland preservation policy. He is the founding member of Working Lands Alliance, a multi-interest coalition committed to increasing the state's focus on farmland preservation.

"Robin not only farms for his family and himself, he also farms for the community. He understands the impact his farm has, and the decisions he makes are always made with the greater community in mind," said Bonnie Burr, director of government relations for the CT Farm Bureau.

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The "Pathfinder in Farmland Preservation Awards" recognize innovative farmland preservation efforts in Connecticut in the public, private, and education sector. Other winners include: private sector winner Terry Jones of the Jones Family Farm in Shelton; the public sector winner is the Town of Suffield and its town planner Phil Chester; and in the educational sector the winner is the CT Envirothon Steering Committee.

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For more information on the Pathfinder Awards, please contact Jennifer Martin, Food Policy Director for the Hartford Food System at (860) 296-9325 or by E-mail at <info@workinglandsalliance.org>